



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Wednesday, 16 September 2020

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 16 September 2020

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Notices

PRESENTATION

[During the giving of notices of motions]

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Canterbury to order for the first time. The member has made constant interjections both yesterday and today. I ask her to cease.

Bills

POLICE AMENDMENT (PROMOTIONS) BILL 2020

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 15 September 2020.

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (09:47:51): Further to my contribution yesterday, I again thank the men and women of the NSW Police Force and, in particular, those of the Manning-Great Lakes Local Area Command. Superintendent Chris Schilt, previously from Goulburn, is doing a fantastic job. He has only been the Manning-Great Lakes District Commander for several months. The Taree PCYC is so important to the Taree community and I congratulate its manager, Justin Hayes, on what they do. I have had discussions with both Justin Hayes and Superintendent Chris Schilt about the real need for a PCYC at Forster. Indeed, that suggestion came about after a discussion I had with Jennifer Miggins and Rick Clissold, two directors of education in the mid North Coast area, about how a PCYC would be good for the young people in the Forster-Tuncurry area. Those young people are missing out by not having a PCYC. The Taree PCYC does outreach, but more is needed.

Superintendent Chris Schilt is on board; he sees the value of the PCYC. I have also had a discussion with the Minister for Police and Emergency Services about it. Together all of us, the education community and police, are working towards getting a new PCYC in the Forster-Tuncurry area. The police in the Manning-Great Lakes Police District are doing so many wonderful things: a district Aboriginal leadership group; a suspended students diversion project; a learning centre; Fit for Life, a corporate program targeting youth, run through the Taree PCYC; the Indigenous Police Recruitment Our Way Delivery program, known as IPROWD; a general duties proactive respite and development team trial; and district inspector engagement portfolios where each district inspector is responsible for a portfolio. This has improved customer service. Once again I thank the police in the Manning-Great Lakes Police District.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (09:50:09): It gives me great pleasure to support the Police Amendment (Promotions) Bill 2020. I congratulate the Minister and his team on this legislation and note that the Opposition supports it. I acknowledge the excellent contribution to the second reading debate by the member for Myall Lakes. The member was a former serving police officer, achieving the rank of detective senior constable. I acknowledge also the contributions made by the members representing the electorates of Cootamundra, Camden and Heathcote. I acknowledge the outstanding contribution by the member for Goulburn, also a former serving police officer who attained the rank of detective senior constable, and the very informative contribution by my good friend the member for Seven Hills. I believe he is the most senior former police officer elected to the New South Wales Parliament, having achieved the rank of acting superintendent. Three excellent speeches were made in the New South Wales Parliament by former police officers, who can speak firsthand of their experiences and the benefits the bill will bring to members of the NSW Police Force. They speak with great knowledge and experience.

The Police Amendment (Promotions) Bill 2020 will provide the legislative and regulatory changes needed to provide for a modern, merit-based promotions scheme for non-executive police officers—that is, for sergeants, inspectors and superintendents. The proposed new promotions system ensures that all officers have equal access to promotional opportunities regardless of where they currently live or serve. As the member for Myall Lakes said, it is a major improvement on the existing system. The bill will allow applicants to demonstrate the technical, operational and interpersonal skills they have developed across a range of police settings, whether they have served in the country, the city or the suburbs. The amendments in the bill ensure that the promotions system is

fair for all police, including those who work in remote and rural areas and may not have the visibility of their city counterparts.

Of course, this includes the Central Coast, which is well served by the Tuggerah Lakes Police District and the Brisbane Water Police District. I take the opportunity to thank Superintendent John Gralton and Superintendent Tony Joyce. These two gentlemen are the senior commanders at Tuggerah Lakes Police District and Brisbane Water Police District respectively. I have had the pleasure of working with these two gentlemen over the last 5½ years that I have been a member of Parliament. They are truly exemplary officers. Tony Joyce replaced our former superintendent at Brisbane Water, Daniel Sullivan, who also is an outstanding police officer. After I was elected in 2015, one of the first phone calls I received was from Superintendent Sullivan congratulating me on my election.

My experience with police in general is, like most people, that I do not really have an understanding of what it is they do on a day-to-day basis. My uncle is a retired senior sergeant and my exposure to police was by way of family. My wife's sister also was a police officer. When Danny rang me, I said that I wanted to go out in the field with his officers to see firsthand what they experience at work on a daily basis. He was surprised but, in true Danny Sullivan style, he arranged a ride along. I spent the evening with Paul Nicholls, an outstanding police officer from Brisbane Water. Paul and I could be mistaken for twins! He has to be at least six foot four and I am four foot six. He is an outstanding gentleman. It was a real eye-opening experience for me as a newly elected member of Parliament.

On many occasions I have recommended to all members of Parliament to spend an evening with their local police to see firsthand what these men and women do on a daily basis to keep our community safe. I went on a Friday night. The police never, ever use the word "quiet" when they are on the job, but apparently it was a relatively quiet evening. I have to say if that was quiet I would hate to see busy. On the ride along I went from one end of the Central Coast to the other within the Brisbane Water command, as it was at the time. It was an eye-opening experience for me as a layperson who has never had interaction with police other than family members. I encourage every member in this place to make an overture towards their local commander to spend a night with these incredible men and women to see what they do. Every call-out is different and can be confronting for these men and women, who every day put their lives on the line to keep us safe. I know I speak on behalf of all members when I thank them for their incredible service.

Not long ago I had the pleasure of joining John Gralton to announce the allocation of six new probationary constables to the Tuggerah Lakes Police District. They recently completed their training and are the latest graduates from the attestation ceremony at Goulburn. These outstanding new recruits to the NSW Police Force have undertaken world-class training at Goulburn over the past eight months. This training has helped them to prepare for the challenges they will encounter over their no doubt stellar policing careers. Our newest probationary constables from class 342 are leaving the academy during unprecedented times due to COVID-19. They will face challenges that have never been faced before by recruits. I congratulate every one of them on choosing such an incredible career path and I wish them all the best. They were excited to be posted to the Central Coast. Three of the graduates were already living on the Central Coast, so it is home for them. The other three are newbies. I have no doubt they will decide to call the Central Coast home. Tuggerah Lakes and Brisbane Water commands have a history of longevity in the service of their police.

I have had great pleasure in presenting long service clasps to many members of both of these police districts. Officers who are stationed at Tuggerah Lakes or Brisbane Water do not want to move because they are fantastic commands led by exemplary leaders, John Gralton and Tony Joyce. As I said, I have spent time on patrol with Paul Nicholls. I mention Rod Peet, who is another outstanding officer, and Nigel Webber, who is a powerhouse and a great guy. Nigel, a senior police officer, is the sort of person who will cook a barbecue for a kids day out at Copacabana. This is time these officers give to the community outside of their already demanding shifts. I cannot speak highly enough of them. Our liaison officer, Jason Tudman, also does an incredible job.

The bill provides me the opportunity to highlight the work that is undertaken by Brisbane Water and Tuggerah Lakes police districts through a groundbreaking new law enforcement and health collaboration called Police Ambulance and Clinical Early Response, or PACER for short. This initiative had been rolled out in Kogarah and I had the great pleasure of announcing that the Central Coast was to be the first region to receive the PACER program. The program will cover both police districts at Tuggerah Lakes and Brisbane Water. Again I pay tribute to our police because they came to me proactively seeking to roll out PACER on the Central Coast.

They had already sat down and worked with Dr Anthony Critchley, the head of the mental health unit at Central Coast Local Health District. Here are our police proactively looking at a system we know works and saying, "We want to be next." I had the great pleasure of taking Minister Taylor up to meet with Superintendent Joyce, Dr Critchley and the team to put forward why the Central Coast would be a fantastic region to receive PACER funding. The case they put forward was compelling and showed the professionalism of our police on the

Central Coast. They realise this that is one of our major issues in dealing with mental health issues with police interaction. [*Extension of time*]

The pilot program embeds mental health experts with first responders to support them by appropriately recognising, assessing and responding to mental health emergencies live and at the scene. This means that our police have mental health officers based at Tuggerah Lakes and Gosford police stations. They have access to patient information. They can then assess the best interaction and best course of action that our police take, whether it be with a mental health worker going out with them to the call or whether it can be dealt with by a mental health worker. The results already speak for themselves: One month after PACER was introduced, admissions to the Central Coast Local Health District were half of what they were at the same time last year.

This is a brilliant program. In a region like ours, which has a large number of mental health admissions, it shows that proactive police work really has excellent results. Again, we were delighted to announce that one month after rolling this program out, the results are already speaking for themselves. I am very keen to ensure that the program maintains its position on the Central Coast, because our police officers and mental health caseworkers know the benefits that it provides. As I said, early analysis has shown a dramatic decrease in the number of police mental health presentations at Gosford Hospital.

Returning to the bill, it specifically amends the provisions in the existing Act that relate to the promotion of sergeants, inspectors and superintendents. It also sets out a new legislative framework for the merit-based promotions system based on the NSW Public Sector Capability Framework. Under the current arrangements, officers are drawn from a ranked promotion list to fill the vacant positions. Those at the top of the list are offered the job; if they reject it, the job is offered to the next person on the list and so forth. Ranking of the list is generally determined by reference to the officers' completion of eligibility assessments, seniority and time spent waiting on the list.

Under the proposed new system that the Government seeks to introduce, the process for filling vacant positions will be as follows: One, a vacant position is advertised and all pre-qualified officers are eligible to apply; two, officers will apply to be assessed on the basis of the specific duties required for the position and each individual officer's capability, experience and knowledge; and, three, the appointment decision will be based on objective assessment criteria. These changes are necessary. They reflect the findings of the 2019 *Review into the NSW Police Force Promotions System*, which demonstrated that 90 per cent of current police officers either agreed or strongly agreed that the current promotions system needs reform. This is coming from grassroots police officers and that is exactly what this bill delivers.

As I said from the outset, the bill recognises the extraordinary contribution to communities made by police in all areas of New South Wales, including the outstanding team on the Central Coast, which I mentioned earlier. The amendments in the bill provide for an equitable and fair promotions system by recognising the variety of skills and attributes police possess across this wonderful State of New South Wales. I acknowledge the great work done by Deputy Commissioner, Corporate Services Malcolm Lanyon, APM; Assistant Commissioner Leanne McCusker, APM; and Nadia Napoletano, Rebecca Alexander, John Robinson, Andrew Reid, Phaedra Parkins and Scott Bingham.

I have highlighted the Minister's contribution, but that would not go far enough; it is the work that goes on behind the scenes in the Minister's office that helps to bring these excellent pieces of legislation before this Chamber. I acknowledge the outstanding work of Trish Wild, who has been in the Chamber while this bill has been debated. I congratulate Trish on all the hard work that she has done with those outstanding police officers and with the Minister to deliver this excellent outcome. As I have said, our police deserve all the praise we can provide them. They do an outstanding job 24/7, 365 days a year, from one end of New South Wales to the other. Every day they go out not knowing what to expect, but they go out and do it nonetheless. We stand here every day because of the safety they provide us. I thank all of the key stakeholders who were engaged with the process. I congratulate the Minister on this excellent piece of legislation, as well as his outstanding staff who helped draft it. I commend this excellent bill to the House.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (10:05:26): It is a pleasure to speak to the Police Amendment (Promotions) Bill 2020. As we have already heard, a clear majority of police officers agree that the current promotions system is due for an update, given that it no longer fulfils the important role that it holds in the lives of officers. The working life and career structure for police is complex. It demands a host of skills in a mix that most of us will never have to deal with as we go about our jobs. The risks faced by police are different too, and—as we are all aware—may include times of abuse and times of peril, exposure to harsh weather, and periods spent away from home and loved ones. They are guardians of our society and our way of life. We do well to listen to what they are telling us about their work, and about their career and promotions system.

In the 18 months that I have been in this role, it has been my privilege to travel my electorate and, in particular, to witness the great work that police do across Albury. The electorate is largely covered by the Murray River Police District and partially covered by Wagga Wagga. The Murray River Police District comprises approximately 74,000 square kilometres of southern New South Wales. It is a massive amount of territory to cover. It borders Victoria to the south, Riverina Police District to the east and north, Murrumbidgee Police District to the north and west, and Barrier Police District to the west. The commander is Superintendent Paul Smith, and I will make special mention of Paul a little later.

There are a number of issues that our local police district focuses on at this stage. In particular—and it will come as no surprise—there is a real focus on cross-border collaboration. The Murray River Police District encompasses several border cities and towns, from Albury-Wodonga in the east to Barham and Koondrook in the west. Offenders regularly cross borders to commit all manner of offences before returning to their home State. It is important that our police officers work across the border and collaborate together. There continues to be liaison with Victoria Police operations and contact where the health orders permit.

The Murray River Police District has a drug unit based at Albury and a proactive crime unit based in Albury and Deniliquin. A charter has been developed whereby the units now work together on a wider range of disruption operations benefiting from cross-pollination of experience, skills and resources. Importantly, there is a focus on youth action meetings as well, with the Murray River Police District establishing a program of youth action meetings. That provides a coordinated approach to address the needs of young people aged 10 years old to 17 years old who are at risk of becoming either a victim of crime or an offender.

I mentioned earlier the privilege of travelling my electorate and seeing great police officers doing great work across the district. I will focus on two particular elements that have touched our electorate over the past 12 months. Geographically, on the border of New South Wales and Victoria we are dealing with a major police operation to protect the State from the transit of the COVID-19 virus from Melbourne. Thankfully, the situation within Victoria appears to have come under control. I thank the Premier and look forward to her announcement later today about an easing of restrictions and permits for border crossings into New South Wales in response to the Victorian Premier's new rules for regional parts of that State.

Today's developments will help ease cases of real hurt in our border communities caused by the heavy restrictions that have been in place since early July. There is a sense of relief, and that will help stoke regional economies and support businesses and jobs. There have only been a few cases of COVID in my electorate. Indeed, Monday's data from Albury Wodonga Health confirms that there are no new cases, no active cases and no cases of the virus in its community for 64 days. It is because we have been charged to be the front line, the border, to protect New South Wales and the greater nation itself.

Much credit goes to our health services and to our communities for their caring support for each other. But as anyone who has driven through the border crossings can attest, the presence of hundreds of police officers and members of the Australian Defence Force [ADF] are the steel in our protection. Day and night since the first week of July those great Australians have been on duty along the border with Victoria. It is a remarkable job and they have carried out their responsibilities honorably and successfully. In particular, I note the way that they have liaised with our community, worked with our community and in return how our community has responded to them. Right along the border on cold nights local residents have provided firewood for them to have little fires. They have dropped them off meals, chocolates and other treats to let them know that our community values the work that the police have been doing.

I thank Superintendent Paul Smith, who joined our area earlier this year. Losing Superintendent Evan Quarmby was a big loss, but Paul has settled into the role magnificently. He has provided great leadership as he has been charged with controlling both the Victorian and New South Wales border and the New South Wales and Queensland border. It is a massive role and a large burden of work. Paul has worked magnificently and I thank him for that and for his counsel over the past few weeks and months. As I contemplated this bill I recalled having a meal with a number of officers and ADF personnel. Along with the Minister for Police and Emergency Services we shared our dinner around the fire, hearing firsthand about the ups and downs of their work. It was a privilege to be there. I am grateful that when I had to move on, I knew they and their ADF comrades would still be there to check permits and play their role in keeping the virus out of the State.

Part of the bigger picture were the fires earlier this year that occurred over the hot, burning summer. I travelled across the fire-affected and threatened communities of my electorate, up into Tumbarumba, Snowy Valleys and Greater Hume Shire. There, as now, I witnessed the impressive, selfless work of police and the Rural Fire Service. While some were hands-on fighting the fires and protecting property, the police officers were also in harm's way, keeping control of the roads and directing residents away from danger. I particularly mention Tumbarumba senior constables Mick Jones and Peter Thomson and Senior Constable Mike Pomona from Khancoban.

I remember travelling to Khancoban. The week that they were expecting the fire to race down the valley towards there, Senior Constable Mike Cremona was doing a fantastic job. I vividly recollect the words of Senior Constable Mick Jones as he rallied his community around and his sense of protection and duty towards them. He and the men and women across our Police Force acted selflessly during those fires. Their actions to protect residents and keep them away from danger are the kinds of skills which are learned in the heat of battle in forests and remote townships. Australia relies on having a vast force of experienced volunteers and professionals who are ever ready to bring their experience and knowledge to the next fire, the next flood, the next natural disaster.

This too has value in the way we recognise and promote people into positions of increasing authority and disaster management. In that sense this is where we need to now focus our attention. The bill will amend the Police Act 1990 and the Police Regulation 2015 by implementing a merit-based and updated promotions system for non-executive police officers. As the Minister has said, this will ensure that police are trained and placed to fulfil their role with the necessary knowledge, experience, capabilities and attributes. In brief, vacant positions are advertised, pre-qualified officers will be eligible to apply, and applications will be assessed using objective criteria according to the specific duties required for the position as well as each individual officer's capability, experience and knowledge. This is about ensuring that positions are filled by people who can do those jobs. It is also about seeing that officers are trained and ready to undertake that job. [*Extension of time*]

The 2019 review into the NSW Police Force Promotions System by Elizabeth Broderick & Co makes a clear statement about talent and diversity for the Police Force. It states:

... the NSW Police Force requires a workforce that is agile, skilled, flexible and appropriately responsive. It must attract a breadth of talent and its people must reflect the diversity of the Australian community. The Force requires leaders who have the skills and abilities to bring out the best in their teams, including being inclusive and creating an environment where everyone is valued, respected and has equal access to opportunities to thrive.

It continues:

... drawn largely from the many voices of members of the NSW Police Force—their stories, opinions and experiences. They are also drawn from the advice of senior leaders, results of the online survey, relevant policies and data, and academic literature, including best practice approaches to key issues. Information was also provided by officers from the NSW Police Association who met with the Review Team on a number of occasions.

The report set out five principles. Principle 1 states that a rigorous and fair promotions system is one that appropriately tests for capabilities, including leadership capability, work performance, achievement and potential, and its outcomes are delivered in a timely and transparent way. Principle 2 says that a good talent promotions system is one that challenges the biases and assumptions underpinning an uninterrogated view of merit and ensures that both women and men have equal access to opportunities to advance their careers. Principle 3 states that flexible work practices are a key capability driver and, as far as practicable, should not be an obstacle to promotion. Principle 4 states that sexual misconduct reduces promotional opportunities for individuals, diminishes team performance and impacts on organisational capability. Principle 5 says that courageous leadership will help drive successful and sustainable reform.

As noted, observance of these principles when developing a promotions structure will get the job done but also provide individuals with opportunities to thrive. My appreciation and thanks go to the police and ADF personnel who have been on border service along the Murray. I enjoy and appreciate working with Superintendent Paul Smith. I express my thanks for his enduring passion for the work and his tireless command of both far-flung and intense urban crossing points. I also acknowledge the great work of Superintendent Bob Noble from Wagga Wagga Local Area Command. I have spoken about senior constables Mick Jones and Pete Thomson. The work done by those officers during the bushfires reflects the points made in Broderick's report that the NSW Police Force is a workforce that is agile, skilled, flexible and appropriately responsive. I see that demonstrated now at border command.

Many officers in other roles continue to make their mark in the daily work of the police in Albury, from people such as Inspector Scott Russell, to Senior Constable Debra Milnes, who does a fantastic job in the domestic violence unit and who received the 2018 Domestic Violence Practitioner of the Year award, and Beth Docksey, a retired superintendent and senior leader who led the way for other women in senior roles. Through bushfires and border closures, the people and businesses of my electorate have benefitted from the magnificent efforts of those who have chosen the career of protecting their communities and New South Wales. We owe them a debt of gratitude that cannot be measured, but which can be recognised by the work we perform for their benefit in this House. I thank the Minister for bringing this bill to the House. I thank his team—Trish and Dom—and I say that this is the recognition that our police deserve. I support the bill.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (10:19:47): It is good to be in the Chamber today to support, as many members have, the Police Amendment (Promotions) Bill 2020 brought forward by the police Minister. The purpose of the bill is to amend the Police Act 1990 and the Police Regulation 2015 to give real effect to a

merit-based and modern promotions system for non-executive police officers. As members have heard in previous contributions, the bill is about ensuring that New South Wales has a police force where promoted officers are actually fit for purpose, with the best fit of knowledge, best experience, best capabilities and the attributes that are required for specific roles. I think all members would agree that is pretty important, given the current police officer promotions list has been recognised as being not really fit for purpose. It was interesting that the *Review into the NSW Police Force Promotions System 2019* found that 90 per cent of police officers agreed or strongly agreed that the current promotions system needs reform.

I will focus on rural and regional areas in my contribution today. Part of the importance of the bill is around the amendments to provide that all police officers, including those who work in remote or rural areas who may not necessarily have the same visibility as their city counterparts, are actually taken into account. I think that is important to note. We know that rural crime costs millions of dollars every single year. There is a range of crimes that affect the livelihoods and wellbeing of people, including the theft of livestock, produce and equipment, illegal shooting and trespassing. I can tell members it is a real problem, and over recent years it has been a severe impediment to many people across the central and western areas of New South Wales.

All members know that many farms run on extremely slim margins. That has been made worse in recent years by the severe drought. Of course, the recent impact of COVID-19 on the economy makes things difficult. That means that even one incident of stock theft can be financially devastating. When it happens repeatedly it is a kick in the guts that many farmers simply cannot recover from. Responding to and preventing rural crime is certainly a key goal of this Government and it needs to be a key goal to support our hardworking police, particularly around rural crime. The good news on that front is that the Rural Crime Prevention Team has four zones across New South Wales. Currently there are 52 members of that team. Each zone comprises a detective sergeant and two investigators. In July last year the Liberal-Nationals Government announced the deployment of a further six rural crime investigator positions to make sure that we keep on top of illegal trespass and stock theft, which, as I mentioned, have been a real concern over recent years.

Recently I joined the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, David Elliott, the NSW Police Force Rural Crime Coordinator, Detective Inspector Cameron Whiteside, and one of our local investigators at the Dubbo Regional Livestock Markets to promote a new operation, Operation Stock Check. This is a little bit different: a high-visibility operation designed to disrupt the movement of stolen stock across regional New South Wales. Members might be surprised at the lengths people go to in order to steal stock from our hardworking primary producers. In fact, on that day at the saleyards Detective Inspector Whiteside outlined to me that in some cases there are vehicles used that you may not necessarily suspect. Horse floats and horse trucks are used fairly regularly, but in some cases even caravans are being used to transport stolen animals—particularly sheep—because it is seen that police will not really think twice about a caravan cruising by. However, that is about to change. Members might be wondering where the sheep fit in the caravan. I do not think they put them in the kitchen. They actually strip out the caravan, put a little ramp in and load sheep. They can fit quite a few sheep into an old caravan.

This high-visibility operation is giving people a warning. This is a shot across the bow to say: You might think you have been sneaky in the past, but whatever you think you can get away with, we are now putting you on notice that you will be checked—maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but maybe next week. That is the point of the operation. Regular stock carriers are well aware that at all times they need to have all the documentation on hand relating to the stock they are moving. That will be the case with this operation. More vehicles of every shape and size will be stopped as part of Operation Stock Check. Hopefully that will get the message out there that things need to change.

More and more landowners are appreciating the efforts being made by our fantastic rural crime investigators. However, in the first six months of this year more than 8½ thousand sheep were stolen and over 730 cattle were reported stolen. The financial loss of that is roughly \$2½ million, and that comes on the back of three years of severe drought. It is a really serious situation. A lot of landowners have destocked because they simply have not had enough feed or water to sustain herds or flocks. The last thing they need is for this thieving to occur. Operations such as Operation Stock Check are vital. I commend Detective Inspector Cameron Whiteside for all the work he does with local area commands and the investigators who form such a vital part of our rural investigation team.

While the Minister was in town a couple of weeks ago I also joined him at the Dubbo PCYC to provide him with an update on Project Walwaay. This program is fairly unique. It is coordinated by Orana Mid-Western Police District Commander Superintendent Peter McKenna. It is the first of its kind and has received a fair bit of attention from the Commissioner of the NSW Police Force and the Minister. The program is all about proactive policing and provides outlets for designated officers to work with at-risk youth in our community. The proof of the program's success certainly lies in the statistics, which I will give to members in a moment. However, I want to give a shout-out to the team, led admirably by Peter McKenna but including Ian Burns, Willie Middleton,

Richard Johnson and Lindsey Kohlet, who are all fantastic members of what is a really important part of our local team.

In just one year there has been a 60 per cent downturn in recidivism. A lot of these young children have previously avoided, thumbed their nose at or maybe even given the bird to police but now are working with local police to better their lives. They have respect for them; they actually approach them on the street, as opposed to running away or throwing something at them. Project Walwaay has been a real game changer. It sets a standard when it comes to police walking hand in hand with our young people, rather than standing in front of them and giving orders. There is a huge thumbs up, not only from the community but also from the police Minister, to Commander Pete McKenna and his entire team for having the vision to come up with this program. It really is making a difference locally. On any Friday night there can be up to 100 kids engaged in activities at the local PCYC, or sometimes at other locations during summer—they get some extra time at the pool. Often all that is needed to take a child out of a cycle of crime or antisocial behaviour is for someone to believe in them so that their pathway becomes much clearer, easier and more appropriate.

There have also been some fantastic work outcomes for some of the young people involved. In fact, on that morning at the PCYC with the Minister we met a couple of young participants in Project Walwaay. A couple of them had started casual jobs recently and were really enjoying the opportunity. That is part of what this program is about. It is no secret that I would love to see this program expanded. I am a great believer in it, and a great supporter of Pete McKenna and his team. I hope there is an opportunity for other police districts across the State to pick it up, because it certainly is changing lives and making our communities better places to live. I think all members can agree that can only be a good thing.

Other local projects include the Fit for Life and Fit for Work programs, again running through the Orana Mid-Western Police District and Dubbo PCYC. Fit for Life is now also in Wellington and Mudgee PCYCs. Fit for Life concerns at-risk youth aged from seven years to 14 years, both boys and girls. It is about increasing school attendance and positive interaction. It has been running for nearly two years. To date, over 30 people have participated in that program, which has been really successful. The Fit for Work program, another being run through Dubbo PCYC, is certainly helping young people transition into meaningful work at a meaningful time in their lives. [*Extension of time*]

The Fit for Life and Fit for Work programs certainly make an incredible difference to young people in the Dubbo region, as do some of the very hardworking police officers. Last year I was privileged to again join the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Deputy Commissioner Gary Worboys, and a local commander, Superintendent Pete McKenna, for presentation of a couple of deputy commissioner medals to two long-serving detective sergeants who have worked in the region for their entire lives. I mention them today as we speak about this bill. Detective Sergeant Mark Meredith oversees approximately 30 detectives and played a key role in working on the Malcolm Naden case, as well as achieving closure for the families of Lateesha Nolan and Kristy Scholes. He was described by Superintendent McKenna as the glue of the Orana Mid-Western Police District and a police officer who is extremely well respected throughout the entire community.

Detective Sergeant Morley oversees the Orana Mid-Western Target Action Group [TAG] and has 18 officers in his team. He also is extremely well known throughout the district, particularly around Wellington where recently he spent a fair bit of time ensuring that the work of the TAG is done meaningfully. Some extraordinarily successful police operations have been conducted by Rick Morley. I congratulate Mark and Richard on being awarded their medals last year and being given worthwhile recognition for achieving the high standard outcomes referred to in the bill. The review survey found that 90 per cent of police officers agreed or strongly agreed that the current promotions system needs reform. The bill is all about ensuring that the provisions in the Act relate to the promotions of sergeants, inspectors and superintendents and sets out a brand new legislative framework for a merit-based promotions system in accordance with the NSW Public Sector Capability Framework.

Under the current arrangements there are some questions around how that actually works. Under the new system the process for filling a vacant position will be much more in line with public sector standards. For example, vacant positions will be advertised, all pre-qualified officers are eligible to apply and then officer applications and assessments are based on assessment of specific duties required for a specific position. Following that, each individual officer's capabilities, experience and knowledge are taken into account and the appointment decision is based on objective assessment criteria. As I stated at the outset, this bill is about making sure that officers who are promoted are fully fit for purpose and have the best fit of knowledge, experience, capability and attributes for a specific role.

I mentioned earlier that in my electorate a lot of issues are based on rural crime in remote and regional areas. It is important to mention that these new processes for promotion must be followed in the bush as much as they are in metropolitan areas. I highlight the amazing work being done by Cameron Whiteside and his entire

group of investigators in the Rural Crime Prevention Team. I also commend the hardworking police men and women across the Orana Mid-Western Police District, who every day go above and beyond. I support the Police Amendment (Promotions) Bill 2020 and I commend the Minister for its introduction. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (10:33:43): I support the Police Amendment (Promotions) Bill 2020. I thank the Hon. David Elliot, MP, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, for introducing the bill to the House. The bill seeks to amend the Police Act 1990 and the Police Regulation 2015 to implement a merit-based and modernised promotion system for non-executive police officers, who include sergeants, inspectors and superintendents. The proposed amendments build upon changes introduced to Parliament in 2013 and emanate from a review conducted by the Hon. Lance Wright, QC, who is a former President of the Industrial Relations Commission.

The Commissioner of Police, Michael Fuller, APM—or Mick, as he has become known to all of us—undertook a promotions review in 2018-19. The bill includes changes that were discovered as a result of the review. The review sought advice and feedback from police officers through online mediums such as surveys, interviews and workshops. The proposed changes in this bill will allow for promotions to be awarded on the merit of a candidate matched to a specific advertised position, instead of officers being allocated from a promotions list to the next and upcoming available vacancy. Through those changes the processes of promotions will be equitable and fair, and will ensure that police leaders have the adequate skills needed to respond to the ever-changing crime patterns within society, as well as the rapidly changing needs of the community.

The proposed changes in the bill will update some of the current promotion arrangements. For example, the bill introduces a merit-based system for specific positions that replaces the concept of a promotions list. The previous concept would mean that a person at the top of the list is appointed to the next available position, irrespective of the particular skills required for the vacant position and whether that person's skills adequately match the position. The proposed changes for the bill maintain the rank-based assessment section of the existing promotions system but adds an additional position-based assessment component to ensure that the officer is both suitable for the rank of the position and suitable for the specific job.

The proposed changes will achieve that by requiring officers to apply and undergo a comparability assessment with other applicants who are deemed "fit for rank". Further, the new arrangements will require officers to pre-qualify in order to apply for advertised positions at a particular rank. Pre-qualification will maintain a requirement of a minimum number of years at their current rank, as stated in the current system. It will continue to include a rank-based review to ensure that the officer qualifies for the promotion on the basis of the required capabilities and skills for the higher ranked position. The new changes will require officers to demonstrate that they have the practical skills and effective knowledge related to the vacant promotion rank, as well as undergoing a management appraisal to evaluate their suitability for the position. The promotions review established that 90 per cent of police officers agreed with the notion that the current promotions system needed reform. The findings and recommendations from the review are mostly drawn from the experiences and feedback of the NSW Police Force.

The proposed changes in the bill will ensure that the NSW Police Force is able to identify the most suitable person for the available position, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, disability status and so on. It is appropriate that I take this time to thank our local police men and women who each day go out of their way to ensure the safety of our local communities. I thank my local police officers at the Liverpool City Police Area Command and the Sutherland Shire Police Area Command and their respective leaders, Superintendent Adam Whyte and Superintendent Jason Box.

Mr David Elliott: Hear, hear!

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS: I thank the Minister for his "Hear, hear!" The police officers at the Liverpool City Police Area Command and the Sutherland Shire Police Area Command are fabulous. We recently welcomed seven new recruits to the Sutherland Shire Police Area Command and six new recruits to the Liverpool City Police Area Command after more than eight months of world-class training at the academy. Obviously those recruits would have done it a little bit tough during the COVID crisis but they will add a much-needed boost to my local community. They will be a great help to my community as we continue to face the impact of the COVID-19 crisis and beyond, as well as looking after our communities in the future. They will also be in good hands under the leadership of Superintendent Whyte and Superintendent Box. Given that my electorate of Holsworthy takes in the suburbs of Barden Ridge and Sandy Point in the Sutherland shire, I do not have as much to do with Superintendent Box as I do with some other police officers, but I know that he does a great job and is supported by a great team of police officers.

Ms Gabrielle Upton: He used to be local superintendent.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS: The Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier and member for Vacluse can speak highly of Superintendent Box as well. I have a lot to do with Superintendent Whyte because his local area command covers approximately 90 per cent of my electorate. I will highlight some of the important work that Superintendent Whyte does within my local community and this will include something that is a little bit different. Superintendent Whyte has a fabulous sense of humour—often being the emcee at the Liverpool Rotary Police Officer of the Year awards—but he also gets what recognition by awards means to police officers. The awards are an opportunity for Rotary, on behalf of the community, to recognise the great work being done every day by officers of the Liverpool City Police Area Command. I thank the Rotary branches of Liverpool, Liverpool West and Liverpool Greenway—and particularly June Young, OAM—for continuing to run the awards to celebrate our local officers.

I look forward to attending the next event—either virtually or in person—which should be coming up soon. Every year June says it will be her last one and every year she does another. She is fabulous and we will miss her when it is eventually her last year. I know that both these police area commands go above and beyond for our community. They have implemented many different strategies to combat crime across south and south-western Sydney. The Liverpool police area command [PAC] has been utilising its officers to conduct proactive community policing initiatives and programs, including establishing the South Western Sydney Local Health District elder abuse and awareness working party. Stakeholders within south-western Sydney discuss elder abuse within the community, including case management, emerging and current trends, strategies, programs and events. That important work helps our community to feel safe in their own homes.

In addition, officers are part of Safely Home, which is a joint program with Dementia Australia and the New South Wales police that is directed at community members living with dementia. The program promotes registering the person on a central database and allowing easy identification in case of emergency. The person contacts a toll-free number or a police station and quotes the reference number shown on the bracelet, which is supplied after registration and worn by the person living with dementia. We hear too often that someone with dementia has gone missing and the community have a call-out for them. This will make it far easier to identify the person with dementia, get them help and return them to their families or to the place where they are living, which is so important to those worried families.

Liverpool PAC is active with youth liaison officer [YLO] programs, including the Prevent Alcohol & Risk-Related Trauma in Youth—P.A.R.T.Y.—Program, Project Shazam and the LoVE BiTES program. The P.A.R.T.Y. Program is coordinated by the trauma unit at Liverpool Hospital and is attended by high school students from south-west Sydney, who are encouraged to make positive decisions around risk-taking behaviours to reduce trauma amongst young people. As part of the program the YLO facilitates a presentation aimed at reducing trauma among young people on our roads. You know that the kids who come out of the P.A.R.T.Y. Program are going to be on the straight and narrow and making sensible decisions after what they witness in that program.

Project Shazam is facilitated annually for 10 consecutive weeks during the middle of the school year in partnership with Warwick Farm Neighbourhood Centre and Warwick Farm Primary School. The program includes a number of workshops that address domestic violence, cyber-safety, bullying, anger management, drugs and alcohol, healthy eating and women's health. The LoVE BiTES program is interesting. It is a school-based domestic and family violence program that aims to promote a model of respectful relationships for young people while introducing them to available service providers who can assist with domestic violence and family violence incidents. How important is that program? We are appreciative to have it running in our local community and to have those particularly skilled police officers looking after our young people and ensuring there is a safe place for them to go.

Mr David Elliott: The nation's finest.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS: They are the nation's finest, and we are lucky to have them. Young people know they have somewhere to go to get help. They have that two-way street of respect and assistance, which is particularly important. I spoke earlier about the Rotary Police Officer of the Year Awards. It is an opportunity to hear about some of the horrific work that our police officers do, the sleepless nights they must have and the dedication they have to their jobs and to making our community a safer and better place. I cannot fathom what they must see and I am particularly grateful to them for the work they do. I know that this program will reward them for the effort they put in and the skills they have. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (10:43:47): In reply: I thank all members who contributed to debate on the Police (Amendment) Promotions Bill 2020, including the member for Seven Hills and Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Justice; the member for Camden; the member for Goulburn, a former police officer; the member for Auburn; the member for Prospect; the member for Lakemba; the member for Heathcote; the member for Cootamundra; the member for Myall Lakes, a former

police officer; the member for Terrigal, who made some generous observations about those working behind the scenes to prepare this legislation; the member for Holsworthy; the member for Dubbo; and the member for Albury.

I am pleased with the bipartisan support from the members of this Chamber and, in particular, those who spoke in debate. Our police work very hard to keep us safe and this bill is a fitting and appropriate way for us to unite behind them. As members of Parliament, we see clearly that the current conditions of the COVID pandemic follow the worst bushfire season we have ever known. As noted by many speakers, these changes are an important means of ensuring the promotion of our best officers into positions of leadership in the organisation and into the wider community. The bill recognises their genuine commitment to hard work, their sacrifices, their professionalism and their technical skills. We are united in recognising the work of local police in electorates, from Coffee with a Cop in Seven Hills to the investigation of stock theft in Goulburn. There is a need for a promotion system that provides equal access to promotions and career progression.

I note that a number of speakers today and over the course of debate on the bill emphasised that the changes have the support of rank-and-file police officers, the Police Association and the executive of the NSW Police Force, which manages them so well. I thank all my colleagues for adding their voices in support of these very important changes. The bill provides for promotion of police officers to the rank of sergeant, inspector and superintendent based on the merit of a candidate matched to a specific advertised position rather than offers simply being allocated from a promotions list to the next available vacancy. The bill ensures that the Commissioner of Police can continue to manage his workforce effectively and efficiently, consistent with the broader community and government sector principles, to deliver a world-class police force.

I pause to commend Commissioner Fuller and his deputies who, in the past 18 months, have proven that the NSW Police Force provides world's best practice when it comes to a civilian police force. They have done it efficiently, effectively and without any unnecessary cause for concern within the community. I note that the Treasurer has arrived in the Chamber. He is happy to hear me give this speech because it is one of the few bills that will not cost him any money. The bill brings the NSW Police Force into line with the capability framework applying to the wider New South Wales public service whilst also retaining necessary police-specific elements. The promotions system review sought feedback from almost 3,500 officers through an online survey, interviews and also through workshops. The survey found that there was overwhelming internal support for an overhaul of the current promotions system.

As I said when I was briefing colleagues yesterday, it is a system that is 30 years old. The promotions principles enshrined in the bill were developed through the promotion steering committee comprising representatives from the NSW Police Force, the Police Association of NSW and a cross-section of Police Force employees, including field and specialist commands. The proposed amendments are the result of this consultation and reflect a balanced and well-negotiated model. I pay tribute to all those participants and stakeholders who I thought came to this negotiation with clean hands, and I think we provided a better policy based on respect and appreciation of the unique role of policing in today's society. I think a career in policing is one of the most challenging and rewarding that a person can choose to pursue—indeed, it is a calling.

Between sitting weeks I have made it a priority to visit many of our officers in regional centres and rural communities. I have visited the Delungra Police Station on Fossickers Way. I have visited police officers at the Byron Bay Police Station at the invitation of the member for Ballina, who is very keen to see police funding increased. I have visited officers and expected works at the Inverell Police Station with the member for Northern Tablelands. It is looking like it will be an impressive police station. I cannot wait to get up there with the agriculture Minister and the commissioner in the new year to open it. The officers there are very keen for that to occur. I had a barbecue breakfast with participants in the Youth Active Rewards Program in Coffs Harbour. I visited Cowra and Young police stations, and did a welfare check on officers working hard in those regional areas. I also did a welfare check on officers managing the border operations in both Albury and Tweed Heads, including officers from the Queensland police force who remarked on what a professional, courteous, well-trained, well-paid and well-organised police force we have in New South Wales.

The NSW Police Force has evolved, adapted and grown, and as 2020 has demonstrated, police officers may be called upon in times of national crisis such as bushfires and pandemics. They may also be called upon to respond to emergencies, conduct highly complex investigations, and undertake their day-to-day crime prevention and community policing work. They are extraordinary people who need our support, our respect and our current laws to do the job. They also need a promotions system that supports, encourages and rewards them. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

SUPERANNUATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2020**First Reading**

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Dominic Perrottet, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (10:51:57): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Superannuation Legislation Amendment Bill 2020. The purpose of the bill is to protect the pensions of New South Wales public service retirees from the effects of COVID-19. The public service retirees pension payments are linked to movements in the Sydney consumer price index [CPI]. Without this legislation, changes to the CPI due to COVID-19 will result in lower pension payments. We are taking action to ensure that public service retirees are not hit with an additional burden at what is a very challenging time for the people of New South Wales.

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected almost every aspect of our lives. It has demanded an unprecedented fiscal response from both Federal and State governments to safeguard the physical and mental health of our citizens and their social and financial wellbeing. That response has included a massive injection of public funding into households and businesses to keep them afloat. It has also included the elimination of a range of costs that households and businesses normally face. One of the most significant everyday costs eliminated for families was the cost of child care. This was the result of the Commonwealth Government's decision to make child care free during the lockdown period. As a result, the cost of child care fell by 95 per cent in the June quarter. This was a welcome relief for families doing their best to stay safe and keep working where possible.

However, one of the consequences of the fee-free child care policy was that removing this cost for households placed significant downward pressure on the Sydney CPI. The fee-free child care initiative contributed a negative change to the Sydney CPI of more than 1.4 per cent. In other words, if child care had not been made free, the CPI would have been 1.4 per cent higher than it was for the 2020 financial year. Other initiatives such as our Government's reduced preschool and primary education fees put downward pressure on the CPI. These COVID-19 relief measures were the major contributors to a 2.3 per cent fall in the Sydney CPI in the June quarter of 2020. More importantly, for the purposes of the bill, they contributed to an overall fall of 1.04 per cent in the Sydney CPI for the full year to June 2020. If the effect of the COVID-19 relief measures were eliminated, the Sydney CPI would have increased over the year to June. To put it another way, despite the fall in the Sydney CPI, the cost of living has increased over the past year for anyone who did not benefit from relief measures such as fee-free child care and preschool.

An annual fall in the Sydney CPI is almost unprecedented, having only ever happened two other times on record—in 1962 and in 1997. It is yet another indicator of the extraordinary period we are living through and the ongoing need to be responsive to new and unusual challenges. A fall in the Sydney CPI of greater than 1 per cent is of particular significance for nearly 67,000 members of our State's defined benefit superannuation schemes. These are New South Wales public service retirees who rely on a State pension for their income. The fall of more than 1 per cent is significant because in a number of legislative instruments that govern these schemes a fall of 1 per cent or more is the threshold for a corresponding reduction in pension payments. Without action by the New South Wales Parliament, pension payments under the relevant schemes would be automatically lowered by 1 per cent beginning in October this year. The principle of indexing pensions to the Sydney CPI is sound. It is intended to match movements in retirees' pensions to movements in their cost of living. What is now clear is that the effect of COVID-19 on the Sydney CPI does not align with this legislative intention.

The emergency relief measures of fee-free child care and free preschool and primary education were meant to lower the cost of living for working families and help get them through the pandemic. Obviously, they were not designed to provide cost-of-living relief to retirees, and nor do they. The right thing to do in these circumstances is to amend the relevant legislation so that pension payments do not fall at a time when the cost of living for retirees has not fallen. That is the purpose of the proposed amendments set out in the bill. The SAS Trustee Corporation [STC], commonly known as State Super, administers most of the affected

superannuation schemes and shares the Government's views that the proposed amendments reflect the original intention of the indexation mechanism and offer an effective and efficient solution to the problem that has arisen.

I turn now to the substance of the bill. In order to avoid a fall in pension payments, seven superannuation Acts and three regulations require amendment. I will refer to these in detail shortly. As I have already noted, the majority of these Acts and regulations already contain general CPI provisions which provide that pensions need only be adjusted downwards if the fall in the Sydney CPI is greater than 1 per cent. Where this is the case, the reference to "1.0 per cent" will be amended to "1.1 per cent".

In particular, schedules 1.2, 1.3 and 1.6 to 1.10 to the bill amend the general CPI provisions in the following Acts and regulations by replacing the reference to "1.0 per cent" with a reference to "1.1 per cent": the New South Wales Retirement Benefits Act 1972, the Police Regulation (Superannuation) Act 1906, the State Authorities Superannuation (Ex-Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority Superannuation Fund Transfer) Regulation 2003, the State Authorities Superannuation (Government Railways Superannuation Scheme Transfer) Regulation 1990, the State Authorities Superannuation (Transitional Provisions) Regulation 1988, the Superannuation Act 1916 and the Transport Employees Retirement Benefits Act 1967.

These amendments will ensure that the fall of 1.04 per cent in the Sydney CPI does not result in the need to lower retiree pensions. In addition to those Acts and regulations, the bill will provide additional flexibility and enable the Government to modify the threshold percentage by regulation. While the need to do so remains unlikely, it is prudent to be ready for that possibility given the unpredictable nature of the pandemic to date. Unlike the seven Acts referred to previously, two additional pieces of superannuation legislation require different treatment as they do not currently provide for a 1 per cent threshold. Specifically, this is the case for the Local Government and Other Authorities (Superannuation) Act 1927 and the Public Authorities Superannuation Act 1985. Under each of these Acts, any fall in the Sydney CPI is required to be passed onto pensions, with no minimum CPI reduction threshold.

To bring those Acts into line with the other Acts and regulations dealt with by the bill, schedules 1.1 and 1.4 to the bill amend the local government CPI provisions to provide for no adjustment to be made to superannuation pensions if the fall in the Sydney CPI is less than 1.1 per cent, or any other percentage prescribed by regulation. Those amendments will ensure the consistent treatment of retirement incomes for New South Wales public service retirees in the future. Schedule 1.5 to the bill also provides that further amendments can be made to the regulations associated with the State Authorities Superannuation Act 1987 to increase or decrease the CPI thresholds that would trigger a reduction in pension payments. Further details of each proposed amendment are set out in the bill. I note that the amendments contained in the bill would not have the effect of providing a double benefit to pensioners in the event that CPI increases in the 2021 fiscal year. Existing indexation mechanisms in the relevant Acts and regulations mean that such an increase in CPI would be measured against the 2019 CPI level rather than the 2020 CPI level.

I turn now to the financial impacts of the bill. STC's total pension payments in the 2021 financial year are expected to be in excess of \$3.2 billion. The proposed amendments are expected to create an additional cash outflow from STC of 1 per cent of this figure—a little over \$32 million in the 2021 financial year. This amount will be paid out of STC's funds. There will be no impact on STC's funds beyond that year. From the Government's perspective, the superannuation expense for accounting and budget purposes is driven by an accounting calculation rather than by the size of the cash contributions made to STC. In particular, the superannuation expense is a function of the 10-year Commonwealth Government bond interest rate, which is multiplied by the size of the total defined benefit liability. Because of this, the impact of the budget result of these amendments is very small. It is the Commonwealth 10-year interest rate, which is coincidentally around 1 per cent, multiplied by the change in the liability of the \$32 million that I mentioned before.

The budget impact is just over \$300,000, with no budget impact for the 2021 financial year. There will be no incremental increase to contributions to STC from government to gradually reinstate the \$32 million, which will continue until the full funding date in the Fiscal Responsibility Act is reached. Once again, this does not have an above-the-line budget impact. There is some urgency to the enactment of this bill because the annual adjustment takes effect from the first pension payment in October. Prior to that, STC must write to its members to advise them of the indexation adjustment that will be applied to pensions for the coming year.

This bill seeks to protect more than 67,000 of the State's retirees from suffering a fall in their pension benefits in an environment where their cost of living has risen, not fallen. It is another initiative by the Government to be responsive, adaptive and proactive in meeting the needs of the people as we navigate the challenges of COVID-19. The pandemic has touched everyone in New South Wales in some way. Our commitment is to continue to provide the support that every one of our citizens needs to stay afloat and get New South Wales on the path to a steady and safe recovery. The bill is another small but important step that will provide welcome support for tens of thousands of New South Wales retirees. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

**TRANSPORT ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENT (CLOSURES OF RAILWAY LINES IN
NORTHERN RIVERS) BILL 2020**

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Paul Toole, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (11:02:37): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of the Transport Administration Amendment (Closures of Railway Lines in Northern Rivers) Bill 2020 is to authorise the closure of two sections of non-operational railway line in the Northern Rivers region of New South Wales to enable the development of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail. The two sections run between Crabbes Creek and Condong and between Casino and Bentley. Legislation is required because section 99A of the Transport Administration Act 1988 (NSW) prevents the closure of a railway line unless authorised by an Act of Parliament. The land will remain in public ownership and each rail trail section will be managed by the relevant local council.

As was highlighted when the bill was before the House to authorise the closure of the Rosewood to Tumbarumba railway line in 2017, rail trails are an innovative use of non-operational railway lines that generate substantial economic and social benefits for local communities. By helping to unlock their potential we will stimulate local tourism and, most importantly in these times, we will provide an asset that improves the physical and mental health of its users. The rail line between Casino and Condong has not been in operation since 2004. Given the stunning location of the Northern Rivers, it is ideal for renewal as a vibrant new tourism attraction, building on the significant natural beauty of the region.

The New South Wales Government's first rail trail pilot, running from Rosewood to Tumbarumba in the Snowy Valleys local government area, was completed in April this year. I am proud to say that that pilot has been a huge success, with over 5,000 riders using the rail trail in July alone. That does not include all of the other walkers, runners and support crew who combine to bring a much-needed economic boost to Tumbarumba, Rosewood and the surrounding local communities. Most States in Australia already have multiple rail trails established, with more than 25 active trails in Victoria alone.

Section 99A of the Transport Administration Act 1988 requires that before a rail infrastructure owner can close a railway line outside a greater metropolitan region, the closure must be authorised by an Act of Parliament. That includes the removal of the tracks, which is a fundamental requirement of the repurposing of the corridor into a safe trail for pedestrians and cyclists. Accordingly, the Transport Administration Amendment (Closures of Railway Lines in Northern Rivers) Bill 2020 seeks to authorise the closure of the non-operational line between Crabbes Creek and Condong and between Casino and Bentley to progress two sections of rail trail along the corridor and to keep the closed corridor sections within public ownership.

The 24 kilometres of rail trail for stage one of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail from Crabbes Creek to Condong has received project and ancillary funding from the New South Wales Government totalling \$8.4 million. That is jointly funded by the New South Wales Government's Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund and the Regional Growth—Environment and Tourism Fund. The project also secured \$6.5 million from the Commonwealth Government in 2018. The 13 kilometres of stage two of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail from Casino to Bentley was funded in 2019 by the Commonwealth Government, which has committed \$7.5 million for the delivery of stage two.

A Tweed Valley rail trail steering committee has been established, chaired by members of Tweed Valley Council. Richmond Valley Council is also a participant and will be able to take away all of the relevant items of discussion, planning and lessons learnt from its own stage two section. The State is represented on the committee by the Department of Regional NSW, Transport for NSW and the NSW Department of Planning, Industry, and Environment (Crown Lands). The steering committee has helped to ensure good progress in the planning and consultation stages of the project. However, formal closure of the railway line is required to further progress the development of the rail trail.

I assure the House that the rail trail will remain under public ownership, which the bill specifically addresses in part 31, clause 229. Any government or public ownership model adopted will ensure that the land can easily be returned to Transport ownership, if this is ever necessary. The Government facilitated extensive community consultations in the Tweed shire in October 2017 and in the Richmond Valley Council area in February 2020. The member for Tweed has confirmed his strong support for stage one of the Northern Rivers Rail

Trail. The member for Clarence has also confirmed his strong support for the rail trail between Casino and Bentley. The member for Lismore has also publicly supported the rail trail. Further, a broad range of industry and community organisations have provided support in writing for the Northern Rivers Rail Trail project.

A strategic risk assessment was completed to address project risks. A specific 2019 biosecurity risk management plan has been prepared by New South Wales Local Land Services to manage both current and potential future risks. The trail will also employ several mitigation and management strategies to address potential risks of contact between animals and trail users, and trail users with neighbouring farms. These include appropriate public signage, warning about trespass and biosecurity obligations, private farm biosecurity signs and farm visitor notices and directions.

The trail user obligation signage will also include rules for the use of the rail trail relating to the treatment, handling and disposal of food, human waste and personal clothing to manage risks associated with soil and seed material. Fencing and barriers will also be a key trail design preventative measure to mitigate and manage the risk of transfer of disease between trail users, animals and neighbouring farms and properties. Other issues to be managed include road safety risks where the trail crosses roads, and issues regarding livestock containment and livestock access to watering points. Mitigation measures have been identified to address each of the risks and will be discussed in detail with affected neighbouring landowners.

Stage one of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail is the second pilot for rail trails in New South Wales. The differences in geography, environment, asset make-up and existing agreements require some different planning and problem solving to that of the Rosewood to Tumbarumba pilot. To this end, during the tender and construction phase of the project the agencies and councils will jointly investigate and put forward any initiatives to further enhance and make more viable this and other future rail trails, including the provision to capture existing and proposed commercial income for ongoing rail trail maintenance. Stages one and two of the Northern Rivers Rail Trail will have positive impacts on local communities and provide increased business and tourism opportunities for the surrounding region. They will also enable better access to this beautiful part of our State.

Mr Geoff Provost: Hear, hear!

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I note that the member for Tweed is in the Chamber today. He has been a strong advocate for this rail trail in his community—knowing the benefits that it is going to provide, knowing that he has the support of his councils and knowing that this is an issue that has been important to him for a number of years. The rail trail will also create and support local jobs, including during the construction phases of the trail. Local residents and visitors will also enjoy social, cultural and health benefits as a result of the trails. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

STRONGER COMMUNITIES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (COURTS AND CIVIL) BILL 2020

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Mark Speakman, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (11:14:00): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Stronger Communities Legislation Amendment (Courts and Civil) Bill 2020. The bill introduces a number of miscellaneous amendments to address developments in case law, support procedural improvements and close gaps in the law that have become apparent relating to courts and civil procedure. In particular these amendments will strengthen our community through improving court processes and integrity, improving civil procedure and the administration of trusts, and clarifying provisions of the Children's Guardian Act 2019 in relation to reportable conduct matters and the Children's Guardian's role as an independent regulator.

Miscellaneous amendment bills are typically introduced into Parliament each session as part of the Government's regular legislative review and monitoring program. However, this year, owing to the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, a miscellaneous amendment bill was not able to be introduced in the budget session of Parliament. Instead, four separate miscellaneous bills are being introduced in this session. The division of the proposals into four bills is necessary due to the large number of reform proposals and to assist parliamentary consideration.

I now turn to the detail of this bill. Schedule 1.2 to the bill will amend the Court Security Act 2005 to provide that transmitting or distributing a sound and/or video recording of court proceedings is an offence. It is currently an offence under section 9 of that Act to use a device to record sounds and images from a courtroom. Under section 9A it is an offence to transmit sounds or images of court proceedings. Neither of these offences apply in circumstances where the recording or transmission was authorised. This amendment provides that it is an offence to transmit or distribute a recording of court proceedings.

The maximum penalty for the offence will be 200 penalty units or imprisonment for 12 months, or both, which is consistent with the existing penalties for the offences under sections 9 and 9A of the Act. This amendment would prohibit recordings of court proceedings being shared without authorisation even where the original recording of the proceedings was authorised—for example, for the purposes of transcription. The inappropriate distribution or sharing of video recordings, including on social media, may pose a risk to vulnerable witnesses and interfere with the administration of justice.

Schedule 1.3 to the bill will amend the Criminal Records Act 1991 to require the disclosure of spent convictions of a person applying for appointment or employment within the Office of the Sheriff within the Department of Communities and Justice. This amendment would enable the Office of the Sheriff to see the full extent of a potential employee's criminal history. Employees of the Office of the Sheriff occupy a position of trust in the community and it is appropriate that the full criminal history of a person seeking employment in that office is disclosed.

Schedule 1.8 to the bill will amend the Judicial Officers Act 1986 to enable the power to suspend a judicial officer to be used where there is a formal request made under part 6A of the Act concerning the suspected impairment of a judicial officer. Currently section 40 of that Act only permits the appropriate authority to suspend a judicial officer where a complaint has been made or in limited other circumstances. This amendment would enable the suspension of a judicial officer if a request for investigation by the Judicial Commission has been made by the relevant head of jurisdiction under section 39B.

Schedule 1.8 to the bill also amends the Judicial Officers Act 1986 to enable directions hearings in the Conduct Division of the Judicial Commission to take place using audiovisual links and to enable the chairperson of the Conduct Division to sit alone for procedural mentions. The Act currently requires all three members of the Conduct Division to be present at a meeting of the division. This is unnecessary for certain cases, including a procedural mention. This amendment would ensure that the regular procedural steps available before other administrative bodies and tribunals would be available before the Conduct Division. This would enable the just, quick and cheap resolution of issues in proceedings before the Conduct Division.

Schedule 1.13 to the bill will amend the Supreme Court Act 1970 to expand the definition of a judge or member to include, first, a former or retired judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, the Land and Environment Court, the Dust Diseases Tribunal or the District Court of New South Wales; and, second, a current, former or retired judge of the Supreme Court of any other State or Territory, of the Federal Court of Australia or of the High Court of Australia. This amendment would address an anomaly in the legislation whereby a review of and an appeal against a decision of a former judge cannot occur in the Court of Appeal as it does not fall within the list of matters assigned to the Court of Appeal under section 48 of the Supreme Court Act. This proposal will ensure that reviews of and appeals against decisions of a former or retired judge of any Australian jurisdiction are properly assigned to the Court of Appeal.

I now turn to amendments in the bill that would improve civil procedure and the administration of trusts. Schedule 1.9 to the bill will amend the Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014 to enable additional functions to be delegated from the New South Wales Legal Services Commissioner to the Law Society Council and the Bar Council. The New South Wales Legal Services Commissioner is already permitted to delegate chapter 5 functions under the Legal Profession Uniform Law, which relate to disciplinary proceedings against lawyers. However, the commissioner has identified a need to clarify his power to delegate related functions under Part 11 of the Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014.

These are, first, the power to apply for an extension of time under section 137 to commence proceedings in the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal. Secondly, the power to agree to an instrument of consent under section 144. This will ensure that the Law Society Council and the Bar Council are able to perform these functions in relation to disciplinary proceedings commenced by them. Schedule 1.14 to the bill will make a number of amendments to the Trustee Act 1925 to improve the administration of trusts. Schedule 1.14 [4] to the bill amends that Act to permit the court to approve an arrangement varying or revoking a trust where this is beneficial to the interests of the beneficiaries or to the fulfilment of the trust purpose. Section 81 of the Trustee Act currently empowers the court to make orders relating to the management and administration of trust property that can be seen to be expedient.

The Court of Appeal has held that section 81 does not authorise the court to make orders for the variation of trusts, which will be beneficial to the interests of the beneficiaries or to the fulfilment of the trust purpose but which are not concerned with the management or administration of the trust assets. This amendment will ensure that the court can approve arrangements to vary or revoke trusts in these circumstances. There are legitimate reasons for which a trustee may seek to modify the terms of a trust in order to discharge their duty to a beneficiary. Set laws often create trusts without consideration to future circumstances and there may be a need to amend the trust to accommodate those circumstances in a way that is consistent with the intention of the settler. This would bring New South Wales law into line with the law in the United Kingdom and in other Australian States.

Schedule 1.14 [1] to the bill will amend the Trust Act 1925 to confer on the trustee the power to apply income or property held in trust for an adult beneficiary towards the adult beneficiary's maintenance, education or benefit. The power would apply only if and to the extent a contrary intention is not expressed in the instrument creating the trust. Where a trust does not provide for or prevent trust income from being used for the maintenance, education and benefit of the beneficiary, section 43 of the Trustee Act currently provides that trust income can be used for those purposes, but only for an infant.

The amendment modernises the application of section 43, which is premised on the assumption that a person would attain financial independence by 18. Most trusts are now set up for beneficiaries well into their mid-twenties, creating a period between a beneficiary turning 18 and when the trust vests in which the trust income cannot be applied for their maintenance and education. The amendment would bring New South Wales law into line with other Australian jurisdictions such as Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia, which enable trust income to be paid to an adult beneficiary for the duration of the trust.

Finally, schedule 1.14 [4] to the bill will amend section 44 of the Trustee Act to remove the limitation in this provision that prevents trust capital from being paid for the maintenance or education of an infant, where the trust property or the infant's share exceeds \$4,000. This amendment would remove the outdated limit of \$4,000, which was introduced in 1938 and is no longer an accurate reflection of the value of trust property. The limitation under section 44 (1) of the Trustee Act would continue to apply, being that where an infant is entitled to the capital of the trust property or any share of it, a trustee may only use up to half of the value of the property or share for the infant's maintenance, education, advancement or benefit.

I now turn to amendments in the bill that clarify provisions of the Children's Guardian Act 2019 in relation to reportable conduct matters and the Children's Guardian's role as an independent regulator. Work is underway to transfer existing regulations to the consolidated Children's Guardian Regulation under the Children's Guardian Act 2019. This consolidated regulation will streamline the regulatory environment by bringing together the Children's Guardian's powers, functions and responsibilities from three existing regulations. These existing regulations are the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012, the Adoption Regulation 2015 and the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) (Child Employment) Regulation 2015. A number of amendments are required to the Children's Guardian Act 2019 to ensure these existing regulations, made under the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 and Adoption Act 2000, can be made under the Children's Guardian Act 2019.

Specific amendments to the Act also confer relevant functions and powers on the Children's Guardian that are currently exercised by the Children's Guardian under existing regulations. These amendments will support the Children's Guardian in her role as an independent regulator. The amendments make clear the Children's Guardian's existing powers and functions, first, to accredit and register agencies that provide, arrange or supervise out-of-home care; second, to maintain relevant registers; and, third, to enforce codes of practice in relation to child employment. These amendments are set out in schedule 1.1 [9] to [20]. The amendments provide a stronger foundation for the Children's Guardian's independent oversight role and are engineered towards ensuring children who are placed in out-of-home care or involved with adoption services are kept safe.

The regulation-making power in section 72 of the Children's Guardian Act 2019 has been extended to provide for the surrender of a designated agency's accreditation and the withdrawal of an application for provisional accreditation or full accreditation. This amendment will address the gap in the legislation where a designated agency wishes to leave the sector or cease to provide services for children in statutory out-of-home care. Limits have been placed on the Children's Guardian's ability to set a date for the surrender of the agency's accreditation, being not more than six months after the notification, where it is necessary to protect the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or class of children. In very rare circumstances where the department needs to make arrangements for the care of children and young people who are in the surrendering agency's care, the notice period imposed by the Children's Guardian provides a sufficient period of time for transition. The department may need to commission services from other designated agencies to take on these placements.

Schedule 1.1 [1] to [7] to the bill will amend the Children's Guardian Act 2019 to clarify that a third party employer must report reportable allegations to the relevant entity. It is the intention of the Children's Guardian

Act 2019 that a third party employer contracting with a relevant entity to provide services to children on behalf of the relevant entity would be required to report allegations. However, under the Children's Guardian Act 2019, employees are defined to include contractors, but not third party employers. Employees, including contractors, have reporting obligations under section 27 (2). A third party employer may still report, but it is not obligatory. Currently, the Children's Guardian can suggest that relevant entities, such as a council, include contractual obligations about notifications of reportable allegations by those who contract with them—for instance, a swim school. However, those obligations cannot currently be legislatively enforced. This amendment will impose an express obligation on third party employers to report reportable allegations to the relevant entity, where the third party employer is providing services to children on the relevant entity's behalf. This amendment will help to keep children safe.

A new definition of "third party employer" will be inserted into the Children's Guardian Act to mean a person, other than a relevant entity, who engages another person to provide services to children on behalf of a relevant entity, including as a contractor. By establishing a link between the third party employer and relevant entity, the bill addresses a legislative gap and achieves the original intention underpinning extension of the reportable conduct scheme to contractors and sub-contractors of third party employers. Finally, schedule 1.1 [8] to the bill will amend the Children's Guardian Act to replace outdated references to the Ombudsman with the Children's Guardian, now that the reportable conduct scheme has transferred from the Ombudsman to the Children's Guardian.

I now turn to amendments in the bill that make necessary updates to various Acts. Schedule 1.4 to the bill amends the District Court Act 1973 to provide that an amount paid to the Treasurer pursuant to section 152 (1) should be placed in consolidated revenue, rather than in the special deposits account. This amendment is necessary as there is no special deposits account for the District Court in Treasury. This amendment adopts the approach taken by the Local Court, which pays unclaimed moneys into consolidated revenue. Schedule 1.5 and schedule 1.6 to the bill will amend the Electronic Transactions Act 2000 to extend the operation of provisions enabling the witnessing and attestation of documents to be conducted remotely through audiovisual link until the end of 2021.

Section 17 of the Electronic Transactions Act was introduced by the COVID-19 Legislation Amendment (Emergency Measures) Act 2020 in response to the impact on interpersonal contact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It allows regulations to be made to alter various arrangements, including the witnessing of signatures and the attestation of documents. The Electronic Transactions Amendment (COVID-19 Witnessing of Documents) Regulation 2020 was made on 22 April 2020 under the regulation-making power in section 17. The regulation enables the witnessing and attestation of documents to be conducted remotely through audiovisual link. The regulation can operate for no more than six months from its commencement on 22 April 2020, which is 23 October 2020. Under amendments in this bill, remote witnessing of documents via audiovisual link will continue to be allowed until the end of 2021. Provisions enabling remote witnessing will be transferred from the Electronic Transactions Regulation 2017 to the Electronic Transactions Act 2000.

This extension of remote witnessing arrangements will allow sufficient time for the department to assess the effectiveness of those arrangements and to consult with the legal profession and other stakeholders about whether longer-term reform is required. The extension in time also responds to the uncertainty presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing need to facilitate processes to execute important legal documents while maintaining physical distancing. Remote witnessing arrangements are not mandatory. Witnessing documents in person will continue to be available. The remote witnessing provisions do not remove existing safeguards associated with witnessing, so the witness must satisfy themselves of all the same things they would have to if they were witnessing a document in person.

The Electronic Transactions Amendment (COVID-19 Witnessing of Documents) Regulation 2020 also expanded the class of witnesses to statutory declarations to those authorised to witness Commonwealth statutory declarations. This provision will also be transferred to the Electronic Transactions Act in new section 14I. An Australian legal practitioner will also be authorised to witness written oaths, declarations or affidavits until the end of 2021 under new section 14H. Schedule 1.11 to the bill amends the Oaths Act 1900 to enable Federal judicial officers to witness a statutory declaration in New South Wales. This will bring New South Wales in line with positions in Queensland, Victoria and the Commonwealth.

Schedules 1.7 and 1.12 to the bill will relocate the provisions relating to the chain of representation for executors and associated provisions relating to the administration of estates from part 3, division 1 of the Imperial Acts Application Act 1969 to the Probate and Administration Act 1898. Where an executor of an estate dies before they have completed probate, their executor can step in and complete the administration of the first estate—this is known as the chain of representation. It is appropriate that these provisions in the Imperial Acts Application Act be located with the other provisions relating to the administration of deceased estates in the Probate and

Administration Act 1898. This change would promote the clarity and accessibility of the law by locating the provisions with others relating to the administration of deceased estates.

Schedule 1.9 to the bill amends the Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014 to appoint retrospectively a registrar of the Supreme Court as Manager, Costs Assessment. Section 93B of the Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014 provides for the Chief Justice of New South Wales to appoint a registrar of the Supreme Court as Manager, Costs Assessment. The Chief Justice made this appointment on 18 February 2020; however, the senior deputy registrar commenced the position in August 2016. This amendment will ensure that any actions or decisions made by the costs assessment manager between August 2016 and 17 February 2020 are valid. Schedule 1.10 to the bill amends the NSW Trustee and Guardian Act 2009 to provide that the NSW Trustee may meet liabilities incurred in exercising official functions from money appropriated from either the Consolidated Fund or the NSW Trustee's Reserve Fund. At present, the NSW Trustee and Guardian Act 2009 provides that any such liability is payable from the Consolidated Fund.

Finally, the bill also repeals the Courts Legislation Amendment Act 2004. Most of the amendments provided for in this Act have already been implemented, but schedule 5 has not commenced and is now outdated. The provisions in schedule 5 relate to appeal processes using the CourtLink information technology system, which is no longer used. Existing appeal processes are currently provided for in the Electronic Transactions Act 2000 and the Electronic Transactions (ECM Courts) Order 2005. The bill is an important part of the Government's regular legislative review and monitoring program. Many of the amendments in the bill are technical in nature and they are important steps towards further strengthening our justice system. They address emerging issues, support procedural improvements, clarify uncertainty and correct errors in legislation relating to courts and civil procedure. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

STRONGER COMMUNITIES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (CRIMES) BILL 2020

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Mark Speakman, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence) (11:38:42): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Stronger Communities Legislation Amendment (Crimes) Bill 2020. The bill introduces 22 miscellaneous amendments to 16 Acts. It addresses developments in case law, supports procedural improvements and closes gaps in the law that have become apparent relating to crimes. In particular, these amendments will strengthen our community through improving criminal investigation and supporting the management of young adults in custody. Miscellaneous amendment bills are typically introduced into Parliament each session as part of the Government's regular legislative review and monitoring program. However, this year, owing to the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, a miscellaneous amendment bill was not able to be introduced in the budget session of Parliament. Instead, four separate miscellaneous bills are being introduced in this session. The division of the proposals into four bills is necessary to assist parliamentary consideration due to the large number of reform proposals.

I now turn to the detail of the bill. Schedule 1.15 [1] and [2] to the bill amend section 4 of the Surveillance Devices Act 2007 to insert additional proceedings into the definition of "relevant proceedings", thereby enabling protected information to be used, published or communicated in those proceedings if necessary to do so. The amendment would enable the use of lawfully obtained surveillance device material in the following proceedings: first, proceedings before the State Parole Authority under parts 6 and 7 of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999; second, applications to an appropriate court under the Crimes (Serious Crime Prevention Orders) Act 2016; third, applications under the Crimes (Forensic Procedures) Act 2000; and, fourth, proceedings before the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal under section 75 (1) (a) and (f) of the Firearms Act 1996, being appeals against a decision to issue a licence or other permit and to make a firearms prohibition order. These proceedings have been identified by the NSW Police Force as proceedings where surveillance device material would be probative and would assist in decision making.

This amendment will ensure that lawfully obtained surveillance device material could be used to inform a decision to make or revoke a parole order, to make or revoke an intensive correction order or a reintegration home detention order, to make a serious crime prevention order, to order a forensic procedure and to inform an appeal against a decision to issue a licence or other permit or to make a firearms prohibition order under the Firearms

Act 1996. Schedule 1.15 [7] to the bill amends the Surveillance Devices Act 2007 to provide a limited exception to the requirement for law enforcement officers to apply for approval after using a surveillance device without a warrant in an emergency. The exception will apply if a law enforcement officer is using an optical surveillance device to observe activity only, not to record activity, and the circumstances under section 31 of the Surveillance Devices Act are met.

Under section 31 of the Surveillance Devices Act a law enforcement officer may use a surveillance device without a surveillance device warrant if the law enforcement officer, on reasonable grounds, suspects or believes that, first, an imminent threat exists of serious violence to a person or substantial damage to property or that a serious narcotics offence will be committed; second, the use of a surveillance device is immediately necessary for the purpose of dealing with that threat; third, the circumstances are so serious and the matter is of such urgency that the use of a surveillance device is warranted; and, fourth, it is not practicable in the circumstances to apply for a surveillance device warrant. Examples of devices that are intended to be covered by the new exception under section 33 include telescopic sights on firearms, binoculars and infrared equipment. These devices are regularly used by law enforcement officers to assist in operations—particularly in emergencies such as hostage situations, sieges and other tactical operations. The amendment will ensure that law enforcement officers are not deterred from using this kind of equipment to observe activity in an emergency situation.

Schedule 1.16 to the bill amends the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act 2002 to provide that a declaration made by the Commissioner of Police under section 24A applies to each location at which police officers are responding to an incident; and that the Minister may, for the purposes of the statutory review of the Act, require the Commissioner of Police to provide information about declarations made by the commissioner under part 2AAA. Section 24A of the Terrorism (Police Powers) Act enables the Commissioner of Police to declare that part 2AAA applies to a terrorist act to which police are responding. Part 2AAA provides that a police officer does not incur any criminal liability for the use of force—including lethal force—that is authorised under part 2AAA, in good faith and reasonably necessary to defend any person threatened by a terrorist act or to prevent their unlawful deprivation of liberty. Section 24A (2) currently provides that such a declaration "may be made in respect of the specified location at which police officers are responding and in respect of any other related specified location".

The requirement to declare a specified location may not be fit for purpose for evolving police responses to terrorist actions. Specificity of location description is particularly unhelpful in a situation with a mobile terrorist offender. The current wording of section 24A (2) may mean that either broad location descriptions or unnecessarily strictly defined locations are favoured, which may cause operational confusion. This goes against Parliament's intent in introducing part 2AAA, which was to provide certainty to police officers acting in an authorised manner to respond to a terrorist incident. The amendment clarifies the intent of section 24A, which is that the declaration and the attached immunity from criminal liability applies to police officers who are responding, in a manner authorised under section 24B, to a terrorist incident. The amendment is consistent with the wording of equivalent provisions in South Australia and Western Australia. The amendment does not in any way broaden the immunity afforded to police officers under part 2AAA; it merely addresses an operational issue that could hinder the making of a declaration.

The police action that is authorised by part 2AAA is the action taken in good faith in response to a declared terrorist incident that is for the purposes of a police action plan and that is reasonably necessary, in the circumstances as the police officer perceives them, to defend any persons threatened by the terrorist act or to prevent or terminate their unlawful deprivation of liberty. The second part of this amendment introduces an additional safeguard to part 2AAA to allow the Minister to require the Commissioner of Police to provide information about declarations made under part 2AAA for the purposes of the regular statutory reviews of the Act.

Schedule 1.3 to the bill amends the Court Suppression and Non-publication Orders Act 2010 to extend the time limit for commencing a prosecution in the Local Court for an offence of contravening a suppression order or non-publication order from six months to two years. The current time limit to commence prosecutions under this Act does not reflect the myriad ways information can now be communicated and published and the resulting complexities of discovering or obtaining evidence of the offence. It is particularly difficult and time-consuming for the police to obtain the required evidence when individuals breach these orders via social media platforms, which may have headquarters overseas. This amendment will enable more effective and appropriate prosecutions. The amendment will also align the time limit for commencing a prosecution under the Court Suppression and Non-publication Orders Act 2010 with the time limit applying to similar offences under the Children (Criminal Proceedings) Act 1987 and the Crimes Act 1900.

I now turn to the amendments in the bill to support the management of young people in custody. Schedule 1.2 [3] amends the Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987 to enable Corrective Services NSW staff to

transport juvenile detainees designated as National Security Interest [NSI]. A detainee with terrorism-related charges, convictions or associations or who has expressed support for terrorism or violent extremism may be designated as NSI when there is a risk that the detainee may engage in, or incite other persons to engage in, activities that constitute a serious threat to the peace, order or good government of the State or any other place. As of 27 August 2020 there were three juvenile detainees designated as NSI, all of whom are over 18 years old. This amendment would authorise Corrective Services NSW staff to transport NSI-designated juvenile detainees between detention centres, courts, hospitals and other places when requested by Youth Justice NSW.

Corrective Services staff will be able to exercise all the powers they exercise when transporting adult offenders, including the use of force that is reasonably necessary to exercise their functions, the carrying of firearms, the use of armoured vehicles and the ability to conduct searches in the same manner in which inmates are searched. The same safeguards for conduct of searches by Corrective Services officers will apply. This amendment addresses a need identified by Youth Justice for increased security while transporting NSI detainees. Youth Justice staff currently provide all transports and escorts for juvenile detainees. Youth Justice staff are not armed, nor do they have access to armoured vehicles. Youth Justice and Corrective Services are establishing a Joint Protocol to support the implementation of this amendment and to ensure that young adult inmates are transported safely. This amendment is necessary to address any risk posed to Youth Justice staff and to the community.

Schedule 1.2 [2] to the bill amends the Children (Detention Centres) Act to provide that a person who is of or above the age of 18 but under the age of 21 is not to be detained in a Youth Justice detention centre if the person is, or has previously been, detained as an inmate in an adult correctional centre for a period of, or periods totalling, more than four weeks; or the person has previously been transferred from Youth Justice custody to Corrective Services custody under section 28 of the Children (Detention Centres) Act. This amendment will ensure that these offenders remain in adult custody unless an order is made by the Minister under section 10 (1) of the Children (Detention Centres) Act directing the transfer of the offender from a correctional centre to a detention centre. Young adult inmates who previously have been transferred out of Youth Justice custody under section 28 have been assessed as unsuitable for Youth Justice custody. It is therefore appropriate that these young people remain in adult custody for the duration of their sentence.

This amendment is necessary to overcome operational and service challenges faced by Youth Justice when dealing with young people for offences committed as a child. These operational challenges may arise when a young adult inmate is required to serve the unexpired portion of a juvenile sentence upon the expiration of a concurrent adult sentence, for example. Young adult inmates who have spent four or more weeks in adult custody are also, in most cases, more appropriately managed in adult custody. This amendment will support the professional decision-making of Youth Justice staff and will promote the effective management of both adult offenders and younger detainees, as well as the effective operation of youth detention centres.

I now turn to the amendments in the bill that align certain provisions of the Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987 with the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999. Schedule 1.2 [7] to [8] to the bill amends section 91 of the Children (Detention Centres) Act to ensure that the provision operates as intended. This provision was intended to ensure that the Children's Court may withhold any document in parole proceedings from any person where satisfied it is in the public interest to do so, and is not required to provide information about any part of the content of a report or other document withheld from a person if it is satisfied it is in the public interest and that the public interest outweighs any right to procedural fairness that may be denied by not providing the information.

Currently, the information protection provisions under section 91 apply only if a provision of Part 4C of the Children (Detention Centres) Act or the regulation, in short, an information requirement, requires a person to be provided with a copy of a report or document, or any part of the report or document, or information contained in a report or document. There is no such information requirement in the Children (Detention Centres) Act or the regulations. Consequently, section 91 has no work to do. Section 91 was inserted into the Children (Detention Centres) Act as part of the 2017 reforms to parole in New South Wales, which created a separate statutory framework for youth parole. It was intended to have the same effect as section 194 of the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999, which allows the State Parole Authority to withhold documents and information contained in documents in adult parole proceedings where it is in the public interest to do so. This amendment gives the Children's Court the same discretion to withhold documents and information contained in documents in youth parole proceedings where it is in the public interest to do so.

Schedule 1.10 to the bill amends uncommenced provisions of the Children (Detention Centres) Act made under the Justice Legislation Amendment Act (No. 3) 2018. Items [1] and [2] will provide legislative guidance to Youth Justice NSW about what information, related to the administration of the Children (Detention Centres) Act, may and may not be disclosed, in order to ensure that particular information related to detainees is protected from

unlawful disclosure. Item [3] amends the uncommenced section 102B of the Children (Detention Centres) Act to allow the Secretary of the Department of Communities and Justice to enter into an information-sharing arrangement with an Australian intelligence agency.

This will expand information-sharing provisions beyond the current scope of the uncommenced provision, in which the secretary is permitted to share prescribed information with a law enforcement agency or a government agency of a State or Territory that corresponds with Youth Justice NSW. These amendments are required to maintain consistency with the equivalent provisions under the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999 in respect of information held by Corrective Services NSW, which have been amended since the drafting of the Justice Legislation Amendment Act (No. 3) 2018.

I now turn to the remaining amendments in the bill that are more technical in nature. Schedule 1.4 to the bill amends the Crimes Act 1900 to protect persons from prosecution for an offence of concealing a serious indictable offence, where the offence arises from the person respecting the wishes of an adult victim of sexual or domestic violence to not have information reported to authorities. Currently, section 316 of the Crimes Act requires a person who knows or believes that a serious indictable offence has been committed, and who knows or believes that they have information that might materially assist in the investigation and prosecution of the offender, to bring that information to the attention of the NSW Police Force or another appropriate authority. Where the person fails to do so without reasonable excuse, they will have committed an offence carrying a maximum penalty of between two years and five years' imprisonment, depending on the seriousness of the offence the information relates to.

Section 316 does not currently specify what might constitute a reasonable excuse for failing to bring relevant information to the attention of authorities. The bill amends section 316 to state that a person will have a reasonable excuse where the information relates to a sexual offence or domestic violence offence, the alleged victim is an adult at the time that the person obtains the information, and the person believes on reasonable grounds that the alleged victim does not wish to have the information reported to authorities. The amendment is not intended to limit what might constitute a reasonable excuse for the purposes of section 316. It will continue to be possible for a reasonable excuse to be made out in circumstances other than those involving the wishes of a victim of domestic or sexual violence. The amendment, however, will ensure that persons such as professionals who provide support services to an adult victim of sexual offences or domestic violence are not required to report information to authorities in contravention of the victim's wishes.

I thank and acknowledge important victims support groups for bringing the need for this amendment to the attention of the Government, including Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia and the NSW Domestic and Family Violence and Sexual Assault Council. I especially thank Karen Willis, OAM, for advocating for these reforms. For those who have experienced sexual or domestic violence, there should be no barriers to reporting the offence to whom they choose. One of the central tenets of a trauma-informed approach is the need to support victims, recognising their choice and autonomy in deciding what action should be taken to respond to the offending against them. This reform strengthens the response of the criminal justice system in New South Wales to serious sexual and domestic violence offences, and provides clarity and certainty for support providers.

Schedules 1.5 and 1.7 to the bill amend the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999 and the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 1999 to clarify that a reference to a condition or obligation that a person not commit any offence is a reference to any offence, whether committed in New South Wales or in any other State or Territory. The obligation to not commit any offence applies as a standard condition for all parole orders, reintegration home detention orders, intensive correction orders, community correction orders and conditional release orders. These amendments clarify the policy intent of imposing this condition by explicitly providing that an offender subject to any of these orders is not to commit any offence in any Australian jurisdiction.

Schedule 1.6 [1] to [3] to the bill amends the Crimes (Appeal and Review) Act 2001 to provide that the functions of the Minister under sections 5 and 77 are functions of the Attorney General as first law officer. Section 5 of the Crimes (Appeal and Review) Act allows applications for annulment of a conviction or sentence made or imposed by the Local Court to be made to the Minister by any person. The Minister, if satisfied that a question or doubt exists as to the defendant's guilt or as to the defendant's liability for a penalty, may refer the application to the Local Court. Section 77 of the Crimes (Appeal and Review) Act enables the Minister to deal with petitions for a review of a conviction or sentence. Currently, I exercise these functions as the Minister administering the Crimes (Appeal and Review) Act. However, because the provisions do not currently specifically confer those functions on the Attorney General, this prevents these functions from being delegated to the Solicitor General for New South Wales. This amendment would enable this delegation and bring New South Wales into line with all other jurisdictions in Australia that specifically confer these functions or similar functions on the Attorney General or first law officer.

Schedule 1.6 to the bill amends section 69 of the Crimes (Appeal and Review) Act 2001 in order to include references to community correction orders and conditional release orders, which were introduced under sentencing reforms that commenced in 2018. This will ensure that where an appeal court confirms the sentence on appeal, any good behaviour bond, community correction order or conditional release order arising from the original sentence will continue to have effect according to its existing terms, except as otherwise directed by the appeal court. Schedule 1.8 [2] amends the Criminal Records Act 1991 to provide that it is not an offence for a member of staff of Corrective Services NSW to inadvertently disclose information concerning a spent conviction, if making the information available is not an offence under the Crimes (Administration of Sentences) Act 1999 and the person employed by Corrective Services NSW does not know the conviction is a spent conviction.

Various organisations request and require an offender's criminal history from Corrective Services NSW, including service providers working with offenders in the community. Information held by Corrective Services NSW only captures the information required to administer the sentence at the time it was imposed. This means that Corrective Services NSW staff are not able to identify whether a person's conviction is spent. Further, the convictions in the criminal history reports disclosed by Corrective Services NSW may become spent in the future. Organisations rely on the criminal history reports provided by Corrective Services NSW in order to assess an offender's history, needs and risk of reoffending to ensure accurately targeted services are provided to an offender based on their risk of reoffending, which includes a consideration of their past convictions, and to take necessary steps for the health and safety of their staff, volunteers and offenders. This amendment would provide Corrective Services NSW staff with protection for the inadvertent release of spent convictions information. It will still be an offence for a Corrective Services NSW staff member to release information that the staff member knows is spent convictions unless another exemption under the Criminal Records Act applies.

Schedule 1.8 [1] to the bill amends the Criminal Records Act to clarify that all non-conviction conditional release orders are spent when the order is successfully completed. Section 8 (4) of the Criminal Records Act currently provides that a non-conviction conditional release order subject to one or more additional conditions is spent on satisfactory completion of the order. It does not explicitly provide for when such an order that is subject only to standard conditions—namely, not to commit an offence and to attend court when called on to do so—will be spent. This amendment will remove that ambiguity and clarify the policy intent that all non-conviction conditional release orders are spent when the order is successfully completed.

Schedule 1.9 to the bill amends schedule 1 to the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act 1985 to correct the entry for delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol, which I will refer to as dronabinol. Dronabinol is a cannabis-based medicinal product that is a prohibited drug under the Drug Misuse and Trafficking Act. Schedule 1 to that bill lists prohibited plants and drugs. The current entry for dronabinol provides that it is a prohibited drug "where prepared and packed for therapeutic use". This amendment removes those words and therefore gives effect to the policy intent that dronabinol is a prohibited drug irrespective of its presentation. The amendment does not affect the lawful possession of dronabinol, such as by way of prescription, in accordance with the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 1966.

Schedule 1.11 to the bill amends the Law Enforcement (Powers and Responsibilities) Act 2002 to enable a police officer to enter premises where they believe on reasonable grounds that a person who has died, otherwise than as a result of an offence, is on the premises and there is no occupier on the premises to consent to the entry. Before entering on these grounds, the police officer must obtain approval to do so, orally or in writing, from a police officer of or above the rank of inspector. This amendment would enable police officers to enter premises in these circumstances to perform necessary duties—for example, issuing a death certificate, notifying the family, ensuring a deceased person is taken to the morgue and securing the premises. The amendment would not empower police officers to enter where another occupier is present and does not consent to police entering the premises.

Schedule 1.12 to the bill makes consequential amendments to a number of Acts to provide necessary updates reflecting the reforms introduced by the not yet commenced Mental Health and Cognitive Impairment Forensic Provisions Act 2020. In particular, the bill amends schedule 3 to that Act to rename the defence of "mental illness" to the defence of "mental health impairment and cognitive impairment", and to rename the special verdict of "not guilty by reason of mental illness" to the special verdict of "act proven but not criminally responsible because of mental health impairment and cognitive impairment" in certain provisions of the Civil Liability Act 2002, the Crimes (Appeal and Review) Act 2001 and the Forfeiture Act 1995. Schedule 1.13 to the bill omits the not yet commenced schedule 3 to the Mental Health (Forensic Provisions) Amendment (Victims) Act 2018, as identical provisions are now in force under sections 30M and 30L of the Crimes (Sentencing Procedure) Act 2018.

Schedule 1.14 to the bill amends the Scrap Metal Industry Act 2016 to enable corporations to provide a single notice of authority consenting to the sale of scrap metal to a scrap metal dealer, which can cover subsequent transactions. Finally, I turn to the amendments to the Surveillance Devices Act 2007 in schedule 1.15 to the bill.

Schedule 1.15 [3] and [5] amends sections 18 and 26 of the Surveillance Devices Act, first, to remove the outdated requirement for an affidavit supporting a remote application for a surveillance device warrant to be transmitted by facsimile; and, second, to enable such an affidavit to be transmitted by any other means of communication, including email. These amendments also add an additional ground on which a remote application may be made, including where an eligible judge or eligible magistrate who is to determine the application requests that it is made that way.

Schedule 1.16 [8] to the bill amends section 33 of the Surveillance Devices Act to allow remote applications to be made for approval of the emergency use of a surveillance device, where the eligible judge who is to determine the application so requests. The bill is an important part of the Government's regular legislative review and monitoring program. Many of the amendments in the bill are technical in nature and they are important steps towards further strengthening our justice system. They address emerging issues, support procedural improvements, clarify uncertainty and correct errors in legislation. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

ROAD TRANSPORT AMENDMENT (DIGITAL LICENSING) BILL 2020

First Reading

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

Second Reading Speech

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (12:10:29): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Road Transport Amendment (Digital Licensing) Bill 2020. The bill will give a digital driver licence [DDL] the very same status as that of the plastic licence card. This means that any time a New South Wales driver licence holder is required by law to produce their licence they can choose to do so using their plastic card or their DDL. This is a natural next step, given the success and popularity of the DDL, and is a significant step forward in advancing the New South Wales Government's commitment to digital transformation.

The DDL went live in October last year and within only 10 days 750,000 customers had opted in. Now over 1.7 million people have downloaded the digital driver licence, or around 31 per cent of all driver licence holders in New South Wales. There are around 2,000 new DDL downloads each day. Customer satisfaction with the DDL is overwhelmingly positive, tracking at an impressive 95 per cent. Of the 192,000 people who have given feedback, 182,000 gave the DDL the thumbs up. That is extraordinary given that, historically, people do not rate highly government service delivery. To have a rating of 95 per cent is just extraordinary.

Service NSW has made it very easy for customers to provide feedback on the DDL through the Service NSW app and customers tell us every day that it is convenient and easy to use. Just in the last week customers said that the DDL is simple and efficient, easy to set up and so easy to use if they forget their wallet. The popularity of the DDL has resulted in a strong customer expectation that the DDL can be used in all situations where customers can use a plastic licence card. The DDL does not replace the plastic card but provides an additional option for customers who find it easier and more convenient to use. The bill does not change the use of a plastic card.

The bill ensures that if a customer chooses to use the DDL they will be able to rely on it to satisfy any legal requirement obliging them to produce their driver licence. Such circumstances include buying pseudoephedrine, buying from a second-hand dealer and buying explosives and various other transactions with government. The DDL not only offers convenience but also provides greater security assurances than does the plastic licence card. It uses unique and easily identifiable features that demonstrate that the DDL is live, such as the animated New South Wales Government logo and the New South Wales waratah hologram as well as the last refreshed date and time.

With basic information and training, the DDL is far easier to authenticate and validate than is the plastic licence card. The NSW Police Force verifies driver licences using a device called MobiPol. MobiPol devices are available to meet the requirements of highway patrol and other officers in the field, providing benefit to both citizens and police officers in the field by making roadside checks easier and allowing New South Wales police officers to suspend a driver licence in real time. By giving the DDL the same status as a plastic licence card, the bill will make the experience of using a DDL even simpler and more consistent. It will provide further industries with greater benefits, which are already experienced by the liquor and gaming industry.

A key industry that will benefit from this bill is pharmacies. Pharmacists are required by law to verify identity by using a driver licence for the sale of pseudoephedrine. The added security features of a DDL give

additional assurance to pharmacists during such transactions, which involve a risk of fraud. Furthermore and importantly, in the context of COVID-19 the DDL provides a no-contact option for conducting identity checks. Service NSW already has been working with pharmacists and other industries to prepare them to recognise and validate a DDL. On 3 July 2020 Service NSW began a pilot with five community pharmacies to ensure there are no barriers to accepting the DDL for proof of identity. Feedback from both pharmacists and customers has been positive.

The Government is also working closely with other States and Territories, in particular their police forces, liquor and gaming regulators and peak bodies, to ensure they are ready to recognise and accept the New South Wales DDL. Throughout its development, the DDL program has been subjected to a number of privacy impact assessments. My department has worked closely with the Privacy Commissioner to ensure that the personal information dealt with when a DDL is used remains secure. Let us not forget that the DDL is an end-to-end digital product. The DDL is subject to a regular ethical hacker program to ensure that robust security measures are in place. Most recently, a short form privacy impact assessment was completed on these legislative changes and found them to be low risk. During the time the DDL has been live there have been no increases of driver licence-related complaints reported by the Information and Privacy Commission or the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, despite over 1.7 million downloads.

The bill will enable further improvements to the security of the DDL by allowing the DDL to be validated directly against the New South Wales driver licence register. This will bring the DDL into alignment with international standards for digital identity documents and pave the way for the DDL to be verified across jurisdictions. As well as expanding the use of the DDL, the Road Transport Act Amendment (Digital Driver Licensing) Bill 2020 will create a legal framework for customer-driven sharing of photos and information among licensing authorities. Amendments to the Licensing and Registration (Uniform Procedures) Act will update the existing photo-sharing provisions to ensure all licensing authorities can easily enter arrangements to share customer information, with the customer's consent.

Customers have told us that they are frustrated by having to provide information to government more than once. Currently a person applying for a licence to undertake high-risk work or a contractor licence has to attach a passport-style photo to a paper licence application. This person has to spend time, effort and money going to a retail outlet and paying for a passport-style photograph, going to Service NSW in person and waiting for counter service to lodge their application, even if previously they have provided their photo to government. If the applicant does not have a valid photo when they lodge their application, Service NSW will send them away to have a photo taken and printed correctly and Australia Post will charge for a photo to be taken.

The amendments in this bill will pave the way for government agencies to share photos and other information, with customers' consent, so that in the future someone applying for a high-risk work or other licence will only have to agree to use their driver licence photo and the government will do the rest. This is one way that we are pursuing the priority of government made easy and continuing to increase the number of transactions where a customer needs to tell government once only. By making the DDL equal in legal status to the plastic card and creating a framework with customer-driven information sharing, the bill builds on the success of the DDL and further secures New South Wales as a leader in digital innovation and customer service. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

LIQUOR AMENDMENT (24-HOUR ECONOMY) BILL 2020

First Reading

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

Second Reading Speech

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (12:20:07): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Liquor Amendment (24-hour Economy) Bill 2020. The bill is part of this Government's vision for a vibrant, modern and safe 24-hour economy. When we started developing these laws late last year, we could not have predicted that a pandemic was about to sweep across the globe. As we chart a path towards economic recovery, now more than ever we need to focus on supporting business through smarter, data-driven regulation.

On 28 November 2019 this Government announced an important package of liquor law reforms. The initial reforms commenced on 14 January this year. They included removal of patron lockouts and drinks restrictions from venues in the Sydney CBD precinct. Those reforms represented the first stage of the Government's response

to the Joint Select Committee on Sydney's Night Time Economy. Furthermore, exhibiting the Government's nuanced and considered approach to invigorating the 24-hour economy in our great city, on 14 September 2020 the Treasurer and Minister Ayres announced the 24-hour Economy Strategy. This Government understands that the night-time economy is about so much more than alcohol.

The strategy recommends 39 actions across five strategic pillars that will reduce red tape, improve mobility across our city and make it an easier place to do business and to go out at night. These action items will be implemented over the coming months and years to support the recovery of our economy as we come out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Today, the Government is introducing a bill to support the Government's response. The bill will implement the measures in our liquor reform package that required public consultation, targeted stakeholder discussions and legislative change. We plan to phase these new reforms in from December this year onwards.

The next stage of the Government's response, which I intend to present to Parliament in the first half of 2021, will involve further consolidation and simplification of liquor licensing and planning laws, consistent with recommendation 15 of the committee's report. This aligns with the Government's desire to deliver a "Service NSW approach" to business regulation. Whether it is digitalisation of the planning system or modernising outdated liquor laws, we want to make dealing with government as painless and seamless as possible for business. The measures in the bill will provide important foundations to support and invigorate the 24-hour economy. These will be built upon significantly in future through the comprehensive initiatives in the Government's 24-hour Economy Strategy.

This bill has four key components. Schedule 1 to the bill establishes an integrated incentives and sanctions system for licensed venues. Schedule 2 provides a framework to help manage and assess liquor licence applications through cumulative impact assessments. Schedule 3 enhances the regulation of same-day alcohol delivery. Schedule 4 supports small bars by making it faster and easier to begin trading and to offer more diverse family-oriented services. It also makes a range of other miscellaneous changes, including to make it easier for venues to obtain approval to offer live music and entertainment.

I turn now to the detail of the bill. Schedule 1 to the bill establishes a new integrated incentives and sanctions system. Over the past 10 years to 15 years we have seen an accumulation of well-intentioned laws designed to curb anti-social behaviour, violence and other negative impacts relating to excessive consumption of alcohol. While these laws have served their purpose, we are now in 2020 and it is incumbent upon us to try to find a better way. We are confident there is a better approach and we believe that is achieved in this bill through the consolidation of the existing Three Strikes, Violent Venues and Minor Sanctions schemes into a single, integrated system based on demerit points. The new system seeks to reward and incentivise well-run venues, minimise violence and reduce serious contraventions of the liquor laws.

There is already a comprehensive range of offences and penalties under the Liquor Act that enable the police and regulators to take action against businesses and individuals who do the wrong thing. The new system will see the most serious offences subject to higher penalties and carry greater consequences. Under the new system, demerit points will be imposed in two ways. First, demerit points are automatically incurred for the most serious liquor law breaches. These "demerit offences" include, for example, permitting intoxication or violence on licensed premises. Selling or supplying liquor to a minor will attract double demerits. This reflects the serious nature of this offence and the Government's continued commitment to minimise risks of harm from alcohol to minors.

Demerit points will attach to licensees and managers of licensed premises, except for registered clubs where demerit points will be incurred against a club's licence. This is consistent with the approach under the existing Three Strikes scheme and directly targets the irresponsible operators in breach of the liquor laws. Second, demerit points can be imposed by the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority where there is a pattern of serious incidents or ongoing compliance concerns with a venue. Under a prescribed complaint process, the Secretary of the Department of Customer Service or the Commissioner of the NSW Police Force can make complaints to the authority about these priority venues. Complaints can be made by police or regulators where venues are observed encouraging risky drinking, permitting frequent intoxication or violence, or putting public health or safety at risk.

The authority can decide to impose one or two demerit points for a prescribed complaint after taking into consideration a range of factors, such as the nature and seriousness of the complaint, as well as the size and patron capacity of the venue. The current complaint procedures for disciplinary matters under part 9 of the Liquor Act will apply, providing procedural fairness. I am pleased to say that this new system also introduces positive incentives to encourage well-managed venues and ongoing good behaviour. The Government wants to recognise these venues and the fundamental role they play in shaping a 24-hour economy that is both safe and vibrant. This is consistent with recommendation 26 of the committee's report.

Under the bill, venues that maintain a clear record with no demerit points will be entitled to discounts on their annual liquor licence fees. This includes a 5 per cent discount on the base fee and the trading hours risk loading after three years, increasing to a 10 per cent discount after five years. Venues where demerit points have been incurred or imposed will not be eligible for the discount. In fact, they will have to pay additional licence fees as part of their annual compliance risk loadings. In this way they will contribute more towards the costs of regulating the industry. The Government will maintain a public register of active demerit points. As demerit points accumulate, Liquor & Gaming NSW will intensify its engagement with venues and can increase its monitoring and supervisory efforts.

After two or more demerit points, the authority will also do a case review to carefully examine the circumstances and may take additional remedial action as demerit points increase. This is similar to existing approaches under the Three Strikes and Minor Sanctions schemes. The authority may consider a range of factors when deciding whether to take remedial action. They include whether the venue has been proactive in making changes to address the issues and, importantly, whether these changes are working. Venues will receive a notice of any proposed remedial action. They will also be given the opportunity to respond with submissions. The scope and severity of this remedial action escalates as demerit points increase. Actions range from a reprimand and imposing new licence conditions and training requirements, to a temporary licence suspension or, for registered clubs, disqualification of the club secretary or a governing body member.

Demerit points will automatically expire after three years; however, licensees and managers can apply to the authority for early removal in certain circumstances. The authority can consider immediate removal of the demerit point where the licensees and managers show that they took steps to address the related risks and have a long record of good compliance. However, immediate removal is not possible for demerit offences that involve serious harm to a person, or selling or supplying liquor to a minor. In other cases, licensees and managers will need to wait at least 12 months before they can apply to remove demerit points. This is so they can demonstrate that they took appropriate measures over the 12 months to actively address the risks that led to the demerit point.

The bill ensures demerit points that are removed early can be reinstated, if, for example, false or incomplete information was provided during the application process. Local police and the local consent authority will be given reasonable opportunity to make submissions on applications to remove demerit points. There is a right of appeal to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal on decisions by the authority to take remedial action and on applications to remove demerit points. The new integrated system aims to incentivise positive behaviour while making it easier for venues to understand and comply with their obligations. It is a risk-based regulatory approach that will support the Government's vision for a safe and vibrant 24-hour economy. We are all for a risk-based regulatory approach.

I turn now to schedule 2 to the bill, which introduces a new framework for issuing cumulative impact assessments [CIA]. This evidence-based framework will help manage the density of licensed premises in areas of concern, particularly for higher impacted premises such as hotels, clubs, nightclubs and bottle shops. It aims to address related cumulative impacts that may arise in the community, including the risks of alcohol-related violence and antisocial behaviour. The bill empowers the Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority [ILGA] to publicly issue a cumulative impact assessment. It can do this after carefully examining the density or amount of late-night trading premises in a particular area. The authority may issue an assessment if, due to the existing issues or risks, it considers that granting further licences or late-night trading in that area is likely to be inconsistent with its existing duty under the Liquor Act to ensure community wellbeing. The assessment must include a map of any such cumulative impact area along with relevant data and evidence used to inform the authority's opinion.

Assessments will be informed by geospatial data and tools to map venue density and potential related impacts on the community, such as alcohol-related violence, crime and offensive behaviour. This allows for a nuanced assessment of the impacts and risks down to a block-and-street level. Issuing a cumulative impact assessment will create a strong presumption against the authority granting applications for new licences or approving more late-night trading in any identified cumulative impact areas, but the authority is not automatically prevented from approving these applications.

Like all applications under the Liquor Act, the authority will consider each application on its own merits. Applicants that show sufficient evidence of an overall positive social impact on the community in a cumulative impact area will still be able to obtain approval—for example, where a proposed new licensed venue shows it will add some unique or innovative offering that substantially benefits local residents, visitors and the 24-hour economy beyond what is already offered by others in that area. This is part of the New South Wales Government's commitment to diversity, safety and vibrancy in the night-time economy, complemented by actions in the 24-hour economy strategy. Importantly, the appropriate harm minimisation measures to mitigate risks must also be shown.

In the first instance, the plan is for the new framework to apply to the Sydney CBD and Kings Cross precincts, and replace the blanket licence freeze that currently exists under the Liquor Act. As a reflection of that, the bill initially limits the use of the framework to the City of Sydney local government area [LGA]. The move is expected to allow certain applications to be considered for the first time in over 10 years. The measure is consistent with recommendation 35 of the committee's report. That initial focus reflects the Government's view that the clear and transparent management of density issues in those precincts remains essential to a safe and vibrant 24-hour economy in Sydney—in a way that accounts for evidence and data and community views, and uses more advanced geospatial tools. The largest concentrations of licensed premises are found in the City of Sydney. Alcohol-related violence and antisocial behaviour have continued in some hotspots of the precincts despite the overall reductions in violence observed there over time. It is important that these areas are carefully managed.

The bill establishes formal consultation, publication and review requirements for cumulative impact assessments. This is to ensure a robust approach. An assessment may only be issued by the authority after consultation with peak industry bodies, the relevant local consent authority, the New South Wales police, the Ministry of Health and local residents and businesses. Assessments must be published on the Liquor & Gaming NSW website. Each published assessment must also be reviewed within the first 12 months and at least two years thereafter. This is so they can be informed by the most relevant data, evidence and stakeholder feedback. The authority may at any time vary or revoke an assessment, provided there is consultation. That means that decisions affecting a particular local area will be undertaken within clear parameters and a shared understanding of the evidence.

The framework provides certainty for industry. It means that someone looking to open a new business, or expand their current operations, knows what to expect from the start. This will avoid a business taking out a lease on a premise, engaging lawyers, planners or architects, or applying for a development consent—and all the costs associated with those—only to find out that the liquor licensing authority is not minded to approve its liquor licence application. With this new framework, the Government continues its work to maintain community safety and support business activity. Once supporting processes and consultation are well established the Government could consider expanding its use to other high-risk areas by amending the regulations.

I place on record the concerns raised by Retail Drinks Australia [RDA], on behalf of the packaged liquor industry, in relation to the application of the cumulative impact assessment framework and the LiveData tool, which will underpin ILGA's decision-making on licence applications. I appreciate RDA's advocacy on behalf of its members and their desire for certainty in relation to licensing decisions. RDA has requested that a review of the CIA framework and LiveData tool be conducted 12 months after the commencement of the new laws. I confirm the Government's commitment to working with them and other stakeholders to refine, enhance and review the CIA framework and the functionality of the LiveData tool as we transition to these new laws. We are committed to reviewing those provisions at the 12-month mark, and consulting with RDA and other stakeholders prior to any expansion of the CIA framework beyond the Sydney LGA.

I turn now to schedule 3, which introduces an enhanced regulatory framework for same-day delivery of alcohol. Changes in technology as well as consumer demand for fast and convenient online delivery services have seen growth of the online alcohol sales market and same-day alcohol delivery options around Australia. There are clear regulatory gaps that need to be filled. The bill lifts related standards so they are more comparable to the requirements imposed on licensed premises. A key focus of the new framework is to ensure that same-day delivery providers—those offering alcohol through fast or same-day delivery—manage the risks associated with their business. This will include existing licensed businesses and food delivery platforms. It will also include private individuals who agree to make deliveries using task-matching platforms.

We know that there are currently weaknesses at the point of sale. For example, some sellers do nothing more than ask a customer to tick a box saying that they are over the age of 18. The bill helps to address this by ensuring that same-day deliveries must only be provided to an adult who has been nominated at the time the alcohol is purchased. Currently, there are few regulatory controls at the point of delivery. There is no mandatory requirement for physical ID to be checked and same-day deliveries ordered online may still be left unattended if that is what the customer has requested. Delivery drivers also do not need to complete responsible service of alcohol [RSA] training.

We currently have a regulatory framework that was not designed with the emerging same-day delivery market, and its attendant risks, in mind. Just as governments have had to act quickly to fill the gaps in regulations exposed by other technology-enabled businesses, such as rideshare, we must also act quickly to update liquor laws to ensure that they are fit for purpose in a world where online alcohol sales and delivery continues to grow in popularity. Under the bill, anyone accepting a same-day delivery needs to produce certain evidence of their identity and age. It will be an offence if a provider does not obtain acceptable evidence before delivery occurs. Depending on the circumstances, acceptable evidence will take the form of an evidence of age document or a

single declaration. Unless it is reasonably believed that the recipient is over 18, a check of an evidence of age document, such as a driver licence, must now occur before the delivery can be completed. To ensure compliance with this, providers will need to put in place robust practices for sighting ID. For example, this should, at the very least, include ID checks for anyone who looks under 25, in line with RSA standards at bricks-and-mortar venues. Providers may also adopt more advanced identity and age verification systems to support compliance as these technologies further mature.

A recipient who is clearly not a minor can produce ID or provide a signed declaration as another option to confirm their identity and age. This covers people who may not have valid proof of age documentation. The bill allows for regulations to prescribe requirements for appropriate record keeping where declarations are provided. Delivery staff and agents remain open to prosecution for delivering liquor to a minor when there is not reasonable grounds to believe that a person is over 18. Other changes in the bill mean that same-day alcohol must not be delivered to an intoxicated person. It cannot be dropped off to people in public areas that are alcohol-free zones, alcohol-prohibited areas or restricted areas where alcohol cannot be consumed. Same-day deliveries will also not be permitted after standard statewide cut-off times for the sale of takeaway alcohol—beyond midnight from Monday to Saturday and after 11.00 p.m. on Sunday.

Collectively, those measures will further address risks at the point of delivery and provide more certainty for industry and the community around what is expected in this environment. The bill ensures that providers must keep records for at least one year after delivery has been refused because the intended recipient was a minor or intoxicated person, or because the person nominated at the point of sale was not able to be identified at the time of delivery. Like incident registers for licensed premises, this record must be available for the NSW Police Force or Liquor & Gaming NSW to inspect. This will assist with monitoring of the sector and compliance with the new rules. The bill ensures that same-day delivery providers cannot financially penalise delivery staff or agents for non-deliveries. But staff and agents must have taken any reasonable and agreed steps to return the alcohol to the seller. This reduces the potential for delivery drivers to break the law, because the alternative is to miss out on their pay.

The Government wants to ensure that people making same-day deliveries have the right skills to effectively comply with the new rules and the skills to identify, and refuse delivery to, minors and intoxicated people and manage their own personal safety. To address this, the bill imposes new requirements on providers to ensure that employees and agents carrying out same-day deliveries complete responsible supply training. This will be the first tailored course in Australia focusing specifically on the rapid alcohol delivery market. The bill includes provisions to support the phasing in of this training. It outlines what the training will need to cover and allows for regulations to be made to support its delivery using standardised course material.

Debate interrupted.

Committees

COMMITTEE ON THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

Reports

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

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (12:45:22): As Chair: I speak to the second report of the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled *Review of the 2018-2019 Annual Reports of the ICAC and the Inspector of the ICAC* in the Fifty-Seventh Parliament, which I tabled on 6 August 2020. The role of the committee includes examining each annual report and other reports of the ICAC and its inspector. This report is the result of the committee's review of the 2018-19 annual reports of the ICAC and the inspector. The review focused on two main topics. The first looked at governance resourcing and strategic issues of the ICAC and the inspector. That included operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. The second topic looked at the core work of the ICAC and the inspector.

The funding model for the ICAC, and other funding concerns, were key issues of discussion at the hearing. Following last year's review, the committee learned that the Audit Office of New South Wales is examining the effectiveness of the financial arrangements of the ICAC and other organisations, which includes reviewing the role of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and Treasury in the funding process. The ICAC also tabled a special report entitled *The need for a new independent funding model for the ICAC*, which outlined concerns about its current funding model. In addition, the Public Accountability Committee tabled a report entitled *Budget process for independent oversight bodies and the Parliament of New South Wales*. Both reports made proposals and recommendations on future funding arrangements and models relating to the ICAC. The committee looks forward to considering the Auditor-General's findings and recommendations in the context of the information that the committee has already considered in relation to funding issues.

The committee was pleased to learn that the Office of the Inspector of the Independent Commission Against Corruption is adequately resourced to perform its functions. It was also pleased to find that the new role of chief executive officer within the ICAC has been beneficial to its operations and a positive addition to the executive structure. Some aspects of the ICAC's operations were postponed during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as public inquiries and in-person training for public officials. However, the committee commends both the ICAC and the inspector for continuing to carry out their functions effectively and efficiently. The committee's report recommends that when an annual reporting period falls within an election year, the ICAC should include an explanation of why there may have been fewer meetings with the ICAC committee in its annual report. That is due to the election and the subsequent reconstitution of the ICAC committee in the new Parliament.

The committee also found that it is important that key performance indicators of the ICAC reflect any significant changes to the environment in which it works. The ICAC reported that it received 585 matters related to the local government sector in 2018-19. That comprised 29 per cent of all matters. The ICAC stated that the over-representation of the local government sector in the complaints statistics "... may be due to the high level of people's interaction with local government and the personal interest many take in the decisions of their local council". The committee was also interested in whether the disclosure regime in relation to pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests is satisfactory for local government elected representatives and staff. It heard about a range of initiatives for corruption prevention in the local government sector. They included tailored workshops and the employment of specialist local government staff. We are satisfied that the ICAC is actively working to assist with corruption prevention in this area.

The committee heard that the ICAC received three complaints against its staff during the 2018-19 reporting period. The committee noted that the inspector was informed of all matters and the actions the ICAC had taken for each complaint. Committee members are satisfied with the inspector's finding that the ICAC dealt with each matter appropriately. We were also interested to learn about the different strategies the ICAC may use for dealing with complaints, depending on the nature of the allegation. The committee acknowledges the importance of the inspector's audit function and supports the view that this function works to prevent incidents from happening rather than waiting for an incident to form the basis of a review. The committee also supports the inspector's approach to continue to monitor the conduct of counsel assisting the ICAC following its recent audit. We look forward to reviewing the inspector's other audits as part of our next review.

I thank the ICAC's Chief Commissioner, the Hon. Peter Hall, QC; commissioners Stephen Rushton, SC, and Patricia McDonald, SC; and the ICAC's executive team for their contributions to the public hearing for the committee's review. I also thank the inspector, Mr Bruce McClintock, SC, for his contribution to the public hearing. In addition I thank my fellow committee members for their valuable input during the review process. Finally, I thank the committee staff for their assistance with hearings and the committee's report. I commend the report to the House.

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (12:50:39): I too make a contribution to the take-note debate on the report of the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled *Review of the 2018-2019 Annual Reports of the ICAC and the Inspector of the ICAC*. A public hearing was held on 15 May 2020. As a consequence of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic a number of committee members and one witness participated via teleconference, so it was a different type of inquiry. Nonetheless it raised many significant matters. I thank each of the witnesses who appeared for their assistance and for the important role they play in the effective operation of the ICAC: Inspector of the ICAC, Mr Bruce McClintock; Chief Commissioner of the ICAC, Mr Peter Hall, QC; commissioner, Ms Patricia McDonald, QC; commissioner, Mr Stephen Rushton, SC; executive directors, Mr Andrew Koureas, Ms Bernadette Doubois, Mr Lewis Rangott and Mr Roy Waldon; and ICAC's chief executive officer, Mr Phillip Reed, who appeared via remote video link. The review made four findings and one recommendation with respect to ICAC's resources, operations and processes. The review's first finding was:

The Office of the Inspector of the ICAC is adequately resourced to carry out its functions.

The second finding was:

The Chief Executive Officer role within the ICAC is beneficial to the ICAC's operations.

The review's third finding was:

It is important that the Key Performance Indicators of the ICAC reflect any significant changes to the environment in which the ICAC is carrying out its work.

The final finding was:

The Inspector of the ICAC's audit function is important, particularly to identify any areas of the ICAC's processes which may benefit from changes.

The sole recommendation of the review is:

When the annual reporting period falls within an election year, the ICAC should include an explanation in its annual report about why there may have been fewer meetings with the ICAC Committee due to the election and subsequent reconstitution of the ICAC Committee in the new Parliament.

I acknowledge the chair of our committee, the member for Mulgoa, Ms Tanya Davies, and her hard work. I acknowledge her earlier comments about local government and the fact that there were 585 complaints related to local government, so that almost 30 per cent of the work that the ICAC undertakes throughout the year relates to local government. I note that a public inquiry into allegations concerning former member for Wagga Wagga Mr Daryl Maguire, known as Operation Keppel, will commence next Monday.

The ICAC is investigating allegations that, from 2012 to 2018, Mr Maguire engaged in conduct that involved a breach of public trust by using his public office involving his duties as a member of the New South Wales Parliament and using parliamentary resources to improperly gain a benefit for himself or entities close to him. I understand this may involve a number of local governments in this State. I assume all members will be watching that inquiry with great interest. Once again I acknowledge and commend the committee's chair, deputy chair and members for their commitment and hard work. I acknowledge and thank the hardworking parliamentary staff for their valuable support and assistance. I also acknowledge and thank the leadership team and staff of ICAC. It has been a very good working relationship.

Debate adjourned.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Reports

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

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (12:55:21): I address the House on behalf of the Legislation Review Committee on its report entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 19/57*, tabled on 15 September. In this digest the committee examined eight bills. Seven of these were introduced in the last joint sitting week and one was introduced on 26 August during the Legislative Council sitting week. The committee also considered 32 statutory instruments, finding issues in three. I will now draw the attention of the House to some of the issues raised. The Police Amendment (Promotions) Bill 2020 was described by the Minister as giving effect to a merit-based and modern promotion system for non-executive police officers, being sergeants, inspectors and superintendents.

The bill amends the Police Regulation 2015 to create a two-staged promotions process, being stage A, a rank-based assessment, and stage B, a position-based assessment. Stage B of this process requires an officer to apply for an advertised position and undertake an assessment for that position. The Minister told Parliament that this is a merit-based process that will allow for applicants to be compared against each other and the position standards. Officers who have completed a stage A or stage B assessment may apply to the commissioner for a review within 48 hours of being notified of the outcome of the assessment. Although officers who have completed a stage A assessment can apply for a review on one of three grounds, the outcome of stage B assessments can only be reviewed on narrow procedural grounds.

The committee noted that the bill imposes a short time frame of 48 hours to apply for a review, which may limit the accessibility of review to officers. Based on this concern, the committee referred this matter to Parliament for consideration. Further, the committee noted that the limited procedural grounds on which a stage B assessment can be reviewed may also restrict access to review. However, this may be reasonable in the circumstances, given the potential impracticality of reviewing decisions about the relative merits of applicants. Accordingly, the committee made no further comment on this issue.

I turn now to one of the private members' bills considered by the committee, the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Sex Workers) Bill 2020. Currently the Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 outlaws certain types of discrimination including racial discrimination, sex discrimination and discrimination on transgender grounds. Schedule 1 to the bill seeks to amend the Act by inserting part 4H, which would create a new ground of unlawful discrimination on the ground that persons are or have been sex workers. The amendments set down what constitutes discrimination in work, including deciding who should be offered employment or dismissed on the basis that a person is or has been a sex worker. The bill also sets down what constitutes unlawful discrimination on the ground of occupation as a sex worker in other areas of public life, such as education, the provision of goods and services, accommodation and membership of registered clubs.

The committee noted that in doing so the bill may have some impact on freedom of contract—that is, the freedom of parties to choose the contractual terms to which they are subject. However, the committee acknowledged that full statutory limits on freedom of contract are not uncommon. Further, the provisions in the bill that set down what acts constitute unlawful discrimination against sex workers or previous sex workers are

consistent with and appear to be modelled on provisions in the existing Act that prescribe unlawful discriminatory acts or behaviour with respect to discrimination on other grounds. In the circumstances, the committee made no further comment.

Turning now to regulations dealt with in the digest, the Protection of the Environment Operations (General) Amendment (Native Forest Biomaterial) Regulation 2020 provides a limited exception to the prohibition on burning native forest biomaterial to generate electricity. Under clause 97 of the Protection of the Environment Operations (General) Regulation 2009, the occupier of any premises who causes or allows native forest biomaterial to be burned in any electricity-generating work in or on those premises is guilty of an offence, attracting significant monetary penalties.

The regulation provides a limited exception to this prohibition. An exception is available to premises to which an environment protection licence that authorises the carrying out of scheduled activities applies and that the Environmental Protection Authority [EPA] has nominated for the purposes of the exception. This nomination by the EPA occurs by notice published in the New South Wales *Government Gazette*. The committee considers that it may be preferable for such exemptions to be effected by regulation. That is, those premises granted such exemptions could be listed in a schedule to the regulation.

This would ensure parliamentary oversight over a significant matter—the grant of exemptions to engage in activity that would ordinarily attract significant penalties under environmental legislation. However, as the overriding principle—the ability to grant exemptions—is included in the regulation and as there is a requirement for exemptions so granted to be made public, the committee made no further comment. In closing, I thank the members of the committee and the committee staff for their work. I also acknowledge and thank the Acting Chair of the committee, Trevor Khan, for taking on this role in the absence of Chair Felicity Wilson. That concludes my remarks on the nineteenth digest for this Parliament and I commend the digest to the House.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (13:00:41): On behalf of the Opposition, I thank the House for the opportunity to speak on the Legislation Review Committee's nineteenth digest for the Fifty-Seventh Parliament. The committee considered eight bills against the criteria for scrutiny under section 8A (1) (b) of the Legislation Review Act, helpfully set out at page 57 of the digest. The bills are the Adoption Legislation Amendment (Integrated Birth Certificates) Bill, the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Sex Workers) Bill, the Education Legislation Amendment (Parental Rights) Bill, the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Prohibition of Waste Incinerators) Bill, the Gas Legislation Amendment (Medical Gas Systems) Bill, the Police Amendment (Promotions) Bill, the Public Health Amendment (Registered Nurses in Nursing Homes) Bill and the Roads Amendment (Toll-Free Period) Bill. The committee commented on all of them except for the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Prohibition of Waste Incinerators) Bill.

Five of these bills are private members' bills. As well as commenting on these bills, the committee took the further step of underlining its comments by referring these to the Parliament for further consideration. It did so in relation to the Gas Legislation Amendment (Medical Gas Systems) Bill, which I note has already passed both Houses. It also did so in relation to the Education Legislation Amendment (Parental Rights) Bill 2020. In relation to this bill, the committee noted that the bill would amend the Education Act 1990, the Education Standards Authority Act 2013 and the Teacher Accreditation Act 2004 primarily by introducing two new definitions, these being matters of parental primacy, meaning:

In relation to the education of children, moral and ethical standards, political and social values, and matters of personal wellbeing and identity including gender and sexuality.

The second definition relates to gender fluidity, which means:

A belief there is a difference between biological sex (including people who are, by their chromosomes, male or female but are born with disorders of sexual differentiation) and human gender and that human gender is socially constructed rather than being equivalent to a person's biological sex.

In relation to the bill, the committee noted that it would insert a new section 20 (1A) into the Teacher Accreditation Act 2004:

That requires professional teaching standards that are developed by the New South Wales Education Standards Authority to include a requirement that all approved courses, teacher education courses, programs and professional development courses must recognise that parents are responsible for the education of children in matters of parental primacy and that such courses must not teach gender fluidity. The standards must also make it a condition of accreditation of teachers and other qualified persons in schools that they must recognise that parents are responsible for education of children in matters of parental primacy and that they must not teach gender fluidity in schools.

In relation to this bill and those provisions, the committee noted that there are a number of competing considerations concerning the introduction of those definitions into the said Acts. The committee referred these matters to Parliament for further consideration. As that bill is before the other place and could come to this place, I refer that bill in particular to members for their further consideration. In relation to regulations, the committee

considered 32 regulations, although it commented on only three. That concludes my remarks on the digest. I thank the committee staff. I thank committee members for their input. I welcome new committee member Anthony D'Adam, MLC, from the other place. I thank Shaoquett Moselmane for his service and wish him all the very best in the future. I commend the digest to the House.

Report noted.

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

Members

MEMBER FOR ROCKDALE

MEMBER FOR CHARLESTOWN

MEMBER FOR OATLEY

MEMBER FOR HORNSBY

MEMBER FOR GRANVILLE

The SPEAKER: I wish members representing the electorates of Rockdale, Charlestown, Oatley, Hornsby and Granville a very happy birthday.

Question Time

THE HON. JOHN BARILARO

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:18:19): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. Does THE Deputy Premier admit his actions last week to bring the Government to the brink of collapse during a health and economic crisis were wrong?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:18:36): I thank the member for the question. The answer is no.

THE HON. JOHN BARILARO

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:18:41): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. Given the Deputy Premier's answer, and given he has threatened to quit the Government five times—August 2018, June 2019, August 2019, February 2020 and of course last Thursday—will he guarantee to never, ever threaten to quit the Coalition again?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:18:36): I thank the member for the question. I tell her what I will guarantee: I will guarantee for the rest of this term I will be working hard to see that the Opposition and the Leader of the Opposition never, ever attain the Government benches. We know under Labor who the losers are—it is regional and rural New South Wales. Those opposite do not like the answer.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. The Deputy Premier has given a yes and a no answer to the last two questions I have asked. Will he guarantee to never, ever threaten to quit the Coalition again? The Premier is listening. Every Liberal MP is listening. Will he give a guarantee?

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier is in the first minute of his answer and may continue.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I have answered the question, and I have every right to respond. I had the opportunity at lunchtime to have a cup of tea with the great Graham Richardson. You know what? That was a Labor Party that was worth fighting for. That was a Labor Party that understood what it was like to represent regional and rural New South Wales.

Ms Jodi McKay: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition takes a point of order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Under that leader, I tell you what, regional and rural New South Wales will be forgotten.

Ms Jodi McKay: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. Will the Deputy Premier give a guarantee to never, ever threaten to quit the Coalition?

Mr JOHN BARILARO: This is my guarantee. My guarantee is that you guys—

Ms Jodi McKay: You will not give a guarantee? You are going to do it again. You have done it five times and you are going to do it again.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier will resume his seat. The Leader of the Opposition has twice taken a point of order under relevance in the first minute of the Deputy Premier's answer. I have made it clear that I generally do not want points of order taken on relevance in the first minute of a response. The Deputy Premier is being relevant and I ask him to continue.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: My guarantee is that I will keep working each and every day for the people of regional and rural New South Wales, including on issues around the koala State environmental planning policy, otherwise known as the property rights SEPP. That is what we are fighting for. That is the guarantee: I will work each and every day to make sure that those opposite are also held to account for their position. Yesterday when the Leader of the Opposition was asked what Labor's position on the koala SEPP policy was, what was the answer? She said, "I will let you know at election time." They know about the regions when it is election time. I have finished my answer.

Ms Jodi McKay: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier has concluded his answer.

Ms Jodi McKay: Will the Deputy Premier give a guarantee to never, ever quit the Coalition? This is the fourth time I have asked him—yes or no?

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier has concluded his answer.

THE HON. JOHN BARILARO

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (14:22:07): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. Given it was revealed today that the Deputy Premier made representations on behalf of property developer Jeff McCloy and also met with property developer Harry Triguboff today, has he discussed the koala State environmental planning policy [SEPP] with any other property developers?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:22:28): The thing about politics is, when you cannot beat someone on policy, you start to play the man. It is that simple.

Mr Michael Daley: You beat yourself on policy.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Where do you play, John?

Ms Sophie Cotsis: Who else have you met with?

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I am trying to answer the question here.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr JOHN BARILARO: Here is the question. In relation to what was reported in *The Sydney Morning Herald* today, I just say that absolutely my office received an email—and when I say my office, I am talking about the receptionist. The receptionist is a public servant, not a political appointment to the office. The public servant sits at the reception desk and oversees the office email. Her job is to scan those emails. She did exactly that. She is a lovely lady who came up from Albury on a temporary appointment to my front desk. What did she do with that particular email? She acknowledged that the email was not an issue for the Deputy Premier so she flicked it on to the office of the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. It said:

Hi team. Please find attached correspondence received by the office of the Hon. John Barilaro regarding State Environmental Planning Policy—

Ms Sophie Cotsis: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 129, relevance. Has the Deputy Premier discussed the koala SEPP with any other property developers?

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier is being relevant. He will continue.

Mr JOHN BARILARO:

—koala habitat protection 2019, and the environmental land management in New South Wales, as this correspondence falls within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities I refer this for all necessary action and attention. Kind regards ...

I will not name the public servant. That is not a representation. That is actually my office doing a job because—guess what?—unfortunately for me, and maybe because I have got a reputation for delivery, a lot of people come directly to my office. But we referred this to the appropriate Minister. I tell you what representation looks like. It is when I receive—

Ms Sophie Cotsis: Point of order: It is Standing Order 129—relevance. The question is very simple: Has the Deputy Premier discussed the koala SEPP with any other property developers?

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The Deputy Premier will continue.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: No, because the member also mentioned Mr Triguboff. What a great Australian. He came to this country at age 14. He is part of the construction industry in this nation—creating tens of thousands of jobs, first buyers' homes and rental accommodation. These guys say just because you meet with a developer, something went wrong. I will tell you why they feel that: because it was under their watch when they met with developers and they ended up with Aldi bags of cash. That is those opposite. At the end of the day, these guys want to play ball. I will tell you what a representation looks like: "Dear John, I write on behalf of Mr Peter Caban of Caban's Rural Fencing Pty Ltd, 19 Undine Street, Ellalong. In the attached correspondence that has been received, Mr Caban raises concerns around the koala SEPP."

Ms Sophie Cotsis: Point of order—

Mr JOHN BARILARO: That was from the member for Cessnock, Clayton Barr.

The SPEAKER: The member for Canterbury rises on a point of order.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: That is what a representation looks like. When did we forward that on?

Ms Jo Haylen: This is about property developers.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: No, I am answering the question.

Ms Sophie Cotsis: My point of order is about relevance. Mr Speaker, I ask you to bring the Deputy Premier back to the question: Which other property developers has he discussed the koala SEPP with? It is very simple.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier has been relevant. Sometimes Opposition members ask a lengthy question that includes references to other parts of the question, and then truncate it when they take a point of order on relevance. Mr Triguboff was specifically mentioned and the Deputy Premier has been talking about him. The member cannot then truncate the question. If members wish to ask a very specific question, they should just ask it. The Deputy Premier will continue.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: The opportunity I had with Mr Triguboff this morning was a meeting that was in the diary. My diary is disclosed for all to see. I make no apologies when I meet with developers in this State in relation to what they do for housing supply. This morning I had the opportunity, with housing Minister Melinda Pavey and Mr Triguboff, to meet and talk about housing supply—especially in this economic crisis that we are facing. We know that the construction industry and the development industry are going to be a big part of resetting and rebooting the economy. We, as a Government, already responded to that in a number of ways, with possibly more to come. Did I talk to Mr Triguboff about the koala SEPP? No. Have I talked to other developers about the koala SEPP? Who knows? No, I do not think so, but my diary is disclosed. This is the message for those opposite: Do not always believe what you read in the press because sometimes journos would like to get led down a path, when a piece of correspondence is leaked from another office, to attack you on a personal level rather than attack you on policy.

Mr Michael Daley: So Stokesy's office leaked a letter on you, did he? We should hear more about that. Why don't you tell us about that, John? You accused him in the House of leaking on you.

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

Mr Michael Daley: I am hoping my interjection goes into *Hansard*.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Maroubra to order for the second time. That can go into *Hansard* too.

THE HON. JOHN BARILARO

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (14:27:52): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. Last Friday the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces wrote:

We are in the midst of a global pandemic, and we have clear, strong laws to protect koalas. So why on earth is Mr Barilaro trying to weaken koala laws—why now, why ever?

My question to the Deputy Premier is why now, why ever?

Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:28:19): I thank the member for—Summer Hill, is it? I thank the member for Summer Hill. Here is a question: How much koala habitat does she have in her electorate? Zero.

Mr Chris Minns: So she is not allowed to ask about it?

Mr JOHN BARILARO: No, my point is this: It is very easy for those in here to lecture us in the regions about where koala habitat should be or should not be. If you read the press statement of what we said last week, not only does the National Party want to see the koala population grow and thrive, but we actually want to see it doubled.

Ms Jodi McKay: You destroyed your own Government, Deputy Premier.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: That is not the question. The question was in relation to koalas: Why now? I am now talking about koalas and the koala population and where the National Party sits in relation to koala habitat. We want to see habitat grow. We want to see the population grow. We want to see, of course, the koala population thrive and double in line with what we recently have seen in an upper House inquiry. But that is a proposal and that is an approach that we as a Government and we as The Nationals are more than happy to participate in: investment around koala habitat and investment around private landholders, absolutely, putting land aside for koala habitat. We are more than happy to have that conversation, but what we have to fight for is property rights.

The idea for a single individual landholder who now, today, if you apply the maps across the State—and we know the maps are flawed. It is acknowledged by many that the maps are flawed. You can remove the maps. When the map says Bankwest Stadium, row 118, seats 47 and 93 are now koala habitat—so the Parramatta Eels now become the Parramatta Koalas—you know there is a fundamental flaw in the principles and the criteria behind the maps. You can remove the maps, but the criteria and principles of the policy still remain the same. So why on earth would we put the onus on farmers and regional and rural communities to now have to, in one way, argue against what is sometimes a ridiculous position, where up in Mungindi the goal posts on the footy oval are koala habitat? Port Stephens—koala habitat.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order: This is one of the most extraordinary breaches of Cabinet solidarity I have ever seen.

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

Mr Michael Daley: Is the Premier going to sack him or is he going to resign from Cabinet? He is having a go at the planning Minister.

The SPEAKER: The member for Maroubra will resume his seat. I call the member for Maroubra to order for the third time. This is the member's final warning.

Mr JOHN BARILARO: I have every right to argue on policy. We have that in this House each and every time.

Ms Jo Haylen: In Cabinet!

Mr JOHN BARILARO: This is not in Cabinet. We have the opportunity to argue policy. This is a policy position that the National Party feels very strongly about and I make no apologies for that. We will have an opportunity to deal with this SEPP going forward. We will have an opportunity to deal with the issues and we will see what we can achieve for the people of regional and rural New South Wales. But I will not be lectured by those opposite. Their greatest threat is that I remain the leader of the National Party and take the party to the next election. Why? They know they cannot beat us in the bush while I fight the way I fight.

LIBERAL-NATIONALS COALITION

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (14:32:00): My question is directed to the Premier. In the interests of transparency and accountability, will the Premier outline to the New South Wales Parliament the nature of the deal between the Liberal Party and The Nationals that determines who governs this State?

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:32:22): I acknowledge the question asked by the member for Newtown and I wonder where she was late last week, when this was made abundantly clear. I refer her to the comments that were made publicly and on the record. I also refer her to the joint statement put out by the Deputy Premier and myself on Friday. I make the following comments: I want to state, as this is the first time this week I have had the opportunity to be on my feet in question time, that the citizens of our State have never relied on us more than they do at this time. Irrespective of what we are discussing in here, many families across the State are hurting, with the cumulative effect of drought, floods, storms and now COVID.

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

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: What they are relying on is that every person in this place, irrespective of which party they are from, is focused on the needs of their constituents and the community. The Labor Party, earlier in the year, wrote to me and suggested we should not hold Parliament because of COVID. Then they wrote to me and said we should have more sitting days because of COVID. Since I have been in this place during the pandemic—

Ms Jenny Leong: Point of order—

Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN: —I have not received a single question from those opposite about the struggles and the pandemic that our communities are going through. I have concluded my answer.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

The SPEAKER: I announce receipt of the following paper petition with 10,000 or more signatories:

Regional Seniors Travel Card Program

Petition requesting that the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads ensure that eligible residents in the Newcastle local government area are included in the pilot of the Regional Seniors Travel Card program, received from **Ms Sonia Hornery**.

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

Business of the House

STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: NO CONFIDENCE MOTION

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended at this sitting to:

- (1) Provide for the following speaking time limits on the motion of no confidence in the Deputy Premier standing in the name of the member for Strathfield:
 - (a) Opposition members, including the mover—50 minutes in total;
 - (b) Government members—50 minutes in total;
 - (c) Crossbench and Independent members—25 minutes in total;
 - (d) Government member in response—10 minutes; and
 - (e) Mover in reply—10 minutes.
- (2) Postpone the public interest debate until proceedings on the motion of no confidence is concluded.

Motion agreed to.

BUSINESS LAPSED

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that in accordance with Standing Order 105 (3) general business notices of motion (general notices) Nos 1163 to 1189 will lapse tomorrow.

Motions

THE HON. JOHN BARILARO, DEPUTY PREMIER, AND MINISTER FOR REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES, INDUSTRY AND TRADE

No Confidence

The SPEAKER: Before calling the Leader of the Opposition, I make clear the order that speakers in this debate will be called: the Opposition, the Government, the Opposition, the crossbench and then the Government. We will be proceeding in a slightly irregular pattern today, given the suspension of standing orders.

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (14:36:38): I move:

That the Deputy Premier no longer enjoys the confidence of the House given:

- (1) His attempt last week to move the National Party to the crossbench, which would have cost the Government its parliamentary majority and threatened the stability of Government in the midst of an unprecedented health and economic crisis across New South Wales.
- (2) Comments made by several of his Cabinet colleagues, including:
 - (a) the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, who described his position as Deputy Premier as "untenable";
 - (b) the Minister for Transport and Roads, who said that "leadership is not what we saw on display last week"; and

- (c) the Minister for Jobs, Tourism, Investment and Western Sydney, who suggested the National Party should choose a leader who "unites our community, not divides them".
- (3) It has become clear that so long as John Barilaro remains the Deputy Premier, the people of New South Wales cannot have faith in the stability of this Government at a time when it is so desperately needed.

I start my contribution with why stability is so desperately needed in this State right now. We are living through one of the most difficult and challenging times that this State has ever seen. We have a global pandemic and we have a recession. That means we have more than 300,000 people who right now are out of work, and it is only going to increase. We have had drought, bushfires and floods. It has been an incredibly difficult time for the citizens of New South Wales. We have families who are struggling to put food on the table and families who do not know how they are going to pay their rent or their mortgage. We have people who have a mental illness. They all face an enormous trauma after a very tragic season of drought and bushfires.

We have communities that are still struggling to come to terms with the bushfires because they have lost their homes and their businesses. We have young people who are confronting what is a very uncertain future—they do not know what their future holds. We have many of our elderly who are in aged care just longing for someone to pay them a visit, and that is not happening. This is a time when people desperately need a government that is focused on them and on jobs, not a government that is focused on itself. This is a time for stable government and that is why I bring this motion to the House.

At a time when we need stable government, guess what the Deputy Premier of New South Wales did last week? Did he bring forward a plan for economic recovery? Did he bring forward a plan for jobs? Did he use the power of his office to actually make a difference to the people in rural and regional New South Wales? No, he did not. Instead, last Thursday—just six days ago—the Deputy Premier of New South Wales effectively blew up the Government. Since then there has been no remorse—we heard that today—and there has not been an acceptable explanation. Today he has given no guarantee that it will not happen again. The only thing the Deputy Premier has said to Liberal Ministers is "you need to put up or you need to shut up." How sophisticated is that—put up or shut up? That is the only thing the Deputy Premier has said in response to his temper tantrum.

At a time of crisis in our State his behaviour has been self-absorbed and self-indulgent. Why did he not consider the difficulties faced by so many people before he did what he did last week? Why did he not think about the impact this would have on the ability of the Coalition to govern before he decided to blow it all up? Why did he do this when the public needs unity? What did he do? He brought chaos and disunity. This is not new behaviour for John Barilaro. Time after time over the past 18 months he has threatened to resign, run for a Federal electorate or pull The Nationals from the Coalition to sit on the crossbench. Every time he has huffed and puffed and then he has backed down. That is what this Deputy Premier does time and time again.

John Barilaro has divided and destroyed the Coalition. His position as Deputy Premier is completely and utterly untenable. Today the Opposition moves this motion of no confidence in the Deputy Premier on behalf of people of rural and regional New South Wales who deserve a Deputy Premier who is focused on them. We do it for parts of this State that are still in drought and for those communities who are struggling to recover after devastating bushfires—and, of course, they are waiting with trepidation about what the summer ahead will hold for them. We do it for all those people who are stranded on elective surgery waiting lists—we saw that on *60 Minutes* last Sunday night. Was the Deputy Premier speaking about them? No, he was not. He was blowing up the Coalition because that is what he does best.

The Opposition brings this motion for every person who is desperate for a job right now. Government members should be focused on jobs for the people of New South Wales, not their own jobs, which is what John Barilaro is focused on. In Coffs Harbour and Grafton the unemployment rate is 11.6 per cent and in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie it is 10 per cent. We have double-digit youth unemployment from the Illawarra all the way to the Tweed. Finally, we move this motion on behalf of the many Government members who know that working with John Barilaro and achieving unity at this challenging time is now completely impossible because of his selfish actions. They know that strong, stable government cannot be achieved while John Barilaro is the deputy leader.

While John Barilaro remains in that position—leaking, undermining, grandstanding, sulking, preening and pouting—this Government cannot function as it should, and everyone knows that. In the past four days it has become very clear that the relationship between Gladys Berejiklian and John Barilaro has completely broken down. The Premier has held four press conferences, including one today, where she could not even utter his name. To be honest, I do not blame her. She cannot even say his name. Within one week we have seen seven Ministers from the National Party threaten to sit on the crossbench and not support government legislation. At least we thought they were going to sit on the crossbench, but when one watches the press conference we see the Deputy Premier was not sure whether they were on the crossbench. He was confused. He went into that press conference not knowing what he was going to do because that is what he does every single time.

What was the revelation in that press conference? Oh, that is right. They were going to walk into Cabinet and be bound by Cabinet solidarity. They were going to make decisions as a Cabinet. Then they were going to walk into this Parliament and decide what they voted on and what they did not. How naive is that? That is not Cabinet solidarity. That is not how the Parliament or the Government in this State works. I say to the Deputy Premier: Mate, if you are going to lead a coup then at least make sure your demands make sense. They did not, they do not and he should not have done what he did.

The most damning indictment of the Deputy Premier comes not from Labor but from members of his own Government. It is not often that I find myself agreeing with members of the Liberal Party, but I do. One MP stated, "If I had a dollar for every time Barra threatened to quit I could retire." I agree. In the words of another, "Our members feel let down, our party embarrassed and the community infuriated." I agree. Another stated, "What we have seen in the last few months is a very selfish man." I agree. At the weekend the Minister for Police and Emergency Services said that the Deputy Premier's leadership was "untenable". The Opposition absolutely agrees, which is why we have moved this motion in the House today. He further stated:

I think what we have seen out of John Barilaro is the greatest act of political bastardry in quite some time.

I agree. Another Minister stated:

You will not find a single Liberal minister, from the Left or a conservative, who thinks we can work with this man. We will not work with Barilaro.

I would not work with him either! The transport Minister said it best when he stated, "Leadership is not what we saw on display last week." Yesterday when the transport Minister walked into this Chamber and gave an incredibly sincere response to the question I asked, I thought, "Now that is actually leadership." John Barilaro does not know leadership. He has never known leadership. He knows how to huff and puff and then he always backs down. We have seen Minister after Minister line up day after day and none has supported the Deputy Premier. As I said, the Premier cannot even speak his name. We now know that when she met with him the last thing she said to him was that she has never been so disgusted. That is a really strong word. That is an emotive word—"disgusted". That does not bode well for a united Coalition.

We will not have a strong and stable government while John Barilaro remains her deputy. I have said that, as Leader of the Opposition, I will do what I need to do to make sure that this Government is able to deliver on the commitments it makes. I will side with the Premier when I need to. I will back her in—I have done that. I have praised her. When I do not agree, I will come out and say that too. The Opposition has always said we will be bipartisan where we can. We will be constructive and put our ideas forward. But we will do what is in the best interests of all citizens of New South Wales. That is our commitment. John Barilaro has never done that. In a time of pandemic and recession and with another bushfire season already underway, the Deputy Premier has shown that he has no idea of his responsibilities as a leader in this State.

I take members back to that press conference last week. We had a handful of Nationals MPs—seven Ministers in total, such as the member for Bathurst, who sits opposite me in the Chamber, and the member for Oxley, who I gather will also speak to this motion—standing shoulder to shoulder with John Barilaro, caught up in his ill thought-out plan. They could not escape. I do not know whether members noticed the member for Oxley over the Deputy Premier's shoulder during that press conference. She did not know which way to look. She looked left, she looked right, she looked down; she moved her eyes to see whether her colleagues were actually looking. She could not escape that press conference. She knew that every time the Deputy Premier uttered a word he was moving them closer to the cliff—and then they fell off. That is what he did, and they fell with him.

When push came to shove, what did The Nationals do? This is critical to the censure motion before the House. What did they do? They capitulated, they folded, they kowtowed, they surrendered, they backed down. Their tough talk was exposed as just that—another John Barilaro dummy spit. The reason for their capitulation is quite extraordinary. I want everyone in rural and regional New South Wales to know this: They capitulated because their white cars and big ministerial salaries were going to disappear. At one stage Nationals Ministers were going to be in the Coalition on the front bench while the backbenchers were on the crossbench, so the Ministers would get their pay and the backbenchers would not get any extras they normally get. How does that work?

Then there was the moment when the Deputy Premier left the meeting with the Premier. He walked out, coffee in hand, claiming he got a commitment on the koala State environmental planning policy [SEPP]. He stated it was going to be debated in Cabinet—but it was always going to be debated in Cabinet! Even I had heard the Premier say that two or three times; all members heard her say that. I watched that thinking, "Is this guy losing it? Did he not hear the Premier say that it would be debated in Cabinet?" Because he says it, he expects us to believe it is true. It is fake news. That is exactly what it is. The Treasurer was asked whether anything had changed.

He stated, "Nothing has changed"—except things did change that day. On Thursday the Deputy Premier brought the Government to the brink of collapse. That is why this motion must be supported by members.

The truth is that this Deputy Premier has form on bellowing big threats and then failing to follow through. For the benefit of the House, I will run through the history. In August 2018 he threatened to quit if The Nationals ran a candidate in Wagga Wagga. In June 2019 he grandly announced, "I am prepared to relinquish the title of Deputy Premier." In August 2019 he circulated a note to Nationals MPs floating whether it was time to "revisit our relationship with the Liberal Party". He stated there was no such thing as a Coalition. In October 2019 he said he would resign his job if they did not get the Wyangala Dam wall raising done. In February 2020 he said the entire Coalition agreement was under threat. As we know, last week in a period of 24 hours he moved his MPs from the crossbench back to the Government benches. Even I thought it would be longer than that. He is the man who cried wolf too many times. This time he has really overstepped the mark because he has brought this Government to its knees. He threatened to pull New South Wales out of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan in March 2019, October 2019 and November 2019—and, of course, he never saw it through.

Then there are all the times he has tried to do a runner on his seat. Despite the people of the electorate of Monaro electing him to a four-year term, the Deputy Premier refused to rule out a tilt for Canberra in September 2019 and again in October 2019. Of course, in April of this year he declared his interest before pulling out. Then he abused both the member for Bega and the Deputy Prime Minister in a series of really vulgar and abusive texts. Never mind that we were in the middle of a pandemic or that the number of COVID cases was on the rise. I remind members that last week, in the middle of that press conference, members of the National Party were asked how many COVID cases there had been that day and not one of them could answer. People read the paper and listen to the radio and want to know what is happening. Not one of those members could answer that question because they had not paid any attention to anything else but themselves.

Leadership is about priorities. When you are in a position of leadership in this State you need to have the right priorities. We have seen over the past week where the Deputy Premier's priorities are. Rural and regional health is not his priority; it was Labor that got up the inquiry into rural and regional health. A jobs plan and economic recovery are not his priorities. Stable and functioning government is certainly not his priority. No, his priorities are all about himself. In John Barilaro's mind, it is always about John Barilaro. However, this time he has gone too far. The community has lost confidence in the Deputy Premier. Labor has no confidence in him, and we know there are members of both the Liberal and National parties who have lost confidence in him too. He cannot threaten the future of the Government and then not face consequences. I cannot stress how significant this is. I cannot tell this House in stronger words how significant what he has done is. The behaviour of the Deputy Premier has been completely inexcusable in a time of pandemic and recession. The Government should be focused on the jobs crisis, but for as long as John Barilaro remains the Deputy Premier, it will be the Government that remains in crisis.

New South Wales needs a strong and stable government. It needs a functional government. Instead, we have a Coalition in name only. As a result we have a government that is barely holding itself together. In concluding, I come back to where I started. Now more than ever we need a functional and stable government. But at 11.30 last Thursday morning the Deputy Premier of this State blew up stable government. He cannot take the Government to the brink and walk away. Members of this House know that this is not over. Opposition members know and all Government members know it is not over. Members of the Liberal Party certainly know it because not one of them is in the Chamber supporting the Deputy Premier. Where is the Premier if she is actually supporting John Barilaro? If everything is rosy, where is the Premier? There is not one Liberal Party member in the Chamber because they are so appalled by the behaviour of the Deputy Premier.

The Deputy Premier will exhibit that type of behaviour again and again because that is what John Barilaro does. For as long as John Barilaro is the Deputy Premier, the Government will be divided. So long as John Barilaro is the Deputy Premier we can have no confidence that we have a stable and functioning government. As I said, that is what New South Wales so desperately needs. I ask members on the crossbench, in the Liberal Party and in the Labor Party to support this motion of no confidence so that stable government can be restored to New South Wales and decision-making can be carried out in the interests of the citizens of New South Wales. I commend the motion to the House.

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (14:56:28): Clearly what we are seeing from the Opposition is mere grandstanding. The Opposition is starved of relevance and is desperate to try to get some media airtime. The Opposition criticises the Government for raising a policy issue yet is happy to come into the House and waste time in scoring political points. Last week the Opposition said that the fundamental issue was not about koalas. What? I cannot believe that Opposition members said that. In fact, the Leader of the Opposition could not articulate what Labor's koala strategy is. All she could say is that if the State

goes to an election, Labor would have a media policy on koala protection at that time. "If" Opposition members go to an election? What does that mean—that Labor will not be standing for the next election?

Clearly Labor members have no policy and no direction. Koala protection is an important issue for our communities. It is an issue that the Coalition will continue to stand up and fight for. Other members of the Coalition and I will not be lectured by Labor. Coalition members belong to parties that stand up for their communities because we know the impact that the proposed policy might have. This is yet more evidence to prove that Labor is not fit to govern. The Coalition opposes the silly political game that is being played by Labor. This game playing is designed only to create division and instability.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Keira will come to order. I remind the member for Maroubra that he is on three calls to order. The member for Keira will cease interjecting.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: People are sick of hearing politicians talk about each other. They want members of Parliament to get on with the job of representing the people who elected us. That is what Government members will continue to do. On Monday this week, when Labor was doing its best to get some media coverage and give media grabs on this issue, the Deputy Premier was with the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales in the Far West of the State examining the necessity for doubling the wild dog fence; in other words, they were examining an issue that is important to our communities.

Wild dogs cost primary producers approximately \$20 million each year. The Government is building the world's largest dog fence to help farmers to protect their stock. That is another election commitment the Coalition made and which this Government is delivering, because it is an issue that is important to regional communities and it is more worthy of the time of this House than is the rubbish we are hearing from the Leader of the Opposition. I am more than happy to compare in this House the Government's record of delivering for the regions with Labor's record when Labor was last in government. At the end of the day it is like comparing apples with lemons. The difference is that the Coalition has the leadership of Gladys Berejiklian and John Barilaro in this Government. John Barilaro and I have been close friends for a long time. We have worked closely together for many years.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: As I said, John Barilaro and I have been friends for a long time. We were both elected in the 2011 State election. Both of us can attest that under Labor regional New South Wales was starved of both funding and focus. Both of us took seats from Labor because of Labor's failings, mismanagement and neglect of regional communities. Opposition members will recall the 2011 election. Labor was the worst sitting government ever seen in the history of New South Wales politics. Labor was obliterated at that election.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: Mr Speaker, I ask you to direct the Minister to confine his remarks to the leave and substance of the motion. The Opposition has been reasonable in allowing the Minister to continue for a while but he should confine his remarks to the substance of the motion.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I think Labor enjoyed pretty wide scope earlier.

The SPEAKER: I am giving the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads a fair degree of latitude but I ask that his remarks do not become an attack on the Opposition. I ask the Minister to refer to the substance of the motion.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Yes, Mr Speaker. I remember his inaugural speech when he was first elected to Parliament. It was about speaking up for the Monaro region. He made a commitment that he would continue to fight for the people of the Monaro region and stand up and fight for issues and policies that are important for people who live in regional communities. He has fought tirelessly for the Monaro region and he continues to fight fearlessly for the people of regional New South Wales. He has pursued investment by the Government in things that matter to people: education, roads and communities and investments like a primary school in Googong, which will be delivered as part of the New South Wales Government's job creation stimulus package.

The Deputy Premier also has created investments such as the \$86 million investment in the Ellerton Drive extension. In July I had the opportunity to visit Queanbeyan and see firsthand how important that project is to the community and realise how it will provide opportunities and further growth. The Deputy Premier has also been involved in investments like \$10 million for the Captains Flat Road and the opening last year of the Bungendore ambulance station that he worked tirelessly to deliver for his community. Those projects are important to the people of Monaro and John Barilaro stood up and fought for them. The confidence that the people of Monaro

have in John Barilaro has been demonstrated in three elections. Each time he has gone to the polls he has increased his winning margin. At the last election he won every booth.

John Barilaro has the confidence of the people of regional New South Wales. These are the reasons for that: \$1 billion for drought—money that has been critical to support our farmers who experienced the worst drought in living memory; more than \$1 billion in water security projects; raising the wall of the Wyangala Dam and delivering the new Dungowan Dam; \$1 billion to fix roads and the hundreds of ageing timber bridges; \$400 million to improve mobile and digital coverage in the bush; investment in hospitals, schools, playgrounds and sporting facilities right across the State. All those projects are important to our regional communities.

It is not just about the money, it is about focus. What the Deputy Premier has done is focus on the specific needs of regional communities and the issues that matter to them. That is why with John Barilaro as the Deputy Premier we now have a Minister who is focused on regional youth, we have a Minister who is focused on regional transport and roads, and I have the honour to undertake that role. Now we can have a holistic view as to those issues and those matters that are important to our communities when it looks at transport and road projects. That is why, during the summer from hell that we just had, the Deputy Premier was out there, stood up and took on the task as the Minister responsible for disaster recovery.

This is a Deputy Premier who is out in the regions almost every day. This is a person who has spent more than 200 nights on the road. This is a person who has done over 120,000 kilometres out there visiting regional communities. He does that because he believes that talking to people is important. When you talk to people you understand the issues that are important to them—and that is what he does—and he then represents them in this place. He understands the issues they care about and the issues that are important to them. Some of the members opposite should think very carefully about the effort that the Deputy Premier has put into working with them on issues before they back this silly motion. I point out to the member for Newcastle that in the past he has praised the Deputy Premier for working with him and the City of Newcastle on plans to solve erosion on Stockton Beach.

I point out to the member for Lismore that she has seen firsthand the effort and support he has given to assist her and her community when it was impacted by bushfires. Labor is nothing more than a one trick pony. Those opposite come into this place and resort to no confidence motions in order to gain airtime on the news. We are not surprised. Our decision to stand up for the bush offends you. Those opposite do not know what it looks like. They come into this place and do what Labor loves to do, they make a lot of noise, say very little and deliver nothing. The voters of New South Wales have made it very clear what they think about New South Wales Labor. The people of New South Wales have no confidence in the Labor Party, they have no confidence in Labor's ability to deliver for the regions, they have no confidence that Labor even knows where the regions are—and we regularly see evidence of that.

If we go back a few months the member for Campbelltown demanded the regional seniors travel card should be extended to Western Sydney, which clearly shows that those opposite have no understanding as to what the difference is between the city and the needs of country people. Those opposite need to get out and see the regions because they do not know the difference between places such as Campbelltown and Coonamble. The Labor Opposition needs to understand that people living in regional communities and people living in the bush have needs that we are standing up for and representing. We all remember Country Labor, which was nothing more than a sham. It is probably better that I do not talk about it today. I recall that you guys came to my electorate a couple of months ago. It is good to see that you continue to practice your COVID safe methods around having no big gatherings.

Labor was practising COVID restrictions well and truly before COVID required it, because they could not gather 10 people for the Labor function that they hosted in my local area. You can be assured that we are behind John Barilaro and those opposite know that. If they wish to persist with this nonsense there are good local members on that side of the House as well and I am sure that they are also embarrassed by these antics. The Nats are a party of people who are passionate about regional communities, a party that is made up of people who care about regional people and a party that will continue to represent the needs of the people in our areas. With the Deputy Premier as our leader we will continue to focus on the issues that matter to them. We will continue to stand up and fight for those communities that are bouncing back from drought, helping those communities to get back on their feet after the bushfires and most importantly helping our communities to continue to recover and work through this COVID pandemic that we are experiencing.

We will ensure that they get the roads, schools, hospitals and projects that are needed in our local areas. I will not waste any more time in this House, because this is just political nonsense and there are real issues that deserve the focus of members on both sides of the Chamber. This Government is firmly focused on delivering for its communities and it is firmly focused on delivering for the regions. When those opposite want to bring a motion to this House in the interests of stability there will be no headlines. This is self-indulgence by the Labor Party.

I oppose this motion. I implore those opposite to focus on what matters; maybe they could start by working on the koala strategy, as they do not seem to have one.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (15:11:07): What a demonstration of leadership we see before us from John Barilaro. He skulked out of the Chamber as quickly as possible, like a coward. He did not remain to defend himself, he left it up to his best mate to tell us what a great bloke he is. John Barilaro is unfit to lead The Nationals and he is unfit to lead New South Wales as the Deputy Premier. It reflects poorly on us all in this Parliament that someone such as John Barilaro is allowed to occupy a senior role in the Berejiklian Government, but that is the reality we face because the Premier will not muscle up and sack John Barilaro.

The Premier must actually do something because he is out of control. Gladys Berejiklian is responsible and must fix this mess. The Deputy Premier is a disgrace and deserves to be sent back to his hobby farm by the Premier. He deserves it for his behaviour last week and because of his track record over the past few years as Deputy Premier. This is a Deputy Premier who has never done the right thing by the people of New South Wales and who has only ever pursued his narrow political self-interest. John Barilaro says he is standing up for the bush, but in the past 12 months I have travelled the length and the breadth of this State and everywhere I go I meet country communities that are beside themselves with grief and anguish because of drought, bushfire and flood.

They are beside themselves with grief and anguish because they do not see an economic future for themselves or their children on the land or in the towns they call home. The economic future for the communities that John Barilaro claims to represent is bleak and becoming bleaker. His proposed solution for the grim future his constituents face is not to revitalise the manufacturing sector or a fair wage and employment system or even investment in infrastructure, his proposed solution is to cosy up to land banking property developers who want to buy up farms, subdivide them and sell them off.

His proposed solution is nuclear power plants dotted around the countryside. His proposed solution is land clearing and endless destruction of prime agricultural land. This man does not represent the country or country people, he sells them out. This man does not represent rural and regional communities, he destroys them and he lies to them. This man is not a friend of rural and regional people or the communities they call home, he is a friend of property developers. That is what the front page of the *Sydney Morning Herald* said today. Not one representation was made on behalf of farmers or rural communities about the koala SEPP, but intervention was made on behalf of a property developer who describes himself as the "walking ATM".

Why would Jeff McCloy, a Newcastle-based property developer, write to the member for Monaro? It is very unusual for a member to make representations on behalf of someone from another electorate. It is even more unusual for a member from down south to make representations on behalf of a Newcastle property developer about a planning matter on the Far North Coast. Are we beginning to see what is going on here? Why does the Deputy Premier jump when Jeff McCloy tells him to?

But then, there are many questions that we can ask about John Barilaro's property affairs. On his financial disclosure document lodged in September 2015 he revealed that he was personally involved in two property development companies, Kotsabola Group and Europartners. He was a director of two property development companies while being a member of this Parliament. Here is a man with a luxury hobby farm that he bought in May or June 2014 for \$2 million. Here is a man who appears to have sold a commercial property in Queanbeyan in March this year for more than \$2.5 million. There is an investment property in Rushcutters Bay he appears to have bought in October 2016 for \$1.3 million, and a set of shops in Canberra on Frenchman Place, which he appears to co-own with a fellow director from the property development companies that he used to run.

Are we beginning to see what is going on here? Well, voters certainly are. They see that the Deputy Premier is using them, and using their grief, and using their anguish as a political prop to justify his political existence. They see that he has turned the National Party into a property development party. He is not a farmer. He is not a pastoralist. He is not even a successful business person. He is actually just a property developer who is here to represent property developer interests.

I am in touch with people in Cobargo, Mr Barilaro. I am in touch with people who cannot get the government assistance that he promised because they are tied up in impenetrable red tape. That is unforgivable. The Deputy Premier has pranced around bushfire-impacted regions touting his temporary accommodation pods, but there are not enough. They took too long to be delivered and people are still, today, living in cars and sleeping on couches. That is unforgivable. I am in touch with small business owners on the North Coast who applied for assistance and were told they would have to wait for weeks and weeks to receive any support, but were asked, in the meantime, if they were willing to appear alongside the Deputy Premier in media stories to promote him.

John Barilaro and his staff have sought cash-for-comment style arrangements with people in their hour of need because the most important thing to him is not these people and their grief and their anguish, but his own

political advantage and his own media exposure. That is unforgivable. What is also unforgivable is the recklessness with which he derailed the Government last week. I do not think this Government is a good government and I do not think that the Premier is a good Premier. I do not think that Mr Barilaro is a good Deputy Premier. We are in the midst of a global health and economic crisis that has not been seen for more than 100 years. In the middle of that crisis, I know that my Labor colleagues and I are looking at ways to improve people's lives.

Mr Geoff Provest: Yes, Eddie Obeid was good at improving other people's lives.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Settle down Tweed. I know that my Labor colleagues and I are looking at what can be done to secure people's health and restore their economic futures. What we discovered last week was that for the past six or nine months John Barilaro has actually been completely preoccupied with issues that have nothing to do with people's lives or their livelihoods. John Barilaro has been preoccupied with his own political self-interest while the lives of constituents are in complete turmoil. John Barilaro and his Coalition colleagues are obsessed with playing political parlour games against one another, and the Liberals are just as complicit in all of this because they have allowed this chaos to spill out into the public realm. John Barilaro has delivered nothing for regional and rural New South Wales. That is why he is going out backwards—

Mr Paul Toole: Rubbish!

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: Listen to the facts, Tooley. That is why he is going out backwards, electorally speaking. The Nationals' primary vote goes backwards and they lose a handful of seats at every election. In 2019 they lost four of the 17 seats that they had. That is almost 25 per cent of their party room obliterated at that ballot box. That is John Barilaro's legacy.

Mr Christopher Gulaptis: How did you go in 2011?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: In 2011 The Nationals lost almost a quarter of its primary vote. That is the legacy of John Barilaro. His standing in the community is in tatters. Nobody takes him seriously, and that is before we look at the temper tantrums and the meltdowns of the past 18 months since the last State election. That is before we look at the impact of his misconduct last week. The misconduct of last week puts at risk the member for Tweed. It puts at risk the member for Dubbo. It puts at risk the member for Upper Hunter. Each of those members are in electorates that are on tight margins, and this chaotic, dysfunctional mess of a government reflects very poorly on them and what they are willing to put up with from their party leader.

John Barilaro's tantrums will cost The Nationals even more seats at the next election, and I guarantee that I am not the only one looking at the numbers in those marginal electorates. Those Nationals members in marginal electorates will be looking at this chaos and wondering "Was it all worth it?" I doubt it. They will be looking at the complete failure of John Barilaro's strategy last week and they will be wondering how it reflects on him as a leader in the eyes of their voters. We can guarantee that those nervous members will continue to cause more trouble. The member for Upper Hunter will not want to lose his seat—God knows he deserves it though. Neither will the member for Dubbo or the member for Tweed. They will be talking to their colleagues, behind the Deputy Premier's back, and asking each other in hushed tones, "Was it all worth it?" They will begin to act out in their own way and they will cause yet more trouble, and more trouble for Gladys Berejiklian. Things will only get worse from here.

The Government is in chaos and the Coalition agreement is in ruins because of John Barilaro and those opposite—all of The Nationals members—who encouraged him to go out the back to wreck their own Government. His ministerial colleagues now refuse to work with him. The Premier will not utter his name. The Minister for Police and Emergency Services—who in his own right is a complete and utter turkey—said the Deputy Premier's position is now untenable. This is coming from a police Minister who has been investigated by his own police force twice in 12 months. It is astonishing, really. The guy who impersonates cops and hassles teenagers in suburban parks late at night thinks Mr Barilaro has problems.

Then there is the transport Minister. He said, "Leadership is not what we saw on display last week." This is the guy who said that he deliberately bought ferries with asbestos in them that can decapitate passengers' heads, and the guy who bought trains that do not fit the tracks. He has called into question the Deputy Premier's suitability for office. Ferry McFerryface himself thinks the Deputy Premier is no good. The guy who once said that he was ecstatic to be sacked as the Treasurer and demoted to transport Minister. He thinks the Deputy Premier is no good. Him. That bloke.

How can the Deputy Premier walk into a Cabinet meeting full of Liberal members who have decided that they cannot work with him? It is untenable. The Deputy Premier is untenable. Speaking of untenable, Stuart Ayres thinks the Deputy Premier is hopeless, too. Now that guy knows a thing or two about hopelessness. He experiences hopelessness every day of his life. So if Huey, Dewey and Louie think that the Deputy Premier is unfit to lead,

what must everyone else be thinking and feeling privately about his capacity to lead? The simple fact is the Deputy Premier's leadership is in tatters. He is not a credible leader of The Nationals and is not a viable Deputy Premier. He cannot be taken seriously. If he cannot be taken seriously by his Cabinet colleagues, he will not be taken seriously by the community.

Now more than ever we need a government that is able to deliver, lead and provide a way forward through this crisis. The Deputy Premier must resign. If he does not then the Premier should sack him. There is a mistruth that has taken hold in recent days that because the Deputy Premier is the leader of The Nationals, the Premier cannot sack him. That is nonsense. It is fundamentally incorrect. If the Premier was serious about dealing with him, and if she was serious about ending the chaos which is tearing the Government apart, she would go down to Government House with one of her little mates and swear one of them in as Deputy Premier. She could do that right now, if she were serious. For instance, the Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections could be the Deputy Premier by the close of business if the Premier was so minded. I have to say that it would be a pretty good decision, and one that we would probably support. But because she is a coward and because she is weak, and because she tolerates chaos and dysfunction, it is left to the Labor Party to move the no-confidence motion and ask Government members to support it.

Only with the successful passage of the no-confidence motion will we see the back of the Deputy Premier. Only with the successful passage of the no-confidence motion will we see the Deputy Premier replaced. Only with the successful passage of the no-confidence motion will we force the Premier to show some leadership and fix this festering sore at the heart of her broken government. The no-confidence motion must pass because we must have a functional government during this time of crisis. If the Premier will not fix the problem, the Parliament must fix it for her. While this melodrama plays out, nothing is being done in our regions. While this chaos unfolds, nothing is being done to provide hope and the opportunity for workers who have lost their jobs during the COVID-19 crisis. While this dysfunction and disunity dominates the front pages of newspapers, people who have suffered through droughts, bushfires, floods and economic devastation have been forgotten about and ignored. While the Deputy Premier remains in place, chaos reigns supreme and it must be dealt with. It must be resolved, and the Parliament must resolve it because the Premier so far has failed to do so. I urge all members to support the motion.

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (15:27:35): I strongly support the motion of no confidence in the Deputy Premier. I speak as the woman who he referred to as "disgusting human". Why? Because I dared to ask him a question. I questioned why he told the people of Menindee that he supported a royal commission into water corruption before the last election. Soon after the election, he voted against a royal commission in the Chamber. I simply asked the Deputy Premier why he said one thing in the bush but then did the opposite in Sydney. His response on Twitter was, "Helen, you are disgusting human." Bad grammar for a start. Is that the right way to speak to a parliamentary colleague? Is that the way we want our leaders to speak to women? Is this the example we want to set for our sons and daughters? That is one way the Deputy Premier's behaviour does not fit his role.

I have been the member for Murray for 18 months. I was democratically elected by the people of my electorate with a 26 per cent swing against the National Party. It is amazing, isn't it? But the Deputy Premier and the National Party refuse to recognise me as the local representative. Whenever there is a government event or an announcement in my town, I do not even get invited. I am often not even told that the event is on. Instead, the Deputy Premier invites the member for Cootamundra—an outsider. She is an outsider to our region. The people of my electorate do not even know who she is, but she swans in and takes the glory. That is a total slap in the face to the thousands of people who voted for me as their representative. It is unbecoming of a party leader and it goes against the principles of democracy.

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

Mrs HELEN DALTON: There is a very good reason why the people of the electorate of Murray are no longer represented by the National Party.

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

Mrs HELEN DALTON: They have neglected my region for so long. In fact, they have neglected the region for about 35 years, during which time we got nothing. It is only when they feared losing the seat that the money started to flow towards us. My electorate has the highest suicide rate in New South Wales but does not have a single mental health service in any of its hospitals. Why does the Deputy Premier not jump up and down in the media about that? That is something that he should threaten to leave the Government over, but alas he only talks about himself—always about himself. He constantly says one thing in the regions while doing the exact opposite back here in Sydney every time. That is not the sort of leader that we need in a crisis.

Last year he talked tough on the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. He said that he was ready to rip it up and withdraw New South Wales. But a few months before that the New South Wales Government quietly signed on to the plan in full. While he was out there talking about it, the deal had already been done. Once again it was all show for the media. In the end, the Deputy Premier backed down to the Premier. It was just like his big show with the koalas. We know that he quietly signed off on the koala policy months before the media antics. The Nationals call themselves the only party for regional New South Wales. Regional New South Wales is hurting due to drought, water mismanagement and border closures and we need leaders who can fight for them in Parliament rather than fight with each other in the media. That is why I support this motion.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation) (15:32:43): I speak against the Sydney-based Leader of the Opposition and a raft of metropolitan Labor MPs, as well as the member for Murray, who does not live in Murray but instead lives Cootamundra. That is why the member for Cootamundra gets invited to events that the Deputy Premier goes to. If the member for Murray wants to fix that then she should shift where she lives. Members opposite want to attack the Deputy Premier for standing up for regional New South Wales. I could stand here and talk as a Minister in The Nationals about the reforms championed by the Deputy Premier, like the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund and the Drought Package. I could talk about his work as the Minister responsible for bushfire recovery and the work that he has done to help thousands of victims to rebuild after this summer's bushfires. We could take note of the NSW Nationals' investment in regional economies through the Growing Local Economies fund to bring well-paid jobs back to the regions. I speak as the member for Tamworth—the best electorate in the State.

The SPEAKER: The member for Swansea and the member for Coffs Harbour will cease interjecting.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: Mine is a regional seat—a seat that was ignored for decades by a city-centric Labor government that looked no further west than the Nepean River. Projects like hospitals, schools, roads, police stations and ambulance stations were continually ignored as Labor propped up an Independent with promise after empty promise after empty promise. I can tell you that those in Country Labor, who we on this side took a great interest in, wanted a leader like John Barilaro to pull them out of the quagmire, the mess, the corruption that they knew they were in and eventually went broke and bust. They wanted a leader like John Barilaro. They did not have anyone. I know that members opposite crawl down the corridor to knock on the Deputy Premier's door when they need help and assistance. Where are they now? They are the ones who knock on his door and say, "Hey, Barra, can you give me a hand? Barra, I need some support. Barra, I need some assistance. We know you are a fighter." They backchannel to him. Labor members backchannel to the Deputy Premier when they want something from the Government. They know who they are.

Ms Yasmin Catley: What is a backchannel?

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: The member for Swansea well knows the path to the Deputy Premier's door. As far as Labor members are concerned, the State boundary is only as far as their eyes can see. My community has not forgotten the neglect and the disregard under Labor. We will never forget Labor's disdain for regional New South Wales. My region will back in John Barilaro time and again.

Ms Yasmin Catley: I do not even know where his door is.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: I am sure you do, member for Swansea.

Ms Yasmin Catley: No, I don't. I know where yours is though.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: Thank you. The Deputy Premier has fought tooth and nail to get our fair share, in and out of Cabinet, to ensure that regional New South Wales is not treated as an afterthought. The investment in my electorate is only possible because of the hard work and the advocacy of John Barilaro and my National Party colleagues—and there are many of them present in the Chamber today under COVID-safe public health—

Mr Adam Marshall: And you, of course.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: I acknowledge the interjection of the member for Northern Tablelands, my neighbouring electorate colleague. We do work as a team. The Deputy Premier [DP] has been instrumental in delivering along with my National Party colleagues, who are present in the Chamber today under COVID-safe instructions. In addition to driving election commitments, it is the out-of-cycle funding requests and projects that need that grunt and push from the DP. He is a tenacious advocate and you can always rely on Barra to back you in. Those out-of-cycle funding requests are the ones that I am talking about when Labor goes strolling down to level 9, all the way to the end of the building, to knock on his door and say, "Hey, Barra, are you in? We need help. We need some support. We need some assistance. We need a bit of grunt. We need someone to go and let the Government know that this is a problem for us in a Labor-held seat." Oh, yeah. And they know who they are.

Some of those projects that we know that have been funded—this is just in the Tamworth electorate and I know they have been spread across regional New South Wales—include \$35 million for an intermodal rail hub and freight terminal at Tamworth, which will create a direct rail line from Port Botany and deliver transport supply chain solutions for producers and commercial operators in the New England north-west. The \$53 million redevelopment of Gunnedah Hospital, a significant investment projected to deliver 530 jobs—so crucial, given the financial impacts of COVID-19.

How about the investment in building a better Banksia Mental Health Unit? A brand-new mental health unit for Tamworth to serve the New England north-west—we know how difficult it is at the moment with COVID-19 and the rise in mental health issues—driven by the Deputy Premier, driven by the Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women, the Hon. Bronnie Taylor, and driven by team Nationals for regional New South Wales. Funding also includes \$14 million for the Gunnedah Saleyards, \$480 million for Dungowan Dam and \$43 million for a new pipeline from Chaffey Dam to the city of Tamworth when our city was running out of water. That has come from the Deputy Premier and team Nationals in regional New South Wales. I think of other water infrastructure projects right across regional New South Wales—

Mrs Helen Dalton: Yeah, the Broken Hill pipeline—the pipeline that no-one wanted.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: I can tell the member for Murray, who does not live in Murray but lives in Cootamundra and gets pretty annoyed when she does not get invited to commitments in Cootamundra, take a leaf out of the member for Cootamundra's book on how to deal with the Government to get what you need.

Mrs Helen Dalton: She does not even know the difference between the Murray and the Murrumbidgee rivers.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: I am sorry, I can't quite hear you sitting up the back there. Funding also includes the \$10 million co-contribution to a water supply for Werris Creek, a \$20 million upgrade for road access to the airport in Tamworth and the industrial estate, \$26 million for a university for Tamworth and, might I add—

[An Opposition member interjected.]

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: I acknowledge the interjection from the member for Blacktown who said, "How does Blacktown get help?" We will show you the door to the Deputy Premier's office. You too can join the conga line of Labor members who go and ask for support and assistance. Just take a number. In terms of koalas, Gunnedah in the Tamworth electorate is the koala capital of the world.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: Of the universe.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: Of the universe, indeed. There is \$7 million for a koala research facility and education facility for Gunnedah. In addition to that, during the worst drought on record, we planted trees, koala habitats and koala corridors. We have put in "blinky drinkers". Do those opposite know what they are? They are where you put little containers full of water in trees so the koalas get a drink. That is what we do. While those opposite are down here trying to muckrake, trying to stir up and knocking on the Deputy Premier's door for assistance, we are out there doing what we do: protecting koala habitat. Come out to Gunnedah and we will show you how to do it for real.

The Deputy Premier was also right behind the support for the New Zealand Warriors team when they quarantined in Tamworth. The list of how he fights for regional New South Wales goes on. This is investment and support of a scale unheard of in regional New South Wales until a decade ago—and that is just my electorate. Imagine the multimillions of dollars that have been spread throughout regional New South Wales. Every single regional MP will tell the same story. The changes we are seeing in regional New South Wales are because of the strong leadership of John Barilaro and the New South Wales Nationals.

When the New South Wales Nationals are strong, regional New South Wales is strong. The Nationals have never been stronger in their support for the Deputy Premier. The Nationals is the only party that gives the people of the regions a voice in Parliament and a seat at the decision-making table. In order to do so, it needs a strong leader who is not afraid to stand up and take a big hit for country people. That is what he does. That is why I will not be supporting this motion. I am disgusted at the way those opposite have attacked the man. I am disgusted at the way the Opposition has belittled this man who has stood up tall, who has got a bloody nose and who has gone in hard for regional New South Wales. No, do not attack the policy; attack the man—that is what those opposite do best. I say to the Labor city-centric members opposite, the National Institute of Dramatic Art is just down the road. Go down to NIDA for further acting lessons because your show today was totally underrated. And let me tell you: No, you did not pass the audition.

Mr Paul Scully: Best leadership audition ever!

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

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: John Barilaro is a friend of mine and I am a member of The Nationals. I back John Barilaro as the Deputy Premier of New South Wales and as the leader of The Nationals. More importantly, I am a regional MP who knows that regional New South Wales is better off as a result of his leadership of The Nationals.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (15:44:18): It is insightful that the member for Tamworth mentioned NIDA, because we have had a few audition speeches here this afternoon. You can imagine them back in their room: You've got to make this good. You've really got to make this good. Make the pictures bigger. Make the words bigger. You've really got to make this good. So far I am with the member for Tamworth.

The Coalition is made up of two parties, the Liberal Party and the National Party. Is not the Liberal Party well represented here today? We now have no-one. We now have on the floor of Parliament not one Liberal member willing to support the Deputy Premier. Not just a backbench member of Parliament who has gone a bit rogue. Not one Liberal member of Parliament is prepared to come down here. Even my good friend the Leader of the House has tapped the mat. He has had enough. My good friend the member for Kiama gone; he has had a gutful. No way. No more for him. The member for Parramatta stayed in for about two minutes until he realised his electorate is going to be on some koala habitat or something. He has run up there to check what is going on. He has gone.

This is a Coalition that is completely obliterated. We saw on the floor of Parliament today the extraordinary event of the Deputy Premier coming in here and basically saying: I can do what I like, say what I like, be what I like because I am in Cabinet. Yes, but this is not Cabinet. This is the Parliament. You are responsible for Cabinet solidarity as the Deputy Premier. You are a key plank in stable government. But you have demonstrated you are not about stable government. You are not about any of those things. You are about yourself. That is what you are about.

I wondered why the police Minister was not here. Then I thought: probably fair enough. This is the greatest act of political bastardry of all time. That is coming from the police Minister. The police Minister calls it the greatest act of political bastardry of all time—the gentleman who impersonated a cop—the greatest political bastardry of all time, by a police impersonator, who is also the police Minister. I thought: What about the member for Bega? He said, "Leadership is not what we saw last week." That is the Minister for Transport and Roads who has ordered ferries that do not go under the bridge. This is the Minister for Transport and Roads talking about leadership when he ordered ferries that did not go under a bridge. This is the low level they are comparing the Deputy Premier to.

You would think the issue of the State Environmental Planning Policy [SEPP] was one that we were only just becoming aware of last week. But this was passed in December. I know they do not like daylight saving, but that is ridiculous, that lag. That is nine months to bring it up. But even worse, the member for Tamworth and the Minister for Mental Health in the other place signed off on it the Executive Council. This has now become stupid.

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

Mr RYAN PARK: We now have a police Minister who impersonated a police officer saying it is the greatest act of political bastardry. We now have a transport Minister who ordered a ferry that would decapitate your head if you went underneath the bridge, calling it bad leadership and now we have a situation where a Minister comes here defending the Deputy Premier for his attack and he signed off on it. This is unbelievable. What I was interested in is the issue that The Nationals raised. The issue that The Nationals wanted to bring the Government to its knees on is its desire to see a reduction in the number of koalas. It wanted to bring the Government to its knees on the desire to see a reduction in koala numbers.

I would have thought it might have wanted to bring the Government to its knees on its decimation of TAFE. I thought that may have got a run. I thought it might have wanted to bring the Government to its knees on the level of access rural and regional people have to healthcare and the fact that in rural hospitals you can go days without seeing a doctor. I thought that might have passed muster to bring the Government to its knees. Or what about the fact that despite promising 30 per cent guaranteed infrastructure funding, the Government has never made that for the people in the bush? Or what about the fact, as the member for Murray talks about and has raised many times, the lack of investment in droughtproofing regional and rural New South Wales? Or what about the privatising of our State forests as raised by the member for Wollongong? I thought that might have been enough to bring the Government to its knees.

But none of those issues. Do not worry about TAFE. Do not worry about access to healthcare. Do not worry about drought proofing the bush. No. We will bring the Government down because you want to kill more koalas. You have got to be kidding. You want to kill more koalas. Do not take it from me. It is your Cabinet

colleague, Minister Stokes, who is saying: Why now? Why ever? That is Minister Stokes. That is not me. That is not anyone on this side. That is him who was standing over there earlier. "Why now? Why ever?" You chose to bring a government to its knees in the middle of the worst economic crisis our communities have faced when communities are facing job losses amongst their family and friends. This lot decides to bring the Government to its knees on the simple wish to do something for property developers. Because, do you know what? This is not about farmers. This is not about koalas. This is about property developers. Let us get fair dinkum about this. This is about property developers and property development where they need it. Let us be very, very clear, because you had two National Ministers sign off on this at the Executive Council. This passed the Parliament in December. If it was about farmers or regional communities, why did you not raise it then? Because this is about property developers. Let us make that very, very clear.

I would have thought that this Government in the worst health crisis in generations, in the worst economic crisis our families, our communities, our loved ones, our friends have faced, would had a single focus on ensuring it is doing everything it can to improve the lives of working men and women. But this is not about working men and women. This is never about working men and women when John Barilaro raises it. It is about John Barilaro and in this case it is about property developers. Let us be very, very clear about this: This is a government that is imploding. It is a government that is worried about itself. It is a government that only worries about its own jobs, not the jobs of working men and women in the communities every single one of us are put here to represent. We are put here by communities to represent them.

The SPEAKER: Government members will remain silent.

Mr RYAN PARK: I will finish with a single story about a gentleman called Max I met last week in my electorate. He said to me he has been in his business for 23 years. He is only surviving because of JobKeeper. His wife has lost her job. He said to me, "Ryan, I'm really, really worried." He said, "You better look after us." I say this to Max and to every single working man and woman across New South Wales in the community today: There is one group of people who give a damn about you in this pandemic and that is the New South Wales Opposition, with members of the crossbench. Because we are the people who are here today who are calling out your rubbish. When people such as Max want a government and are looking for a stable, strong government, they get you lot. No wonder they are angry and no wonder they are disappointed.

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (15:54:39): I come to this motion not by choice but by necessity so that The Greens can put our position on the table. We take these motions very seriously. We have variously supported and not supported motions of no confidence. If this motion had been moved under Standing Order 111 or Standing Order 118, we would not support it. We would not support a no-confidence motion in the Government. But today, as the motion was moved under Standing Order 112, we will support the motion of no confidence in the Minister, and we will explain why.

We have witnessed a most embarrassing spectacle that has undermined confidence in the Government, divided the community and misled it on a Government policy. We take the pandemic and the recession very seriously and believe we need to be focusing on that. If the National Party has a problem with something the Government produces, it should deal with it in the proper way rather than bringing the Government into crisis and putting the focus on the National Party rather than on the wider community. At the moment, people need our support and our backing. Many local businesses and families in our communities are suffering, and the future is uncertain. Instead, the Deputy Premier chooses to wreck relationships, wreck the Government and wreck the habitat of koalas.

The koala State environmental planning policy [SEPP] is such a mild touch—such a mild SEPP. It is remarkable that the National Party has chosen to have a dispute over this issue. Why has it done so? It is because finally, and for the first time, the Liberal Party stood up to the boy who cried wolf. The Government found—as the National Party knows, the wider community knows, everyone knows—that the boy who cried wolf has a bark but no bite. There was an embarrassing backdown. It is incredibly disappointing. It happened not because of a policy issue but because of the disorientation of the National Party—the changing demographics in its own communities, the attack by The Greens and Labor on the coast and by the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party in the west—desperately seeking to follow its strategy. What is that strategy? First, The Nationals say, "We are the best mayor of the bush; we build more than anybody else." Secondly, they say, "We are not the Liberals. We want to be in government but, hey, we are not in government."

That strategy cannot win. That strategy will not win The Nationals government and it will not maintain the party. We need an important voice for regional New South Wales but the National Party cannot win if it maintains that strategy. That was called out by Rob Oakeshott, who wrote what I think is a thoughtful piece for *The Sydney Morning Herald*. He said:

... less than 20 members of the NSW National Party undertook an exercise in performative politics by threatening to abstain from their own government's agenda while maintaining ministerial privileges as an expression of their frustration to koala policies in New South Wales ...

What a ridiculous situation. It again demonstrates the disorientation, the lack of direction and the lack of confidence of the National Party. To me, that is a shame because it affects the way our State is governed. That is something we should all consider. Importantly, we have seen reports—there was another op-ed piece in *The Sydney Morning Herald*—that people who have worked with The Nationals say it is not unusual that they engage in the policy process late, they fail to understand how the policy works and, importantly in this situation, they spread disinformation. It is unbelievable that the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces had to write opinion pieces in *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Sydney Morning Herald* to correct the mistruths that were spread by the Government's own Coalition partner.

We are supporting this motion not just because of the destabilisation of government but because of the mistruths, the reports of bullying behaviour and the constant attempts to create a false division between the city and the country. The Deputy Premier represents the people of New South Wales, not the people of western New South Wales or northern New South Wales or Sydney. The Deputy Premier represents everybody, just as the Premier represents everybody. The Premier does not represent just the people of Sydney; she represents everyone in this State. That fundamental misunderstanding is causing a problem for so many people in this Parliament and in the wider community. The Deputy Premier should stand up for everyone, not use the divisive tactic of "I only stand for the bush". We expect the Deputy Premier to listen to everyone across the whole of New South Wales and respect their views. That is what I choose to do.

I have often stood in this place—Government members know this—and said that for a long time the regions have been under supported. We will always say that. That is absolutely critical. The Shooters say that, we say that and many other people put forward that perspective. But for the Deputy Premier to try to blow up the Government for the people he represents—who now more and more are the strong and the powerful, such as developers and their supporters—is very disappointing to everyone in New South Wales. If there is a policy issue it should be resolved internally, not taken to the streets with claims that can never be backed up. I find it remarkable that the member for Bathurst made an implied threat, "Be careful, member for Newcastle; be careful, member for Lismore. If you back this motion there might be an issue." That is the type of disgraceful government we should oppose. Decisions should be based on merit and the nature of the proposal, not based on who supports whom in a no-confidence motion. I think it is a disgrace that the member would suggest people should not get support for important issues in Lismore or in Newcastle because he does not like the way someone voted in this place.

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

Mr JAMIE PARKER: I think that is disgusting, and I think other National Party members will agree. We know that when Labor was in government it made decisions based on the same types of motivations. Decisions should never be based on whether you like a member or how they vote; they should be based on the community issue and the importance of the proposal being put forward. Finally, I agree with the Premier when she reportedly said that the behaviour was disgusting. I think we all agree it was a sad and shameful episode in New South Wales politics when the wider community is facing such enormous challenges. It is also incredible that the Deputy Premier has accused another Minister in his own government of leaking to a newspaper. This has to stop because we know that the Government will not only destroy itself but also destroy the confidence of the community. It will not be focused on the things that people need in the community post bushfires and in the middle of a pandemic. We will support the motion.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (16:02:08): I oppose this motion and I oppose the words of the Leader of the Opposition. Every day John Barilaro and his team fight for the interests of New South Wales, particularly regional New South Wales—every single day. That is what motivates him and what motivates everything we do on behalf of our communities—every day. Members may wonder where John Barilaro is right now. He is right now where we need him to be on behalf of our communities—in budget deliberations. For those members who may remember what it is like to be in government, this is an important time to be focused on budget preparations. That is where he is today, and that is where we need John Barilaro to be on behalf of regional New South Wales.

The Sydney Morning Herald ran an excellent piece yesterday about stimulus funding. Do you know what? The article said that 52 per cent of the funding will go to regional New South Wales, and for that we can thank John Barilaro and his strong, determined leadership. Yes, he has an interesting style; but he delivers for our communities. He delivers day after day for our communities. I listened with great interest to the contribution by the member for Balmain. It was a very thoughtful, measured contribution. He acknowledged that regional New South Wales has missed out for too long. In government we discuss how people in regional New South Wales are sick of being told by those in the inner city how they need to live their lives and what property rights

they may be impacted by. I am not going to go into the ins and outs of that policy arrangement and those discussions. Quite rightly, they need to go behind closed doors again and we will get an outcome for our communities.

This is not John Barilaro going out on a limb. As the leader of The Nationals, he had the support of his party room because our communities and our constituents care deeply about the impacts to their farms and their properties. That is what this issue is about. We will have those conversations behind closed doors, where they need to be. But be assured we are doing it on behalf of our people: our farmers, our towns and our communities. We have had an acknowledgement that the maps are simply flawed. Whether it is a roundabout in the main street of Grafton or Mount Panorama, we know that is not core koala habitat.

I can tell the House 100 per cent that we want koala populations to grow and thrive in our communities. We have seen the devastation of those fires and how many koalas were burnt and destroyed. We saw owners of property surrounded by national park with tears running down their faces because they saw dead koalas. That is what happened. There are other ways that we can protect koalas and our farmers are part of that stewardship. Farmers are proud when there is a koala on their property but that should not impact on the shed or fencing they want or the driveway they need. That is what we need to focus on.

We need to focus on regional New South Wales being at the heart of opening up opportunities post-COVID. We do not need limitations on our regions. We want our regions to thrive. Where is the member for Keira? He can tell Max that we want his business to succeed. We do not want to tear people down who want to make a go of it, who want to employ people, who want to pay wages and taxes. We want to support those people every single day. In a couple of hours part of the Pacific Highway will be reopened as a dual carriageway. That is what this Government is doing. John Barilaro is the first leader in 30 years to announce new dams for New South Wales. We are delivering for the regions, not because they deserve it—they are grateful—but because they need it to thrive. In a post-COVID world we want our communities and businesses to grow. We want jobs. We want employment. We want the investment in the Pacific Highway to succeed. We want more water security through dams.

Mrs Helen Dalton: We want digital connectivity.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: We do want digital connectivity. We want to support more opportunity for access by Telstra and Optus and everybody else.

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

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: That is why for the first time, through the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund, the State Government is supporting that type of investment. As for the member for Murray, how many times has she been back channelling to John Barilaro for help with border issues? How many times has she rung his office?

[Opposition and crossbench members interjected.]

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: That is his job because he is effective in what he does. As the member for Tamworth said, they always back channel to Barra because he is effective. He gets things done. We will sort out this issue. We will all work together and we will get where we need to go. It is right to say there is stress on this State like no other time. It is important that the right policy settings are in place so that when we come out of this we can support regional New South Wales, Max can employ people and his business can survive, we can have growth in koala populations and we can have jobs. One of the most exciting things that the leader of the National Party achieved was funding for our Stronger Communities projects. What does that mean? It means an \$8 million investment in an industrial park in Valla, an industrial park that was supported by council because the other industrial park is full. That is a good thing. We want manufacturing in regional New South Wales. We need to support that; that means jobs. I am glad The Greens support that because the Labor councillor does not. As a matter of interest, she is outside her own party platform on that issue.

In terms of bushfire recovery, John Barilaro was asked to do the job of cleaning up, sorting it out and delivering pods to 3,613 properties. He took up that job with the energy that we know and expect of the Deputy Premier. It was a very traumatic period and a really tough time, whether it was in the Clarence electorate, my electorate, the Myall Lakes electorate or the South Coast. In terms of drought, I am sure the agriculture Minister will expand on the support that he and the Deputy Premier delivered for farmers. In terms of water security, since the election the Deputy Premier has been at the table fighting for at least \$270 million to ensure towns did not run out of water. That is on top of dams. We are delivering to our communities. We are working hard every day for our communities and our constituents. Our constituents have asked us to pick up the ball, run with it and deliver. It is about ensuring that we have the right planning policy settings for the future, for our farmers and for us all. The message from the bush is that they are sick of being told by officials in the city how they should live, how

they should make applications, how it all works. We are working internally to improve that and increase opportunities for regional New South Wales.

Mr Ryan Park: You are on the table.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: We are at the table and we are working through that.

Ms Yasmin Catley: You have been at the table for a decade.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: In that decade regional New South Wales has seen investment like no other: the Pacific Highway dual carriageway, the announcement of the dams, the Great Western Highway funding that is about to come and the plan to duplicate the Princes Highway. This is what we are doing and this is what we are achieving. We will continue to work through and sort out our issues behind closed doors. I do not support this motion. I support my communities. For the record, the meeting today with Harry Triguboff was organised on 27 August. It was to do with Australian housing standards that could impact and close glass manufacturing across regional New South Wales and throughout western Sydney. There are plans afoot at a Federal level to bring in glazing that would not be able to be provided by small to medium businesses across regional New South Wales and western Sydney.

I make no apologies for attending the meeting. I have glass manufacturing in my electorate. I want those people to thrive and I want those jobs to continue and I do not want decisions being made in Canberra affecting what we are doing. That was the genesis and the basis of the meeting today, which was organised on 27 August, just for the record. I am proud to be a member of the National Party. I am proud to be a member of this Government and I am proud to be led by John Barilaro. We will work our way through this. We will ensure, as we have continued to do, the support that John Barilaro has given the Premier in the COVID deliberations. We will make sure that the voice of country New South Wales is heard in those decisions. I have not had COVID in my region for about 140 days. We have and will continue to work through the border issues. We will ensure investment so regional New South Wales can continue to thrive and grow, as it has done since we came to government in 2011.

The SPEAKER: I will clarify the time remaining pursuant to the motion passed by the House earlier. The Labor Party has three minutes and 54 seconds, the Government has, on my calculations, just over 13 minutes and the crossbench has about 12.5 minutes.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (16:14:31): I want to reflect on the contribution of the Minister for Water, Property and Housing, the member for Oxley. I remind her that she sits at the Cabinet table. This matter is not being sorted out behind closed doors as she claimed because if it were we would not have to consider this motion before the Parliament. We would not have to see the unedifying display that we saw last week of a decade-old government self-destructing. We would not have seen a Deputy Premier who had to throw a temper tantrum to get his way, just like a 10-year-old but not befitting a 10-year-old government. This is a tired government. Government members can hold up a eucalyptus leaf, as a fig leaf, about how it will conduct its business behind closed doors. The fact of the matter is today on the floor of this Chamber the Deputy Premier basically called out another Minister in the Government for leaking information against him.

The Deputy Premier took to task members of the Cabinet about a policy issue that yesterday they said was all sorted out. Today it is back on the front pages of the papers and back on the floor of this Chamber, and not at the Cabinet table where it should be discussed. I have watched politics for a long time at a national and at a State level and I have seen a lot of things come and go, but I have never seen a weaker defence of a leader than what I have seen from Minister after Minister from the opposite side of this Chamber today. Those were akin to political eulogies of a political carcass, not about how one would defend one's leader.

Applications were made for the leadership, and I think the passion showed by the Minister for Water, Property and Housing might have pipped the Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation, the member for Tamworth. There were certainly some auditions. It is a pretty close race and the Deputy Premier is a big fan of the National Rugby League so he might be going to the bunker on this one just to find out what is going on. If similar speeches were given at the Cabinet table rather than in this Chamber things would be different. We would not be considering such a motion. We would not have open attacks from Liberal Party Ministers on the Deputy Premier calling his leadership untenable. Leadership was not what was on display last week. They said they will not work with the Deputy Premier.

It is incredible because a government cannot run, and competent decision-making cannot take place at the best of times when Ministers are in open warfare with one another, and when that warfare spills out of the Cabinet room and into this Chamber. We cannot have competent government at the best of times doing that, let alone competent government and competent decision-making in a pandemic and in the middle of a recession when they behave like that. I note that there are only two members of the Liberal Party in the Chamber. Any member who does not vote in support of this motion today is voting in support of incompetent decision-making and unstable

government, and it will go against not only city residents of New South Wales but also rural and regional residents of New South Wales. If members continue to support this disgraceful sideshow that has become everything that is about the New South Wales Government at the moment, they support a circus act that has to end.

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (16:18:44): What an extraordinary motion to be speaking on in this Chamber. I acknowledge the construction of this motion of no confidence moved by the Leader of the Opposition. I think this motion is inherently supportable *prima facie*. Last Thursday The Nationals delivered a gift to the Opposition by their behaviour when they walked across the road and wanted to take on their own government with whom they sit in the Cabinet every other day. It was extraordinary. I would be absolutely shocked and surprised if the Leader of the Opposition had not moved a motion of no confidence because that is Opposition business 101. It would not matter if the situation was reversed with a Coalition sitting on the Opposition benches. If they were given such a gift they would also move a motion of no confidence.

It is extraordinary to be arguing about such an iconic creature, a koala, about plans to protect them and enhance their habitat so that we will see more koalas in New South Wales. We have driven so many species to the brink, or pushed them over the brink, in some 250 years. We are a disgraceful people in New South Wales and around Australia if we cannot own up to the fact of what we have been doing and take the strongest measures we can to fix it. In my view the best way is to rely on the science, and that is what the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces is doing. I believe that that Minister should prevail in this particular measure.

I have so much to say, but as a local well-known developer in the Hunter Jeff McCloy has been introduced into this matter it may make people think some corruption from a developer could be involved. I would say to people from now on if they want to take advice about the natural world, about the protection of our iconic species from Jeff McCloy, who in other ways I quite respect as a successful businessman, they are probably going down the wrong track. I am pleased that the Deputy Premier said he did not have any discussions with Jeff McCloy, which is an important issue to set aside.

Some matters are very important about the way in which The Nationals conducted themselves. I say to all members of The Nationals who are in this House that I found it extraordinary that they walked across the road and embarrassed the Premier at this time. We have to deal with many serious matters at this time in New South Wales and the Premier, I believe, has been doing an extraordinary job of dealing with COVID-19 within our community. COVID-19 should be the pre-eminent focus of the Government at this time. I was dumbfounded when The Nationals crossed the road. The independent members of the crossbench want to make it very clear that we are not looking for new members of the crossbench. From now on I ask members to take that option off their program. It is not an acceptable position for members of the crossbench and if they do so, we may move to the front bench somewhere. I am sure the member for Murray concurs with me. The member for Balmain spoke about The Greens decision to support this motion. He said it is because this motion was brought under section 112 and not section 111. He made a distinction about the impact on the Government. My colleague and friend the member for Sydney and I believe that regardless of the section it is brought under it does have a significant impact on the stability of this Government. Our position is we want a stable government.

While the Opposition has every right to bring this particular motion, I also think other members have an obligation to think beyond that, because this is not a simple matter that we are here to consider. The member for Sydney, the member for Wagga Wagga and I have always made it known that we would only give support and confidence to the Government as long as there were no issues relating to maladministration or corruption. That has not been an issue in this case. We feel the stance of the National Party should be condemned in this particular case, and we fully support the Government, Minister Stokes and Minister Kean in seeking to protect and enhance the habitat for koalas.

By the way, we are not just talking about koalas. I acknowledge that the member for Port Stephens would agree that iconic creature, the koala, is part of an ecosystem. If we are losing koalas we will lose ecosystems. That can have so many broader ramifications than just for the koala. The koala is emblematic in that sense. However, we have not seen the maladministration and the corruption. I appreciate our colleagues in the Opposition reaching out to us and I truly do appreciate the argument they are putting. But we do not believe that the threshold has been reached to take the three Independent members across the line that would have us supporting this motion at this stage. I thank the House.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (16:26:19): Dear oh dear. Is that it? Is that basically all those members opposite have got? I always wanted to know what it was like to be whacked with a piece of wet lettuce or figuratively mauled by a guinea pig in this Chamber, and that is it. Those opposite have got absolutely nothing. They have brought a motion of most seriousness to this House yet all we saw was the very poor delivery of pre-written lines, where the speakers have stumbled over their lines when put under pressure.

Why are they bringing such a serious motion to this House to attack Deputy Premier John Barilaro, the Leader of The Nationals? It is because they are scared. He has got them bluffed. They do not know how to deal with someone who is passionate, someone who is a fighter who believes in the courage of his convictions and wears his heart on his sleeve—someone who fights wholly and solely for rural and regional New South Wales and backs his local members in the party room. Why? Because those members opposite have no soul. They have no scruples. They do not believe in the regions. If they did, why would they not bring into this House for this important debate a single member of the Opposition who holds an electorate west of the Great Dividing Range in country New South Wales?

Mrs Melinda Pavey: Why is that?

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: Do they hold any?

Mrs Melinda Pavey: No!

Mr ADAM MARSHALL: Do they hold any electorates west of the Great Dividing Range? The bush is an absolute anathema to these people. They never get a bit of dirt on their nice shiny lace-up shoes. I ask members to look at my boots: Here are some boots with some country dirt on them! That dirt is kryptonite to those members opposite; they should not get too close. They would not have a clue what is going on. I know the Leader of the Opposition was born in Gloucester. My family is from Scotland; it does not mean I play bagpipes and eat haggis. One swallow does not make a spring. They have to live in the bush and represent the bush. They have to believe in the bush, not come to this Chamber with rehearsed lines and platitudes saying, "We care about the regions."

If those opposite cared so much, where was their drought policy at the last election? At the height of the worst drought in our State's history they had no drought policy—absolute crickets. Where have they been on supporting a farmer's right to farm? Nowhere. Where have they been during their COVID slumber on supporting a national agricultural workers' code and encouraging their colleagues in Labor States to support the development of that code so that farm workers can travel across State boundaries? They have been nowhere and offered nothing. They do not care about regional New South Wales. They should not come into this House pretending that they care. If they want to kick someone on our side of the Chamber that is one thing, but they should not pretend they care because they do not care and they have shown it time and again.

Every member on this side of the Chamber has examples in their electorates of hospitals, schools, bridges, infrastructure that went neglected during 16 years of Labor. The infrastructure projects that this Government is building now are us trying to play catch-up to fill the enormous gap that was left by those members opposite. There were hospitals—whether it be in Inverell or in the electorates of Tweed or Myall Lakes—where the roof was leaking and nursing staff were literally pushing gas bottles around on trolleys to connect to the beds of patients. That should have been fixed 20 years ago, but it was left to us to fix when we came to government. Those opposite should not dare come into this House pretending they care.

[An Opposition member interjected.]

I am not even going to listen to that interjection. The member for Swansea should get a bit of dirt on her shoes and listen to some people. The fact that those members opposite manufacture confected outrage about property developers again shows they have not even read the policy. I am glad the member for Keira mentioned crayons and pictures. I doubt he has even been through the budget from three years ago, because it does not have pictures in it. Seriously, members opposite should get out into the regions and talk to people. They will begin to understand the impacts of some of the policies that they pretend to care about but also that they show utter contempt about when it comes to the crunch. When it comes to elections and fighting on the issues of substantive policy, they are absolutely missing in action time and again. Instead, they are playing political or ideological games.

An important part of being a Nat—whether you are John Barilaro and the leader of our party or you are just a member, whether a member of Parliament or not—is that there are two critical tenets. One is speaking up on behalf of your community in regional New South Wales. The Deputy Premier does that in spades. He supports The Nationals members in this Parliament to do that, and we should. You have to be a fighter. No matter what party you are part of, or whether you are an Independent, fundamentally you are in Parliament to speak up for your community. You have to do that consistently, but you have also got to be able to deliver. You have to be able to fix those issues where communities—in some cases because of those members opposite—have been going without for decades. You have got to be able to deliver that hospital, that new ambulance station at Iluka, that beautiful new footy field or cricket oval at Victoria Park, or whatever it might be, across various parts of New South Wales. You can only do that if you have done your homework and done the groundwork, but most importantly if you care.

I am glad the member for Oxley and Minister for Water, Property and Housing mentioned drought in her contribution to this debate. We have not completely come through the worst drought in living memory in this State, but we are getting closer. But I tell members this: None of those 18,500-odd farmers who have received direct financial support through this drought would have received a dollar if it were not for the strong advocacy of our Deputy Premier, fighting around the Cabinet table and the table of the Expenditure Review Committee to make sure we got the \$2 billion to provide in direct funding and the \$4 billion in water security, and other drought measures that the water Minister spoke about. That would not have happened.

Nor would we have seen the investment in special activation precincts across rural and regional New South Wales. Unlike what one member said in their contribution, it has not just been in Government-held electorates but in one of the crossbench-held electorates as well. There was a special activation precinct in the member for Wagga Wagga's electorate and one for Williamstown as well. Which electorate is Williamstown in? It is in the electorate of Port Stephens. Where is the member for Port Stephens? There was another special activation precinct in Parkes, in another crossbench member's electorate, and of course there was one in Moree. I am not sure which electorate Moree is in, but it is a great electorate.

Those projects alone will unlock thousands and thousands of brand new jobs in regional New South Wales, in most cases building on the back of inland rail—another critical infrastructure project happening in regional New South Wales. The Stronger Country Communities Fund, the Snowy Hydro fund, all of the bushfire funding, the tens of millions of dollars provided just to rebuild fences: all of those things would not have happened. Government is not all about the shiny projects, but in times of need money certainly goes a long way to support people. None of it would have happened without the leadership, the advocacy and the passion of John Barilaro.

It will come as no surprise to members that I oppose the motion. I not only oppose it but I find it absolutely repugnant. I would be willing to respect it—although I would still oppose it—if I thought those members opposite believed in it. But they do not. In this House Opposition members feign interest, but when the rubber hits the road they are never anywhere to be seen. Just saying that they were born in a bush community ain't enough; it does cut the mustard. I encourage all members of this House to vote against the motion.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (16:34:57): The Greens support the motion but I participate reluctantly in this debate because, in common with most members of this House, my communities are doing it so tough. At a time when unity is important and when members of Parliament are asking their communities to do so much—to not attend funerals and not visit family members such as grandparents—and at a time when we are asking our frontline workers we spoke about yesterday to risk their health and the wellbeing of their families and make many sacrifices during a one in 100 years pandemic on the back of other crises, last week we witnessed a spectacle. All this motion is about is the spectacle of The Nationals leader. I find it really sad that each Nationals member has tried to justify the behaviour of a spoilt child, which is what we saw.

If I was on a team with that person and that person was my leader, I would be saying, "You have not got our back and you have not got the back of the communities you say you serve." In terms of where we go from here, I am speechless. I did not attend the previous sitting of the Parliament because I was worried that I would bring COVID back to my community. This time I have come to Parliament and this is what I see—and I am so sad. I will not engage in political pointscore because I want to get back to the job of representing my community, but The Greens support the motion because there is a lack of confidence. Confidence in this Government has plummeted at a time when unity is required. It is disgraceful behaviour. It is unacceptable. We simply must do better.

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (16:37:31): Quite frankly, this debate highlights that Labor and The Greens members do not quite understand regional New South Wales. They still do not get it. This is an issue for farmers, timber workers and for other people who work on the land. Why have we raised it at this time? There is never a good time to bring such an issue to the House, but you deal with it when it arises. This matter has been around for six months. It has not been dealt with and my constituents are terribly frustrated. I received a letter from a farmer, not a developer, and it goes to the heart of the issue. The letter states:

Dear Chris

I greatly appreciate the attention you and the Nationals are giving to addressing what appears to be a poorly planned Koala Habitat policy (albeit with good intentions).

I have looked at the map of our property (attached) and have great concerns of the accuracy. Many of the pink areas are open country with very few trees, and I question the suitability of those trees for Koalas some areas are Camphor Laurel (an introduced species I am trying to control).

Conversely I note that much of the 'blue area'—

which is the area with no koalas—

has seen some Koala activity over the years, in contrast to many pink areas, which has seen none.

We have land that is marked as pink to highlight it is core koala habitat and a blue area over trees that is marked as having no koalas, yet the farmer has seen koala activity. This is an example of the flawed plans that have been distributed in an attempt to convince rural communities that the State environmental planning policy [SEPP] is good for them. The letter goes on to state:

I am unsure what this means for me undertaking farming activities, including single tree selection for falling trees for activities such as fence repairs.

It seems ironic that I may need permission or a development application for areas with very low chance of Koala activity, and need no permission for areas I know there is potential Koala activity.

I consider myself a responsible and sustainable farmer who takes into consideration my activities on ALL native wildlife, including Koalas. The more complicated and onerous this policy is, the more resentment there will be from those it affects. If this is the case I can unfortunately see many disregarding the rules and defying the government because it is 'just too hard' and they feel alienated and not supported.

Farmers are certainly not supported in this House because when we come to the core of the matter Opposition members are looking at their phones and talking to each other, which just shows they do not give a hoot about regional communities. That is why I am standing up for them. That is why John Barilaro is standing up for them. We are not being heard by the city-centric bureaucrats and media representatives who just portray us as koala killers. We love our koalas. That is why we have them in the country. Sydneysiders have killed all theirs.

We will not listen to Opposition members tell us how to protect koalas because Labor killed 30 per cent of them in the fires that ripped through our national parks—the national parks that Bob Carr locked up and then threw away the key. Labor let the fuel load build up and it was like throwing another 100 tonnes of ammonium nitrate into that warehouse in Beirut. Labor blew up the koalas and killed them but is now blaming the farmers. Labor is putting it back onto the farmers and rural industries to protect koalas on their land and at their cost. Shame on Labor! The letter continues:

If the government was really serious about native wildlife (including Koalas) they would be encouraging targeted projects such as linking known populations via wildlife corridors, and using grants/subsidies/tax breaks to achieve this (many more great ideas/projects out there).

The Labor Opposition is not supporting any of the great ideas and projects. The Opposition is simply following its own ideology. Opposition members just want to have another great koala national park on the North Coast to devastate and kill even more koalas in national parks where they lost 30 per cent of them. What is the matter with you? Quite frankly, the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition is shameful—absolutely shameful. The Opposition should be supporting the Government and saying, "We want a better outcome for farmers. We want a better outcome for koalas." That is what the Government is trying to achieve.

I am ashamed to be in this House listening to the joking about rural and regional communities. If that indicates what Labor members think about them, those members should be absolutely embarrassed. They should look in the mirror tonight, have a look at themselves, and think, "That's all I care about regional communities." Shame on them! I will not support the motion—no way. John Barilaro is one of the best leaders we have ever had. He fights tooth and nail for regional New South Wales. [*Time expired.*]

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (16:42:42): In response: My response to the debate will be very brief. The Deputy Premier is not present in the Chamber because he is upstairs doing the job we expect him to do—which is standing up for the people of New South Wales and the issues that matter to them. The people of New South Wales expect Government members to do a job on their behalf. The people of New South Wales want parliamentarians to engage in things that matter to them and not be playing at silly antics. Coalition members have full confidence in the Deputy Premier. We oppose the motion because of the political grubbiness it is.

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (16:43:36): In reply: I thank the Deputy Opposition Leader, Yasmin Catley, and the Leader of Opposition business, Ryan Park, for their contributions to this debate. I also acknowledge the contributions to the debate made by members representing the electorates of Bathurst, Murray, Tamworth, Balmain, Oxley, Wollongong, Lake Macquarie, Northern Tablelands, Ballina and Clarence. I thank them for that. However, I point out that members of The Nationals spoke, the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers members spoke, The Greens members spoke and a crossbench Independent member spoke, but not one Liberal member of Parliament spoke in defence of the Deputy Premier in this House. I find that extraordinary.

I have heard today, particularly from The Nationals, what a nice guy John Barilaro is. I have to say, I think John Barilaro is a nice guy. I have always got on with John Barilaro. But this is not about whether he is a nice guy or a nice person. This is about his actions last week which sought to destabilise a stable government at a time when we need a stable government. I have used the word "stable" many times. I used it in my initial speech and I will use it now because this is about stability. As the wording of the motion shows, this is not an attack on John Barilaro personally. It is a sensible motion that has been brought before the House today because we want to see

stability and functionality returned to this Government. It is a motion that I believe can be supported by the Liberal Party, by the Independents and by the crossbench.

I know a number of Liberal MPs are furious. They had every expectation, when the Deputy Premier was asked questions in the House about whether he regretted his actions last week and thought The Nationals were wrong, that he would admit that his actions were wrong and that he should not have done it but that he did so to support rural and regional New South Wales. He did not say that. He said that his actions were not wrong and, effectively, he would do it again. I then asked the Deputy Premier if he would give a guarantee that he would never threaten to leave the Coalition again, as he has done a number of times. He would not give that guarantee. I watched the faces of every Liberal member in this place during question time when he would not give a guarantee and they were furious. They are so angry.

Mr Barilaro promised the Premier last week that he would stick with the Coalition agreement and that he understood its importance at this time of great difficulty and challenge for people in New South Wales. But he would not give that guarantee. I must say I was shocked. I could not believe that when he had the chance to clean it up today, to get the National Party out of the difficulty they are in and back on the straight and narrow, to ensure that the Coalition partnership acted as a partnership, he did not do that. He has once again blown it up. He has done so at a time when Liberal MPs are expected to walk in the Chamber and vote to oppose this motion and, in effect, support the Deputy Premier. What they are being asked to do is to be loyal to the Coalition agreement. In other words, it is their duty. It does not matter what they think of him personally, they are bound and that is what they will do.

If the Coalition is to be unified and able to deliver as a proper government, the Coalition members are expected to walk into this Chamber and support the Deputy Premier this afternoon. Yet the Deputy Premier does not do that; he does not give the same support in return. It would be so easy for me to let the Liberals and The Nationals fight it out but, as I said earlier, I care about stable government right now and about the 300,000-plus people who do not have a job. I care about the young people who see no future. I care about all those businesses that are going to the wall. I care about communities that have been impacted by drought, flood and horrendous bushfires. I care about them and I want a strong stable government to deliver for them.

When the Government is strong then we are strong as an Opposition. That is what happens in this Parliament. That is how it works. I would say to the National Party, this is not an attack on your leader personally but your leader has done the wrong thing and there have to be consequences. Today he could have cleaned it up but he has made it a whole lot worse. I sit across from the Premier in the House. What usually happens at question time is the Deputy Premier walks into the Chamber, says hello to the Premier and goes to his seat. Now he sneaks in the side door so that he does not have to walk past the Premier and look her in the eye, knowing what he did and what she said to him. That cannot be fixed. It needs to be fixed. That relationship has to be repaired.

In some ways we are siding with the Liberal Party today. That is unusual for us in the Labor Party. We are actually backing the Liberal Party. We are trying to help the Liberal Party and the National Party become a stable government. That is what we are about. As the member for Lake Macquarie said, the motion is a reasonable, well thought out motion. It is certainly not an unreasonable motion. It is not a personal attack on the Deputy Premier. We must have better from the Deputy Premier. In their heart of hearts, the National Party members know that. I understand that they will back their leader, and that is fine, but they must fix this situation. Each and every one of them has a responsibility to fix it, otherwise the Government will collapse at a time when people need it to be strong. That is my plea to each and every one of The Nationals today. If they do not support the motion, that is fine. But when the bells ring, they must give thought to the fact that Liberal MPs will walk into this Chamber to support their leader and do what The Nationals have not done for them.

I asked the Deputy Premier today whether he had regrets, whether he would apologise and whether he would give a commitment to the Coalition agreement. He would not. I am stunned that he would not. He could have cleaned it up. Prior to this important motion I thought he would but he did not. He has threatened to leave the Coalition on five occasions: August 2018, June 2019, August 2019, February 2020 and last Thursday. Surely he has learnt his lesson. It seems he has not. For the next couple of weeks what will happen is that the Coalition members will backstab each other, they will tear each other apart, there will be front-page stories about who is leaking and who is not and all the while there are people without jobs, young people without a future and older people who do not know how they will put food on the table or pay the rent or the mortgage.

There are so many more important issues in this State right now. The Government, because of what the Deputy Premier did last week and again today, will tear itself apart. We all know that this motion will probably fail. We thought hard about whether we should bring this motion to the Parliament today knowing that a censure or no-confidence motion is a significant motion to bring in this place. We did not do it lightly. I know that when the crossbench votes on this motion they will not do so lightly. They have given it a lot of thought because that is

what members on this side of the House do in relation to a motion of this regard. The motion we bring today is one that will not be supported and will probably fail.

I say to all the Liberal MPs that there is an option: they do not have to vote against the motion, they can just not show up. That would send a strong message to the Deputy Premier after he yet again undermined them today. It is important for us in the Labor Party that we have a functioning and stable government. You cannot take the Government to the brink, which is what this Deputy Premier did, and expect that nothing will happen as a result. We need unity and the public needs unity. We cannot have a divided Government. I ask each member of Parliament to consider how they will achieve unity before they vote on this motion. Today the Deputy Premier's behaviour once again did not deliver.

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

The House divided.

Ayes40
Noes48
Majority.....8

AYES

Aitchison, J
Atalla, E
Bali, S
Barr, C
Butler, R
Car, P
Catley, Y
Chanthivong, A
Cotsis, S
Crakanthorp, T
Daley, M
Dalton, H
Dib, J
Donato, P

Doyle, T
Finn, J
Harris, D
Harrison, J
Haylen, J
Hoenig, R
Hornery, S
Kamper, S
Lalich, N
Leong, J
Lynch, P
McKay, J
Mehan, D (teller)

Mihailuk, T
Minns, C
Park, R
Parker, J
Saffin, J
Scully, P
Smith, T
Tesch, L
Voltz, L
Warren, G
Washington, K
Watson, A (teller)
Zangari, G

NOES

Anderson, K
Ayres, S
Barilaro, J
Berejiklian, G
Bromhead, S
Clancy, J
Conolly, K
Constance, A
Cooke, S (teller)
Coure, M
Crouch, A (teller)
Davies, T
Dominello, V
Elliott, D
Evans, L
Gibbons, M

Greenwich, A
Griffin, J
Gulaptis, C
Hancock, S
Hazzard, B
Henskens, A
Johnsen, M
Kean, M
Lee, G
Lindsay, W
Marshall, A
McGirr, J
Pavey, M
Perrottet, D
Petinos, E
Piper, G

Preston, R
Provest, G
Roberts, A
Saunders, D
Sidgreaves, P
Sidoti, J
Singh, G
Smith, N
Speakman, M
Stokes, R
Taylor, M
Toole, P
Tuckerman, W
Upton, G
Ward, G
Williams, L

PAIRS

McDermott, H
O'Neill, M

Wilson, F
Williams, R

Motion negatived.

*Public Interest Debate***LIBERAL-NATIONALS COALITION**

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (17:03:32): I move:

That this House calls on the Government to make public the secret Liberal-Nationals Coalition deal that determines who governs this State.

Koalas have come to the top of the political agenda in New South Wales in the past few weeks because of the threat to the Government from The Nationals. We know that without decisive government action koalas will be threatened with extinction in the wild, and we know it is crucial that we act to protect this species. We also know that this is just one of the many issues where the secret power-sharing deal of the Liberal-Nationals Coalition is dictating how decisions in this State are being made. The Greens are calling for transparency when it comes to our democracy, and that is absolutely in the public interest. When I asked the Premier during question time to disclose the nature of the agreement, she referred me to public comments made on the record and referred me to the joint statement by the Deputy Premier and herself last Friday. It is only three lines long, so I can quote it in its entirety. It reads:

Following a meeting this morning between the Premier and Deputy Premier, the NSW Liberal & Nationals Coalition remains in place. This includes a commitment to supporting Cabinet conventions and processes. The matter will be dealt with at an upcoming Cabinet meeting.

To be clear, the question that I asked today, and the motion before us now, is not referring to the antics of just the last week. It is not supposed to be referring to the supposed resolution between the Liberal-Nationals Coalition after the recent stoush. The Greens are calling for an end to the secrecy that surrounds the deal since the formation of the Liberal-Nationals Coalition. The constant threats from the Deputy Premier have made this backroom deal—this not-so-gentlemanly arrangement that dictates who governs the State—and the secrecy around it now completely untenable. The complete lack of transparency around this power-sharing arrangement is a risk to our democracy. It is not good enough. The only reason The Nationals have Ministers in this place, and the only reason the leader of The Nationals is the Deputy Premier of this State, is because of the secret Coalition deal between The Nationals and the Liberals. The people of New South Wales deserve to see the deal.

Let me be clear: There is nothing wrong with different parties coming together to govern in the interests of the community. It will happen more and more as old parties see their votes plummet and new parties and independents see their votes increase. What is problematic is the absence of transparency around the arrangements and agreements. If The Greens were to enter into such an arrangement we would make it public, as we did with the Gillard Government in Federal Parliament and as we did with the Ardern Government in New Zealand. Different parties coming together and reaching an agreement to serve and collectively govern in the interests of the people of New South Wales has the potential to improve our democratic systems, the levels of debate and the quality of policy outcomes for the State. What we have here is the Liberals and The Nationals entering into a secret deal. If it is not secret, I challenge any Government member in this place—or indeed any other member—to put the details on the public record.

I wonder if members in both the Liberal Party and The Nationals are aware of the specifics of the deal. Have they all seen it? I wonder if some of the journalists in the press gallery are aware of the specifics of the deal. Have they seen it? What about the New South Wales Governor? Does the New South Wales Governor see the deal before conducting the swearing in ceremony of the Cabinet? Imagine if the Queen's representative in this State is privy to the details of this deal but the people of New South Wales and this legislature are not. The Executive being held accountable by the legislature is an important principle at the heart of our democracy, but under the secret arrangement the Executive is bound by an agreement that we cannot see.

We know from recent reports that there is clearly some sort of formula in the deal that determines the number of Ministers that The Nationals get. Recent reports have suggested that if three Nationals move to the crossbench, that would result in the loss of a Minister under this agreement. Clearly, some have access to this agreement and yet it is not public information. It is crucial that any power-sharing arrangement is shared as public information and tabled in this place. Why is this so important? Why is it in the public interest? Under this secret deal, The Nationals are handed the role of Deputy Premier and are given a number of ministerial and parliamentary positions. This comes with real power, as well as a significant pay increase and generous parliamentary resources. It also sets out the way that the Government operates, but none of us are privy to those rules.

Given the stoush over the past week, I wonder if there is anything in this secret agreement that actually delivers for country New South Wales. I wonder when The Nationals negotiate this agreement with the Liberals for this power sharing arrangement whether the interests of country New South Wales are put on the agenda. I wonder whether the deal only secures them a certain number of ministerial positions, a certain number of increases to their pay packets or a certain number of parliamentary resource increases. I suspect it is the latter

because sadly for the people of regional New South Wales—as we saw when my colleague the member for Ballina so articulately spoke during debate on the no-confidence motion against the Deputy Premier—it is clear that when it comes to the interests of the community there is more infighting and intersections keeping this deal together, or breaking it apart, than there is a focus on what the community needs.

We know that many people will say that this is a long-held thing and we do not have to question it. For many years in this place, I have not questioned it. Like so many, I just accept that we are talking about a Liberal-Nationals Coalition. We just accept it as a coalition. Now is the time for us to say that we are not going to accept it anymore. The threats have been too much. We want to see the deal and, in the interests of the accountability of the Executive to this place, we have a right to see the deal. We should demand that the deal is tabled and the information is made public. The benefits, parliamentary resources and extra positions of power that are handed over to The Nationals under this power-sharing arrangement should be shared, just as any other arrangement now or in the future between any governing parties should be tabled in the Parliament. In the interests of transparency, any deals that are done on the side to work out who governs this State in this place should be shared.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (17:10:26): I move:

That the motion be amended by deleting all words after "That" with a view to inserting instead:

"this House calls on the NSW Greens make public the secret preference deal with Labor and with the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party."

I can help out the member for Newtown very simply. The arrangements with respect to the Coalition deal are very obvious. She can see them on the front benches of both the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. She can see them in the composition of the ticket of the Legislative Council, which we proudly put forward in coalition. There is no secret arrangement here. That is easy for all to see, but what we do not see is the secret deals that go on between Labor and The Greens.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Port Stephens will come to order.

Mr GARETH WARD: The reason I am particularly concerned about The Greens is that they are an extremist party. They are a party of extremes and a party of protest. We saw that when they dangerously encouraged people to protest in spite of public health orders. In fact, one of their own staffers defaced a statue. Someone said to me, "Will she get charged?" I said, "No, she'll get preselected." That is the sort of party we have opposite us.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Balmain will come to order.

Mr GARETH WARD: In the same way that Labor is no longer the party of Hawke and Keating, The Greens are not the party of Bob Brown anymore. It was members on this side of the House that protected both the Kakadu and Uluru national parks. It was members on this side of the House that established the first ministry for the environment and stopped sand mining on Fraser Island. This side of politics had the first woman elected to this place and the first disabilities Minister. The member for Newtown talks about The Greens being a party of social progress, but they are not. They are a party of dangerous protest.

Ms Jenny Leong: We are proudly, as was Bob Brown.

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

Mr GARETH WARD: The Greens members say "proudly", but what did they have to say about Christine Milne's comments in 2014 when bombs were falling on northern Iraq and Yazidi women and children were being persecuted? Countries like ours were mobilising for airdrops, but their leader at the time said that we were simply falling in behind President Obama.

Mr Jamie Parker: How is that relevant?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Balmain will come to order.

Mr GARETH WARD: It is your sanctimonious vanity, your canting vanity. You talk about transparency but when it comes to your policies—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Kiama will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr GARETH WARD: Do The Greens ever reveal their policies prior to an election? No. They talk so highfalutin about donations. Who received the largest political donation in the history of New South Wales politics or Australian politics? It was none other than the Australian Greens, from Wotif.com.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Newtown will come to order.

Mr GARETH WARD: They talk about politics for sale—well they sold, sold, sold. They are the enemy of the free market, of sensible development and of industrial development.

Mr Jamie Parker: Tell that to Scott Morrison, who is getting involved in gas.

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

Mr GARETH WARD: The Greens want to stop the export of thermal coal because they believe in 100 per cent renewables. That would devastate our economy and increase power prices. If they want an example, they should ask the Germans how that worked out. The Greens are the party that wants to cut funding for independent schools and slash private health insurance. They want to jack up taxes on superannuation. If The Greens were in government with Labor and their policies ever came to the fore, we would see economic Armageddon in this State. We would see national government securities reduced and relegated to junk bonds because of their crazy policies. Somebody once said to me, "The Greens are the watermelon party: green on the outside and pink on the inside." Well, the lot opposite are avocados: green on the outside and nuts on the inside. And you only need to see the policy devastation that would—

Mr Jamie Parker: There's not a nut in an avocado.

Mr GARETH WARD: I had to listen to a speech from the member for Balmain about farming. The only farm in your electorate has hydroponic lights, mate. You have absolutely no policy credibility when it comes to—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Jamie Parker: Point of order: We are happy to have a debate—

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

Mr Jamie Parker: I ask that the Minister direct his remarks through the Chair instead of pointing at me and uttering complete falsehoods.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thank the member for Balmain but remind him that he has continued to interject on the Minister. I suggest that he cease interjecting.

Mr GARETH WARD: They are an extremist party with extremist policies that are dangerous, and they are in coalition with the Labor Party. Whilst Labor may be in government, it is always The Greens that are in power. That should concern every decent working Australian who does not want their power prices to rise and who wants to see a lower cost of living. If it were not for the policies of this Government we would not have the infrastructure agenda we have across this State. This is the secret deal that must be condemned.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (17:15:37): The Greens put forward this topic for debate. It is pretty disturbing. Why is a Minister attacking and deflecting rather than addressing the actual issue: What is the Coalition deal? But I digress. We are talking about transparency and democracy. We have seen that The Nationals in particular—but also the Liberal-Nationals—have become a party of secret deals. I have seen this firsthand in my electorate. On the one hand, we talk about it with cynicism. After 27 years of The Nationals holding the seat of Ballina, people in my community now have seen a huge increase in government money for infrastructure. Why is that so? It is because we have become a marginal seat.

I have said many times in this place—with the cynicism we all know—that the only time you get a funding injection from a party in government is when that party wants to retain government or is about to lose it. My community wants to see so much more. I know my colleagues in The Greens agree with me, and I am sure there is not a member of the Opposition who would not like to see a transparent, needs-based funding model that is at arm's length from politicians. But that is not what we have. I will give an example of one of the worst cases I have seen.

There were jokes that The Nationals candidate in my electorate would go to the opening of an envelope but it was not a joke—as we know from the grants rorts that are now in the public domain—that the councils in my electorate were held hostage. They were told they could not make any announcements; they were to be made at the pleasure of The Nationals candidate. We saw that happen in other electorates also. It was a captain's pick and although it was taxpayers' money, as we heard from the member for Murray today, the democratically elected members of Parliament simply did not get an invite. I cannot tell you how many times I have been told, "Oh no, we sent you an invite," when my office has an incredibly diligent administration system and that simply did not happen.

But what happened at Billinudgel was too much to bear. After the floods—floods that were expected to recognise electoral boundaries—Billinudgel in the electorate of Ballina was underwater but we did not get the

first round of funding. Fast-forward a year and a half, two community members put forward a proposal with the Bureau of Meteorology for an early warning system for Billinudgel. Council led that grant application and it was successful. But do you know what? The proponents of that grant told me that The Nationals candidate—the upper House wannabe member—quarantined it and waited many, many weeks. If there had been a flood during that time the community would have been in peril because of the ego and the showmanship of the wannabe member. That is just one example of the kinds of cloak-and-dagger secret deals that are being done. We need to do so much better.

Tell us what the Coalition deal is. Tell our communities why a party that gets only 5 per cent of the vote has so many Ministers. What is the deal? What is behind the veil? Lift the veil. It was interesting to hear the Minister talk about preference deals. We are not talking about preference deals; we are talking about his Government and about its deals in government. As the member for Newtown has exposed, in the past week they have been laid bare for all to see. I return to the cynicism in the community. I simply will not move; we have seen where cynicism gets us. It is time for us all to turn our minds to open and transparent funding and to an open and transparent Coalition agreement so that people can see what they are getting. I look forward to hearing the contribution of the water Minister, given that she talked about backroom deals on this very day and said things would be done behind closed doors. We are tired of that. We want openness. Our communities deserve that kind of democracy.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing) (17:20:46): I support the amendment of the member for Kiama to the motion. I also want to talk about the deal. The deal The Nationals and the Liberal Party have is a deal for the betterment of New South Wales. That is simply what the deal is. We have shown from 2011 to 2020 that that deal has benefited regional New South Wales, and Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong. What we have done in coalition over these past nine years is transform the State. There is nothing secret about what we have achieved. There is nothing secret about what good government has given us through this COVID crisis: a deal with people sitting at the table, led by the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Treasurer, the health Minister and Minister Dominello. That "secret" deal has delivered the best arrangements in relation to COVID across Australia.

There is nothing secret about that deal because it is delivering for New South Wales. You put the best voices from across New South Wales in the room and you get the best outcomes. The amendment put forward by Minister Ward speaks to "secret" deals around preferences. The Greens think, "Oh, that doesn't matter; preference deals don't matter." Preference deals matter because they determine who wins a seat. I refer to the seat of Murray. The seat of Murray was delivered to the Shooters party by a secret deal with the Labor Party. That is what delivered the seat. I might even use the words of upper House member the Hon. Mark Latham. It was Mark Latham who uncovered just how far those opposite would go to sell out regional New South Wales. In the lead-up to the election, Mr Latham said:

The Shooters' candidate for Murray, Helen Dalton, is trying to deceive voters in the electorate.

She has pledged to support a Michael Daley Labor Government in a hung NSW Parliament. This is in return for receiving Labor preferences.

Yet in past elections 80 percent of people in Murray have voted against the Labor Party. They don't want Daley to be the Premier with his green environmental policies.

Dalton is set to become the Tony Windsor and Rob Oakeshott of NSW politics ...

That is not from us. That is another political representative from another party making those comments about the deals that the Shooters, Labor and The Greens have done. Again, in a great display—and sadly for the people of Eden-Monaro—the Shooters ensured the Labor Party won that seat with their preference deal. We, with the Liberal Party, put New South Wales first. We are not ashamed of that deal. It is not secret. We are proud of what we have been able to achieve together in partnership, such as our plans for the Pacific Highway dual carriageway. Minister Ward has the bypass at Kiama and we are going to build a dual carriageway on the Princes Highway. We are going to get the Great Western Highway dual carriageway. We are going to have the Bells Line of Road.

How many new hospitals have we built throughout regional New South Wales, in Labor seats and in the Shoalhaven? We are able to govern this State and reinvest in infrastructure like you have never seen. As well as Sydney, our State is so much better off because of the deal between The Nationals and the Liberals. We are proud to sit at the Cabinet table and make a contribution. When Labor was in government there was no-one from regional New South Wales—apart from Tony Kelly—who was from the regions. Now half of the Cabinet is supported and represented by regional New South Wales members. That is not secret. That is a fact and we are proud of it.

As the member for Kiama said, it is very clear that we are in coalition—our upper House ticket, the work we do together. I hear what the member for Ballina is saying but to understand what is going on you have to be at the table. You have to be a part of a government to really achieve. You have to be part of growing New South

Wales and supporting our communities. I am proud of what our Government has done for the entire State; as a National Party member I am proud of what I have achieved for my electorate and our communities.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (17:25:29): The public interest debate before the House today is so simple that one would think every member in the House would support it—namely, it is about transparency and openness. It is about asking the Government to share with the community and with all members in this place the very document that allows it to form government. The member for Kiama could not answer the question so he decided to amend the motion. He could not answer the question because he does not know the deal. No-one talks to him anymore about anything important. He is completely on the outer in his own party, let alone in The Nationals.

How can we actually rely on this mob to provide stable government? That is what people are asking after witnessing the disgusting behaviour over the past week of John Barilaro, the Deputy Premier and the leader of The Nationals. It is not an insignificant question. Today those opposite are trying to undermine and distract from the very serious question we are trying to get answered. People want to know that this Government is capable of being accountable for its decisions. It may seem like a novel concept but when you are given the power of government you inherit responsibilities. You are accountable to the public. Those opposite do not seem to get that. The Liberals and The Nationals have been in government for nine years, yet only last week they were still trying to blame Bob Carr for all the problems. It has been 15 years since he left office—six Premiers ago. Time and again The Nationals want to blame everyone but themselves.

For years we have seen the Deputy Premier publicly attack his government and try to pretend he is not responsible for any of the decisions his Government makes—everyone here knows that has been going on for so long. In fact, as we heard in this House today, in the past 18 months alone he has threatened to leave the Coalition five times. That charade has been happening time and time again; it is nothing new. It is pathetic and it is childish. It all comes down to this secret, mysterious Coalition agreement between the Liberals and Nationals that keeps them all in government. This dark and murky deal that no-one is allowed to see. Why is it hidden? We all know how many ministries each party is given. We all know who gets parliamentary positions. So what is contained within the Coalition agreement that they do not want us to see? Without this secret document The Liberals and The Nationals could not govern. Think about that for a second.

Without the secret document, without the secret deal that the Minister for Water, Property and Housing mentioned in this House, without this murky agreement, the Liberals and The Nationals could not govern. Every time they put on their chinos, slip on their akubras—try to pretend they have got R. M. Williams—and accuse Labor of being in bed with the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers and other parties, as was done today, they should remember there are only two political parties in this House that are in bed together: the Liberals and The Nationals, with an agreement but no-one knows what is in it. However, after last week's chaos, dysfunction and instability, the durability of that agreement is seriously in doubt. Every day we see that its effectiveness is definitely in doubt. A Coalition agreement that allows Cabinet Ministers to move to the crossbench but remain in Cabinet is a serious threat to our system of government. Indeed, the proposition is the exact opposite of our parliamentary system, which is why the public should see this document.

What we witnessed last week could only be explained by the following two options—either the Coalition agreement allows Cabinet Ministers to move to the crossbench but keep their ministries, their cars and their cash, or the Deputy Premier was lying to the people of New South Wales when he made that claim. It has to be one or the other. Now if this secret, murky document undermines our system of government and risks future instability, we deserve to know what is in it. If the Premier has signed an agreement that allows her Ministers to quit the Government, to put themselves on the crossbench and keep their salaries, drivers and perks of office, then we deserve to know. It is not insignificant. We do not support the amended motion that has been put forward because the communities of New South Wales deserve to know the dodgy deal—what the selloffs are by The Nationals so that they can keep their ministerial positions.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (17:31:21): The motion calls on the New South Wales Government to make public the secret Liberal-National Coalition deal that determines who governs this State. It is an important question that goes to the heart of our democracy in this State. How is government formed in the State of New South Wales? We all know the answer, or we think we do—through the operation of the Westminster system, convention and the underpinning authority of the Constitution Act 1902. The Government of New South Wales is formed by the party that commands a majority in the Legislative Assembly and His Excellency the Governor acts on that basis. On 2 April 2019 the Governor appointed a new Executive Council and office holders as follows:

His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to appoint the following persons to the offices set out after their respective names:

The Honourable Gladys Berejiklian MP
Premier

The Honourable (John) Giovanni Domenic Barilaro MP
Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Kiama will come to order.

Mr DAVID MEHAN: The Premier and the Deputy Premier are not of the same political party. They are tied together by a secret deal, which creates this thing called the Coalition. That deal has never been made public. How is it communicated to the Governor? Is it written down anywhere? What is in it? It has constitutional significance, yet the citizens of New South Wales do not have public access to the deal agreement or whatever lies behind it that ties the Liberal and National parties together. It underpins the important issue of who has the numbers in this place. It is a matter of great importance—and that importance is even greater today because no single party commands a majority in this place. Let us recall the numbers. There are 93 seats in this House and 47 seats are required to form a majority. The Australian Labor Party holds the majority of seats in this House with 36 seats. The Liberal Party only holds 35 seats. It is not the party with the majority in this House; the Labor Party is. The Liberal Party can only form a majority by its attachment to the 15 seats held by The Nationals. There are three Greens, three members of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party and three Independents.

The Coalition deal matters. What is in that agreement also matters. Does it predetermine who gets which ministerial jobs? Does it predetermine the numbers of each of the Coalition parties in the ministry? Does it enumerate the number of times the Deputy Premier can threaten to quit the Coalition? Maybe that is already decided. Maybe if the public knew there was a set number of times written into the Coalition agreement that the Deputy Premier can go out there and say "I'm going to quit", we could sit back and say, "We don't need to worry because this is the last time" or "He's only got two more times down the track, so we can probably put up with it."

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for The Entrance will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr DAVID MEHAN: That should be public knowledge—put our minds at rest. That is what I say to those opposite, who cannot even fill the benches. They sit there on their phones and they interject rudely. This is an important matter of public interest. I am surprised the media does not pay more attention to it. I recall the forensic attention that was applied to the former Gillard Labor Government when it had an arrangement with The Greens to form government in the Commonwealth Parliament. It was forensic. The media interest was incessant. But the deal the mob opposite operate under seems to pass with no comment. It is an important question; it is a matter of public importance. The member for Kiama went off on a side track, asking, "Where is your preference deal?" The preference deal is public. It is on the how-to-vote card.

Mr Gareth Ward: So is the Cabinet, mate.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr DAVID MEHAN: When are you going to hand out your preference, your deal with The Nationals, to members of the public in my electorate?

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

Mr DAVID MEHAN: I thank the member for Newtown for bringing this motion to the House. It is an important question and members should support the motion.

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (17:36:21): I appreciate the opportunity to speak in this public interest debate because we know this is an issue of public interest. How government is determined and managed has been thrown into stark relief by the behaviour of the Leader of The Nationals, and Deputy Premier. It is something that has concerned us all. I welcome some of the more considered language used by National Party and Government members who realise that this situation should not be repeated, for the sake of not only the Government but also everyone in New South Wales. Our focus should be on other important issues.

One issue we need to address in the context of this matter is the arrangement between the Government and the National Party, which pretends to be the Opposition. It is disappointing that the Minister who led for the Government in the debate chose to amend the motion and try to deflect from the subject of this discussion. We have had every type of half-baked allegation thrown at The Greens, including that we are anti-market. The hilarious nature of that proposal is interesting. Maybe the member should speak to Scott Morrison, who is now entering into the biggest intervention in the energy market that this country has ever seen.

Mr Gareth Ward: You are for the free market now, are you?

Mr JAMIE PARKER: We support market mechanisms. That is why we supported the tax as a way to deal with the climate crisis—a market mechanism. We thought that was a worthwhile approach. That is why we always like to include negative externalities in these issues. We know the Government always seeks not to do that, but to put the biggest burden on the environment and often on working people's wages and conditions, claiming

that the market will solve it. We know there are various situations when market mechanisms are useful and when they are not. That is just one example of why that was a ridiculous, pointless statement designed to draw attention away from the important matter before us. It is critical that we understand what the agreement is. Government members say, "Look at the Cabinet Ministers." If there is something that says The Nationals get a certain number of Cabinet Ministers and that is it, then just say, "Here it is."

Mr Gareth Ward: I said that.

Mr JAMIE PARKER: If the Minister has a copy of that document I would be very pleased to see it, and I invite him to table it. That would be a very positive move. If the Minister were to table that document we would not need to have this discussion and we could all be satisfied that there is nothing to be concerned about. This issue is important because we know that the best disinfectant is always sunlight. We want to keep issues of government highly visible to the public. The public needs to see things, including arrangements that are made between parties or made in government. How the Government determines how it will be run and managed is of the highest order of importance. It is a silly distraction to talk about preferences because in the end the voter decides where their vote will go.

The Minister was most upset that voters did not support his party. Voters may be handed whatever piece of paper he likes, but they fill out the ballot paper. That is their right. Here we have something that voters cannot decide, cannot see and is not available to them. That is far more important to the community than preferences. If it is a simple issue, let the Government table the agreement and we will get on with things. It is clear there is more to it than that—or there is a suspicion there is definitely more to it than that.

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

Mr JAMIE PARKER: I believe it is important to address these principles because at all stages all members in this place must ensure that decisions are based on the public interest and are open and accessible. The member for Ballina highlighted specifically the pork-barrelling that goes on, which is ridiculous. The grants frauds are unbelievable. That is why today I called out the member for Bathurst for implying that the member for Newcastle and the member for Lismore would not have their projects supported if they voted for the no-confidence motion. That is a statement we should never hear in this place. Members should not have their votes called into question by a Minister saying that if they do not vote the right way they will not get their project. Do people realise what that means? It is absolutely unacceptable and something the Minister should apologise for. That is why we are here today calling for maximum openness, transparency and accountability and for the peak secret document, which is the arrangement between the Coalition.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (17:41:20): In reply: I acknowledge the contributions by members representing the electorates of Balmain, The Entrance, Port Stephens, Oxley, Ballina and Kiama to this public interest debate. I express my lack of surprise that the Government's response to our calls to get some kind of detail around the secret deal between the Liberals and The Nationals is simply to deflect by talking about preference deals between parties during elections. There is a huge difference between what we are talking about in this motion. I assure the Liberals and The Nationals that, despite the uncomfortable way in which they have responded—the fact that they simultaneously tried to claim it is all on the public record already yet refused to give details of the deal or table anything about it—we will not stop asking questions about it after this public interest debate has concluded.

I have a genuine belief it is in the public interest to know what the arrangement is. I will continue to talk about this deal. I will continue for a long time to highlight the secrecy that determines who gets to dictate who are Ministers in this State as a result of this deal that no-one gets to see. I note it was pointed out in the debate that The Greens are protesting, we are doing this and doing that. I am a proud member of a party that engages and supports peaceful protest. I absolutely recognise—just as Bob Brown did all those years ago—that sometimes these Chambers fail to deliver what the community needs. Sometimes we need robust, non-violent, direct action and peaceful protest to demand the elite powers that be in this place listen to the needs of the community.

I will never step back from the fact that I stood up for justice in The Domain and supported Aboriginal families whose members were dying in police custody at the hands of police. I will never, ever step back from that. I will stand up for people's rights to peaceful assembly and to peaceful protest because that is why I am in this place. But that is not what we are debating today. Again, that was a deflection and an attempt to discredit my place in this Chamber. I am saying that the secret deal between the Liberals and The Nationals is infecting our understanding of how democracy works in this State. We will keep asking these questions; we will keep pushing journalists to ask them. We will keep pushing the public to ask what is the deal that determines a Nationals member gets to be Deputy Premier and Nationals members are Ministers in this State. What is the deal that determines this power-sharing arrangement, who knows about it and why does the Parliament not know about it?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Newtown has moved a motion, to which the member for Kiama has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment of the member for Kiama be agreed to.

Amendment agreed to.

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

The House divided.

Ayes45
Noes37
Majority.....8

AYES

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

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

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

NOES

Aitchison, J
Barr, C
Chanthivong, A
Daley, M
Finn, J
Haylen, J
Kamper, S
Lynch, P
Mihailuk, T
Parker, J
Smith, T
Warren, G
Zangari, G

Atalla, E
Car, P
Cotsis, S
Dib, J
Harris, D
Hoenig, R
Lalich, N
McKay, J
Minns, C
Saffin, J
Tesch, L
Washington, K

Bali, S
Catley, Y
Crakanthorp, T
Doyle, T
Harrison, J
Hornery, S
Leong, J
Mehan, D (teller)
Park, R
Scully, P
Voltz, L
Watson, A (teller)

PAIRS

Williams, R
Wilson, F

O'Neill, M
McDermott, H

Motion as amended agreed to.

Bills

LIQUOR AMENDMENT (24-HOUR ECONOMY) BILL 2020

Second Reading Speech

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (17:54:09): Providers can be held liable for breaches of the new same-day delivery rules by employees and agents unless they can demonstrate that staff have undertaken the new training. Under the bill all providers will need to ensure they have a pathway for customers to self-exclude from that provider's same-day delivery. This is an important additional measure to

minimise harm for people in vulnerable situations. Providers must comply with these self-exclusion agreements, whether a person has asked for temporary or permanent exclusion. The Government wants to ensure that all businesses providing same-day deliveries in New South Wales comply with these new rules.

Currently a business licensed in another State can store liquor in New South Wales and offer same-day delivery to New South Wales residents, using its interstate licence for the sale. These businesses are outside the reach of New South Wales regulators and do not contribute to the cost of regulating same-day deliveries in the State. Under the bill these businesses will need to comply with the new measures. Interstate operators selling liquor as part of same-day deliveries will be required to hold a New South Wales licence so that our State liquor laws apply and they contribute to the regulatory costs. As a part of the Government's Better Regulation practices, the new same-day regulatory framework will be reviewed after two years.

Schedule 4 to the bill contains a range of reforms to remove red tape, improve how industry is regulated and invigorate the 24-hour economy. These proposed new laws build on the Government's ongoing backing of small bars, which has seen the number of these small, lower-risk businesses growing year on year. The reforms provide measures to help small bars continue to prosper as an essential part of our State's 24-hour economy. The bill enables small bars to offer family-orientated and diverse services for customers. Small bars that regularly provide meals in seated areas from their opening time until 10.00 p.m. will be permitted to have minors in the company of a responsible adult during those times. Small bar licensees will be able to apply to the authority for a new minors authorisation if they wish to provide services that cater to families or minors in a broader range of circumstances or times up until midnight. The regulations may prescribe the purposes or circumstances in which the authority must refuse a minors authorisation.

This change will support these small businesses, which can have up to 120 patrons, to operate diverse business models beyond bar services, such as small arts venues, galleries, bookshops or record stores. It means the small bar licence can be used more flexibly by small venues to provide a mix of activities and entertainment that caters to a range of ages, lifestyles and cultures. Small bars must display a notice indicating whether minors are allowed on the premises, between what times and for what purpose. Venues can easily opt out by displaying a notice which indicates that minors are not permitted. The bill clarifies related defences for minors and licensees should a minor enter or remain on small bar premises.

The bill streamlines the application process for the low-risk small bar licence by introducing an interim small bar authorisation. Where an operator has already gone through a public consultation process as part of the planning application approval for a small bar, we think they should be able to commence trading as soon as their liquor licence application is lodged. A streamlined process in the bill allows for this to occur. It replicates the existing interim restaurant authorisation for licensed restaurants and cafés under the liquor regulation. This will be a welcome move for small businesses keen to start up and contribute to the 24-hour economy.

The fundamental idea is that low-risk venues like small bars, restaurants and cafés should not have to undertake further multiple stages of public consultation in order to operate. To ensure the proposed operation of the small bar is subject to appropriate scrutiny, small bars will need to notify the local police and the Secretary of the Department of Customer Service within two days of lodging their development application. Small bars that require a community impact statement with their licence application are not eligible to use this fast-tracked approval process. However, a community impact statement only applies in limited circumstances for a small bar. It will only be needed if the required notification to local police and the secretary has not occurred when lodging a development application or where an application seeks extended trading hours between 2.00 a.m. and 5.00 a.m.

Where a small bar does commence trading using an interim authorisation, it will need to notify the local police and local council at least two days before it opens. This risk-based approach cuts red tape while ensuring there are appropriate channels for stakeholder feedback around potential impacts and related management plans before a small bar begins trading. The bill seeks to encourage a vibrant and diverse nightlife where live music and entertainment thrives. Further, the wider strategy aims to increase accessible spaces for small-scale, cultural pop-up events to create jobs and further contribute to the diversity of our night-time offering.

The bill automatically removes certain outdated licence conditions that unnecessarily limit music and performance. This includes restrictions on the genre of music that may be played or performed, the number of musicians on stage or the types of instruments used. Application fees will be waived for licensees who apply to the authority to remove or vary other historical licence conditions that restrict live entertainment. This allows the authority to consider venues' current circumstances. At the same time the bill prevents entertainment conditions from being imposed on most liquor licences in the future unless in response to a disturbance from the local council or the Commissioner of Police or if the condition relates to adult entertainment.

Currently up to seven government agencies and bodies are responsible for managing noise. This causes confusion and frustration for the community and it creates unnecessary complexity for venues. Reducing the

regulatory overlap in this space is common sense. Under the bill, Liquor & Gaming NSW will no longer deal directly with complaints made by local residents about live entertainment sound and other noise emanating from within venues. Residents will complain directly to local councils and police. Councils and police will be able to refer complaints to Liquor & Gaming NSW if capacity or capability concerns mean they are unable to address the complaint themselves.

The bill makes various other changes, including to reflect existing takeaway liquor trading hours and small bar trading hours under the Liquor Regulation in the Liquor Act itself. While this will have no practical effect on current trading times, it will improve clarity around the operation of these laws. The bill will also improve clarity around how licensed venues should manage intoxicated patrons by amending the defence provisions relating to intoxication. Changes to signage requirements in the bill will support licensees being offered a new option to print their own signs from the Department of Customer Service website. The Australia Post Digital iD will also become an acceptable form of evidence of age under the Liquor Act and opens the door for other such forms of digital identification to be approved in the future. I also note the collaboration between Service NSW and Australia Post during the rollout of the digital driver licence [DDL] across the State. We were able to work with Australia Post to ensure the DDL could be accepted across its network for parcel delivery.

I thank all industry groups, businesses and individuals who made submissions in response to the exposure draft bill. We received 296 submissions, which I think demonstrates a strong level of interest and engagement from across the industry and the community in relation to these reforms. I want to acknowledge the contribution of a number of my parliamentary colleagues to the development of this bill. In particular I acknowledge all the members of the joint parliamentary select committee, chaired by the Hon. Natalie Ward, MLC, whose report was the catalyst for this bill and the night-time economy strategy which underpins it. I offer my congratulations and thanks to the Hon. Natalie Ward. The committee demonstrated an ability to put politics aside and work collaboratively in the best interests of our State.

In accordance with recommendation No. 40 of the committee's report, I have had the opportunity to work with the Hon. Mark Latham and the member for Newcastle in recent months on a trial that will see a relaxation of liquor licence laws for small bars in Newcastle. The trial, which is due to start on 1 October, has attracted strong interest from small bars and restaurants across Newcastle looking to benefit from the ability to trade later and offer a greater variety of drinks to their customers. I thank the Hon. Mark Latham and the member for Newcastle for their advocacy and their leadership. It is really difficult reform that is happening in Newcastle, so I thank them for their hard work. I thank my Cabinet colleagues Minister Ayres and Minister Elliott for their support in developing these reforms. The work of Minister Ayres on the formation and launch of the 24-Hour Economy Strategy has resulted in a range of actions for local government, State Government and industry that complements the bill before the House.

I also acknowledge the contributions of the government agencies, councils and industry advisory group that were instrumental in the formation of that strategy. The Government looks forward to continuing to work with, and today acknowledges the contributions of, the Industry Advisory Group. Members of the group include Natalie Zelinsky, CEO of Stay Kind; chairman Michael Rose and James Hulme of the Committee for Sydney and its CEO, Gabriel Metcalf; Mike Rodrigues, chair of the Night Time Industries Association; Katherine O'Regan at the Sydney Business Chamber; John Green at the Australian Hotels Association; Karl Schlothauer, director of the Independent Bar Association NSW; John Wardle from the Live Music Office; Kerri Glasscock, director of the Sydney Fringe Festival; Justine Baker, CEO of Solotel Group; Justin Hemmes and Antony Jones at Merivale; Dean Ormston and Nick Pickard from APRA AMCOS; Margy Osmond, CEO of the Tourism & Transport Forum; Wes Lambert and Tom Green from the Restaurant & Catering Industry Association; Richard Evans and others at Live Performance Australia; Nick Atkins and Imogen Gardam from Theatre Network NSW; and Tyson Koh of Keep Sydney Open.

This Industry Advisory Group was made up of a cross-section of representatives from the 24-hour economy who contributed diverse ideas and perspectives to the formation of our Government strategy, and I thank them very much. I acknowledge the invaluable feedback provided by NSW Police Force in relation to the application of violent venues, three strikes and service to minors sanction schemes. In particular, I acknowledge Assistant Commissioner Mick Willing and the licensing team within his command. They have done outstanding work. I also acknowledge the contribution of the Australian Hotels Association NSW, ably led by CEO John Whelan and president Scott Leach and supported by Chris Gatfield. I also acknowledge the contribution of Clubs NSW CEO Josh Landis and his team, including Anthony Trimarchi and Simon Sawday. Further, I acknowledge Karl Schlothauer of the Independent Bar Association NSW, Michael Rodrigues of the Night Time Industries Association and James Hulme from the Committee for Sydney.

I acknowledge the contribution of Retail Drinks Australia, including CEO Michael Waters and Sahil Prasad, to the development of the same-day alcohol delivery provisions, many of which seek to replicate and build

on the RDA industry code of conduct introduced last year. I also acknowledge the advocacy of the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education, including Caterina Giorgi, Jenny Goodare and Maddie Day, particularly in relation to the regulation of online alcohol sales and delivery. I acknowledge the contribution of the City of Sydney, including Lord Mayor Clover Moore and all the councillors. I thank the Department of Customer Service and all the staff who played an integral part in the development of the bill, particularly the Liquor & Gaming NSW policy team led by Paul Sariban and ably assisted by James Donnelly, Jasmin Mills, Lucy Zhou, Luke Lecordier, Rebecca King, Warwick Kneebone and Jules Bastable.

I really do appreciate the work they have done. The amount of times my office reaches out to Paul Sariban and his team for advice and expertise puts a lot of strain on them, particularly during the challenging times of COVID when they are trying to get businesses reopened. I again offer my heartfelt thanks to Paul and his team. I also acknowledge the Chair of the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority, Phillip Crawford. Phillip is a doyen of knowledge in this industry. I thank his team, including Rochelle Hurst, for their contribution.

From my ministerial team I thank my chief of staff Matt Dawson, director of policy Jane Standish, parliamentary liaison officer Priya Pagaddinnimath and departmental liaison officer Lubna Al-Zadjali. I also acknowledge the work of Tom Watson, Amanda Choularton and Rebecca Meyer, advisers to Ministers Elliott and Ayres respectively. It is fair to say on behalf of Minister Elliott and Minister Ayres that we are so blessed to have amazing ministerial officers and staff who put the people of our State first.

Together, the reforms in the bill provide important foundations needed to underpin a vibrant, safe and strong 24-hour economy and further improve the regulation of the liquor industry supported by the holistic approach presented in the Government's 24-hour Economy Strategy. These important reforms ensure our State's liquor laws are risk based, with effective measures that help minimise risks of alcohol-related harm and support more customer-centric approaches for businesses and the community. This Government is determined to deliver reform that improves the lives of the people in our great State, including the residents and visitors who participate in the 24-hour economy. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Private Members' Statements

PITTWATER ELECTORATE KOALA PROTECTION

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (18:11:14): Today I discuss the koala State environmental planning policy [SEPP] in the context of my electorate of Pittwater. There has been a lot of misinformation peddled about the SEPP over the past few weeks and its impact on development. It has been stated that saving koala habitat will make farms unable to be farmed—it will not. It has been stated that saving koala habitat will destroy private native forestry—it will not. It has been stated that saving koala habitat means Sydney home owners will have to get koala surveys done—they will not. All these false arguments are designed to obscure the point of the koala policy: We need to manage the impacts of large developments on koala habitat to stop them going extinct in the wild by 2050.

It has been said that this is an issue of country versus city; that city people want to assuage their guilt for wiping out urban koala populations by forcing regional communities to save what is left of theirs. In fact, the policy is designed to give expression to the National Koala Conservation and Management Strategy 2009, which aims to conserve koalas by retaining viable populations in the wild throughout their range. Certainly, the plight of extinct koala colonies is informative about how we can best shape development to ensure that koalas have the best chance of survival wherever they occur—whether in the city, on the coast or in the bush.

I offer the example of my community of Pittwater as a case in point. The Pittwater electorate is emblematic of the Aussie coast—of its environment, its culture and its lifestyle. A string of villages nestled in forested hillsides between beach and bush, Pittwater hints to the nature of the coastline that continues north right up to the Queensland border and beyond. Pittwater is home to a huge range and diversity of flora and fauna. There is more biodiversity in Pittwater than across the entire British Isles. One of the most iconic residents of Pittwater is the koala. Now sadly restricted to our national parks, the koala was until relatively recently a familiar sight in the suburban streets of Avalon Beach, Bilgola Plateau and Newport. Former Mayor David James remembers koalas in the trees outside his family home in Philip Street, between Newport and Mona Vale. My mum remembers the racket that koalas in the trees near Clareville Beach made during the night. I can recall the last koalas of Avalon that lived and ranged across the backyards and streets between the Angophora and Stapleton reserves.

The Avalon koalas were not wiped out by existing suburban housing, nor by farmers; nor was their habitat felled by loggers. No, the Avalon koala population fell victim to exactly the same villain that is threatening koala habitat right up and down the coastline all the way to the Queensland border and beyond: poorly designed property development, with subdivision of land in the wrong place—in the case of Avalon, the expansion of a retirement

village—with inadequate efforts to preserve canopy trees. Private native forestry can be conducted sustainably near koala populations. Routine agriculture occurs every day around koala colonies and suburban families live in the shadow of koala-used trees in peri-urban parts of Sydney—such as the northern beaches, Wollondilly, the Hawkesbury and Campbelltown—where known koala colonies still exist. Of course, if a company or an individual is engaging in significant development that involves clearing core koala habitat then, yes, this policy will have an impact on their activities. It is simply not possible to support koala populations without identifying and protecting the habitats in which they live. As one local resident recently wrote to me:

I wish to offer my support for the modified SEPP Koala Habitat Protection. I read the scientific report on koala habitat trees and how the SEPP would operate and I think that the new legislation is a vast improvement over the old legislation which was simplistic and unworkable for a rare and patchily distributed species.

I was born and raised on the land in western NSW until my thirties but I have been based in Sydney working as an ecologist, environmental statistician and environmental scientist for 30 years. However, I also juggle this with running a working farm near Glen Alice, and I fail to see how this change to the SEPP will hinder my operations, despite having several listed tree species for my region. It is imperative that strong legislation such as this be implemented to protect the future of the koala.

Generations of children grew up among the koalas of Avalon Beach. I wish that similar protections had been around 30 years ago because then the kids of Pittwater today would be growing up with the same experience I had. But we still have the opportunity to save koala colonies up the coast from the scourge of poorly designed development that fails to adequately protect the trees that koalas use so that children in those areas can enjoy the opportunities that kids in Pittwater enjoyed until all too recently. What happened to the Avalon Beach koalas will occur right up the coast unless we act now.

SWANSEA ELECTORATE HOSPITAL WAITING TIMES

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (18:16:05): I wish to address the issue of hospital wait times for elective surgery and emergency departments for many local constituents in the Swansea electorate. The latest Bureau of Health Information report covering the April to June quarter this year is a damning indictment on the Liberal Government's record on regional health. The data shows that Central Coast patients are being left behind, with the wait time for urgent elective surgery at Wyong Public Hospital 30 per cent higher than the State median waiting time. The median wait time for non-urgent surgery also exceeded the State median by 99 days. I find that disgraceful. Patients at Gosford Hospital who are awaiting urgent elective surgery fared a little better—waiting 20 per cent longer than the State median—while those waiting for non-urgent elective surgery found themselves waiting 52 days longer than the State median waiting time.

Our local hospital emergency departments are also under tremendous strain. As a result, wait times have increased from the same period last year. Patients who present at Wyong Public Hospital are waiting three hours for treatment—an increase on last year's figure—while 35 per cent of patients waited over four hours for treatment. Gosford Hospital's wait times increased even more, with patients waiting three hours and 25 minutes in the emergency department and 41 per cent waiting for over four hours. Hospitals in the Hunter and New England Local Health District have also experienced an increase in emergency department wait times. Belmont Hospital has experienced its median emergency department wait time increase to two hours and 35 minutes, and 28 per cent of patients are waiting over four hours. Emergency department wait times at John Hunter Hospital also remain far too long, with patients waiting two hours and 51 minutes along with 29 per cent of patients waiting over four hours. At John Hunter Hospital wait times for non-urgent elective surgery also increased compared with the rate this time last year.

The Liberal Government went to the 2019 election promising an additional 8,300 nurses, doctors and psychiatrists of whom 45 per cent were supposed to be located in regional New South Wales. I ask the Government: Where are they? The Government's own 2019-20 budget papers promised an extra 1,060 medical staff including doctors, psychiatrists and specialists to improve response times, especially in emergency departments, and to tackle elective surgery waiting lists. Again I ask: Where are they? The latest Bureau of Health Information report shows that the Liberal Government has failed its own test because waiting times for elective surgery continue to head in the wrong direction for regional communities right across New South Wales. It is worth noting that data from the January to March report, prior to COVID-19 restrictions taking effect, demonstrates the same excessive wait times for elective surgery and in emergency departments in regional areas.

This Government's horrendous record on health recently was on full display when in the midst of the global pandemic it announced that the Casuarina Grove aged-care facility, which also assists those living with a disability, would be transferred to a private provider on Thursday 29 October 2020. This will result in the termination of 37 ongoing positions and all casual staff—the very workers who have been on the front line of this pandemic—will lose their jobs. Does this Government have no shame? I have constituents whose family members spent time at the Casuarina Grove aged-care facility and who spoke glowingly about the staff's treatment of their

family members in their time of need. To say they were furious at the staff's treatment by this Government is an absolute understatement.

It is clear the Berejiklian Government has ignored the needs of Central Coast and Hunter patients for way too long. It is time the Government gave the Central Coast and Hunter community the health resources it requires to ease the strain on our local hospitals. I call on the Berejiklian Government to immediately reinstate critical funding to restore the damage done by its \$252 million cuts to NSW Health last year. I commend our public hospitals staff and current staff at the Casuarina Grove facility for the amazing work they do in our communities. They need to be supported by the New South Wales Government. I call on the Berejiklian Government to stop being so mean and support our wonderful frontline health workers.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLIE COX, OAM

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (18:21:06): Sadly, I draw to the attention of the House the passing of Charlie Cox on 14 August at the age of 80 years young. Charlie was a leader all his life. He was a teacher, educator and university teacher-adviser, local councillor, mayor, surf lifesaver, sportsman and a recipient of a Medal of the Order of Australia. I am proud to say he was a friend of mine. Charlie Cox's name is well known by most people in Casino and the Richmond Valley, where he served as mayor for eight years with the Casino Municipal Council and then as mayor for the amalgamated Richmond Valley Council. He was recognised as an emeritus mayor in 2008. I knew Charlie for over 20 years and my life has been the better for it.

Charlie was a visionary and a community leader. He helped shape Casino and the Richmond Valley. He worked hard to make those town improvements that were desperately needed and that are so important to improving people's lives—and he always did it with a smile. When things got tough he still did not lose his smile—he was just more determined to get a good outcome for his community. Charlie loved his community and his community loved him back. Charlie was always the perfect gentleman and I loved working with him, particularly on projects for the men's shed. He was always working on projects to improve the shed and was instrumental in transforming it from an afterthought in the pavilion at the Casino showground into one of the best men's sheds in the region.

His Medal of the Order of Australia acknowledged his services not only to local government but also to the community of Casino and to surf lifesaving. He was awarded life membership of surf lifesaving in Evans Head, the Far North Coast Surf Life Saving Club branch and the State organisation, the Casino soccer association and the Far North Coast education board of examiners. He held committee positions from secretary to president of several sporting groups. Charlie was a competitive sportsman and he demonstrated sporting prowess in swimming, soccer and rugby league in addition to surf lifesaving. Charlie was a staunch and dedicated supporter of the South Sydney Rabbitohs rugby league club. Charlie's illustrious story of achievement and service stems from humble beginnings and he never lost his humility.

When I think of Charlie I automatically think of his disarming smile—a smile he wore every day and a smile that everyone will remember him by. He treated everyone as an equal and truly cared about their wellbeing. There is no doubt he brightened up your day when you saw him. Charlie always gave 100 per cent with whatever he did—it was never halfway with Charlie. It was always done with grace and respect. He always had a positive outlook on life and he was an all-round nice bloke. Charlie lived an extraordinary life that profoundly impacted on his community and on all who knew him. I want to express my thanks to Charlie for all that he has done for me and his community, for being the wonderful person he was and for being my friend. On behalf of the House, I express condolences to his wife, Robyn, and his surviving family, Anthony and Dean and grandchildren Tiarna, Riley and Sam. Rest in peace Charlie. We will never forget your smile.

RIVERSTONE ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (18:24:53): I will place on record a number of the infrastructure and services improvements delivered to the electorate of Riverstone and the greater Blacktown region under this current Liberal-Nationals Government. The comments of some people in the region about infrastructure remind me of a famous Monty Python sketch. Many of the people hearing or reading this will recall the famous segment in the movie *The Life of Brian* in which John Cleese, playing the character Reg, one of a group of would-be liberation fighters, asks the question, What have the Romans ever done for us? Reg claims:

They've bled us white, the bastards. They've taken everything we had, and not just from us, from our fathers, and from our fathers' fathers.

Then rhetorically he asks:

And what have they ever given us in return?

Well, inconveniently for Reg, his fellow conspirators come up with more than a few answers: aqueducts, sanitation, roads, irrigation and much more. Poor old Reg can only conclude:

All right, but apart from the sanitation, the medicine, education, wine, public order, irrigation, roads, a fresh water system, and public health, what have the Romans ever done for us?

In asking this question Reg bears a striking similarity to the mayor of Blacktown, Tony Bleasdale, who frequently claims that the State Government has not provided infrastructure or services to support the growth areas of the north-west. The mayor must have failed to notice the North West Metro connecting the region to Sydney via Chatswood along a new 23-kilometre route. You would think the section of viaduct alongside Windsor Road might be easy to spot. Perhaps he has failed to recognise the two brand-new police stations built at Riverstone and Mount Druitt. Maybe the new ambulance superstation at Blacktown is invisible and the nearby Service NSW centre is too well camouflaged to catch his eye.

When this Government came to office, both Richmond Road and Schofields Road were old-fashioned, two-lane country roads with winding and hilly sections. Hundreds of millions of dollars later, both are four-lane divided carriageways and smooth arterial roads. The underpass of Schofields Road beneath the Richmond rail line has freed up movement across the district. How could the mayor miss that? It is puzzling that the mayor could fail to notice the four new schools that have been built by this Government in the Riverstone electorate or the expansion and upgrading of schools at Acacia Gardens, Riverstone, Schofields and The Ponds.

One would think he would have noticed the enormous engineering project that has been going on at Blacktown Hospital, which is visible from his window at the council chambers a few hundred metres away. The hospital has more than doubled in size and has been provided with new facilities and a massive injection of new staff. Most of the new services provided by this \$700 million upgrade in two stages are already in use. I can understand that the mayor may not have used all the new services that have been added to existing bus routes nor the new routes that have been introduced as new areas have opened up but I might think he would notice the distinctive bright blue on-demand buses servicing the Schofields and Tallawong railway stations and surrounding areas.

The new pedestrian footbridges over Old Windsor Road, giving residential areas direct access to the metro stations, are fairly easy to spot. A person would have to be seriously trying not to notice them to miss those. If the mayor has missed all of that, surely he noticed the \$45 million that the State Government gave to Blacktown City Council just a month or so ago to fund shovel-ready infrastructure projects as a job stimulus package in response to the effects of COVID-19. These funds are in addition to the regular grants given by the State to the council for work on projects such as Hambledon Road. The council has nearly completed the first stage, utilising the \$27 million grant from the State Government.

My time is running out, so I will need to end my list for the time being. However, there are infrastructure projects in the State Government pipeline which I can point out to the mayor in the future. So Mayor Reg is left to ask: Apart from the metro, police stations, the ambulance superstation, the Service NSW centre, Richmond Road, Schofields Road, rail underpass, new schools, expanded schools, the Blacktown and Mount Druitt Hospital, extra bus services and new routes, pedestrian footbridges and millions of dollars in infrastructure funding for council, what have the Liberals ever done for us? Poor old Mr Mayor; poor Reg. Perhaps he should have gone to Specsavers.

LIVERPOOL HOSPITAL

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (18:29:36): I advise the House of a significant report entitled *Condition critical*, and subtitled *An insight into the pressures that impact Liverpool Hospital staff in servicing the needs of the community*. The report by researchers at Western Sydney Regional Information and Research Service Limited was prepared at the request of the Liverpool Hospital medical staff council. One of the reasons it was requested was to explore the ability of Liverpool Hospital and the surrounding services to meet the needs of the Liverpool community. Liverpool Hospital is a quaternary referral hospital and one of the leading trauma centres in the country. It provides services not just for the immediate community of Liverpool but for the surrounding south-west region. The South Western Sydney health region includes the local government areas of Camden, Campbelltown, Canterbury-Bankstown, Fairfield, Liverpool, Wingecarribee and Wollondilly. The report states:

The report found that Liverpool Hospital services a community with substantial challenges notably above those seen in other regions in Greater Sydney. This is combined with relative under funding, lack of private alternatives, comparatively very low rates of private health insurance and reduced comparative densities of specialist and non-specialist clinicians to support outpatient healthcare.

These views are underpinned by a number of key findings in the report. The first group of such findings are headed "Funding is not equitable". Specifically the South Western Sydney Local Health District [LHD] had one of the lowest total annualised expense budgets per resident by LHD when compared with other regions in Greater Sydney. The low costs per national weighted activity unit [NWAU] showed that the LHD can deliver cost-effective health care, however this impacts the ability to deliver timely and effective care to patients with

complex needs. The LHD also had the lowest average cost per acute encounter, indicating that the region had less funding to deal with complex cases outside the NWAU system.

As the report notes, and it is indisputable, the socioeconomic challenges of the community are greater than in other Greater Sydney local health areas. This includes a higher number of one-parent families and greater numbers with low household incomes. It has comparatively low levels of English proficiency, which increases the cost of interpreters and lengthens the time needed to treat patients properly. As the report points out, this is in the context where south-western Sydney has the lowest rates of private hospital beds and private health insurance hospital cover compared to other Greater Sydney regions. Especially compared to inner-city areas, Liverpool and south-western Sydney have a significantly lower number of medical and health services. Additionally, the area has a much lower rate of GPs and specialists compared to other Greater Sydney health regions. As the report states:

This document provides evidence that the funding is unfairly low compared to other health districts. It also illustrates the community's socio economic and cultural/language challenges as well as the comparative lack of alternative healthcare providers and thus reliance on the public hospital system.

Liverpool and south-western Sydney, on a strictly numerical basis, is getting less than its fair share of funding. This in a context where other factors mean it needs more than just the average. The report shows that south-western Sydney has the largest residential population of the Greater Sydney health district regions. It has grown by 10.5 per cent since 2011 compared to the New South Wales rate of 8.1 per cent. The area has the highest proportion of one-parent families among the Greater Sydney health districts. It also has the highest rate of residents who do not speak English well or at all of the health districts in Greater Sydney. These and other demographic factors referred to in the report impact significantly on the health system. As the report says:

This social and economic inequality decreases the ability of community members to weather health shocks and prioritise healthy behaviours, and these pressures are undoubtedly experienced by Liverpool Hospital and the local health system daily.

In this context of greater need in south-western Sydney and Liverpool, the report's analysis of comparable funding levels is profoundly disturbing. The most recent data available to the report's researchers showed that the total annualised expense budget per resident in the South Western Sydney LHD in 2017-18 was \$1,714. It has grown by only \$210 per resident since 2012-13. The 2017-18 year was markedly lower than for other districts. Nepean Blue Mountains was \$1,967, Central Coast was \$2,323 and Sydney was \$2,497. Western Sydney at \$1,697 was the only one with a lower figure than South Western Sydney. The report's conclusion states:

There appears to be significantly increased resident need and significantly less available resources compared with other Greater Sydney LHDs. This is particularly felt by Liverpool Hospital which functions as a quaternary service hospital for the district.

It also states:

It is clear from this review that Liverpool Hospital does not have equitable access to funds and also has a greater than average challenge in its efforts to meet the health care of the community.

The Government's response is that it is redeveloping Liverpool Hospital and is committed to substantial capital expenditure. That is problematic, and not just because of the recent report by the Auditor-General. The problem is not the buildings. The problem is the lack of funding for services. The Government is not properly or adequately funding the services in the buildings that are already there. It is a bit like building a new road and not letting cars go on it. The Government is delivering a second-rate health service in Liverpool. It is treating Liverpool and south-west Sydney unfairly.

MYALL LAKES ELECTORATE KOALA HABITAT

Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (18:34:40): I have major concerns for farmers and property owners and for the continued growth of the Myall Lakes electorate should the new State Environmental Planning Policy (Koala Habitat Protection) to replace SEPP 44 not be amended. The new SEPP is not a plan to protect koalas. We are told we should rely on the science, but the science is being misrepresented. The SEPP will affect farmers. The SEPP will affect jobs. The SEPP will affect the timber industry. The SEPP will affect communities. We all want to have koala populations thriving again after witnessing their devastation in the recent bushfires, but the SEPP in its current form will fail to protect even a single koala. We are told to rely on the science, and that the SEPP is based on science.

It is based on the koala strategy put out by the NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer. Part of that is the tree habitat study. We contacted the scientist who did the habitat study and he has said that his science has been misrepresented. The 123 trees that are in the new SEPP includes all categories of trees, including those of minimal and no value. It includes casuarina, black box and other trees. The casuarina, known as belah, is a noxious weed. The SEPP includes trees that are of minimal value. We are saying that we should look at the higher priority trees, which is 39 trees, and those are what should be in the new SEPP. That is a fourfold increase on what the old SEPP included. The foundation of this SEPP is based on false science, and the person who did the research is horrified

that those numbers have gone into the SEPP, which was never intended. They have conglomerated the whole of all the trees that were in his report rather than the high-priority trees. When a fatal flaw like that is found, the science loses all credibility. That is what this SEPP has done. It has lost all credibility.

On top of that there are also maps in the SEPP. Areas of the CBD in the major centres of Forster and Taree in the Myall Lakes electorate are set to be considered as koala habitat should the SEPP not be amended. Let's think about that. An avenue of jacarandas on the road that leads up to the bridge into Taree will be a core koala habitat. The people of the Manning Valley know that there are no koalas in those jacaranda trees. The member for Clarence would be horrified to know that jacarandas have somehow become a koala habitat, because Grafton is the jacaranda capital of Australia. The maps also include numerous houses and roofs. I did not know that koalas were some sort of drop bear. They must be because they eat corrugated iron, tiles, bricks and bitumen. I did not know that. That is what the maps say. These maps are based on science. We are meant to accept this. We are meant to all fall down and say, "Oh, it's the science".

There are two areas where the science is fundamentally flawed and it is wrong. We agree that there has to be a SEPP, but the one that has been proposed needs to be amended. People ask why we did not do that before. A delegation of The Nationals went to the Minister in October last year with our concerns. We took the maps and showed how they would affect certain farms. What happens now? It gets leaked because one of the farms referred to was owned by one of our members. If we cannot rely on the science of the maps and on the koala strategy that the SEPP is based on because the author of the research study says it has been misrepresented, then we really have to look at the impacts of this. When someone says that it will not affect farmers, it will. They have changed the definition so that any koala habitat tree makes it a koala habitat and then it says "or if a koala has been seen in the last 18 years". It should be "and". They should be joined together. We have told the Minister. That is why I have concerns for my constituents. [*Time expired.*]

RYDE ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service) (18:40:08): The power of community never ceases to amaze me. I have lived, worked and grown up in Ryde. I was born in Ryde Hospital, went to the primary school and high school there and even had a stint working as a Christmas casual at Grace Brothers in Macquarie. Ryde has reached new heights in our modern world and with each project our Government provides, it gets better and better. The real driving force behind these changes and improvements in Ryde is the community. I am reminded of this fact every time we work together. I see firsthand the excitement and passion in my community that is working towards better infrastructure.

A key recent example of this is our new commuter car park set to be constructed in West Ryde. The station is a key hub in Ryde situated on Victoria Road and is one of our four train stations connecting people to the rest of Sydney. An expanded commuter car park makes a huge difference to those who depend on public transport. It cuts the costs of transport to the commuter and improves sustainability in our area by increasing usage of public transport. The benefits do not stop there. Better lighting, pathways and landscaping will update the look, safety and accessibility of West Ryde station. The station upgrade will include 108 at-grade new smart car spaces, with features like smart lighting, access to Opal card tap-on services and the like. We would expect nothing less from a government that is committed to digital transformation.

I listened and worked with my community, and we made a petition that brought the commuter car park to the forefront of attention at Ryde. I thank Carl Pozzato of the Ryde Eastwood Leagues Club, our local paper *The Weekly Times* and the one and only John Booth for their support in raising awareness of the project and helping to bring this important upgrade to the area. The way I contact my constituency has been very different since the start of the pandemic, but putting the community first has not changed. I thank members of our community for their comments on the issue. Mabel, who was one of the signatories, said she would be able to use the station due to increased car capacity and accessibility allowing her to park. Helen, located in the heart of Ryde, said she was proud to support the developments that improve our community. Robert similarly noted how we could better use vacant land near the station for the benefit of the community. As a small sample, they represent the involvement and action of the community in the future of Ryde, even during these unprecedented times.

That project is being developed in conjunction with our other commitments in West Ryde, including the widening of Victoria Road. As part of the project, complex investigations which started in January are continuing across numerous departments. These projects will transform the face of West Ryde forever and they will go forward with guidance and consultation from the community as we together shape where we live. I am proud to be part of a government that is delivering the highest standards of infrastructure across transport, education, health and more to the people of Ryde. It will take far more than a pandemic to stop the future. I know my community will be there every step of the way to make sure that we have the very best.

In Meadowbank and West Ryde we are building a brand new primary school and high school. We are relocating Meadowbank Public School to the Meadowbank campus. The school site will be given back to the community as open space and we are consulting with the community on what that will look like. Do we keep the hall there for future use or make a new oval out of the green space?

We are putting \$140 million into an upgrade of the TAFE, which will be digital and technology focused. This will be fantastic for the area because it augments what we are doing on the other side of the electorate at Macquarie University. That whole education and employment precinct will completely transform Ryde. I cannot begin to say how excited I am. I have seen some of the preliminary drawings of what we can do to activate that precinct. People have heard of the Grounds of Alexandria. We want the same kind of community facility in Ryde—with markets, stalls, coffee shops and more open space. I thank the community for their patience and persistence. We will get through this pandemic together and we will be stronger on the other side.

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:45:13): I am proud to report that I will be the first Australian mainland politician to bring a private member's bill to amend the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Amendment (Coercive Control—Preethi's Law) Bill 2020. It has been a long journey which began in England and came to fruition in Shellharbour with my involvement with the Illawarra Women's Health Centre. As a backbencher, I am so proud of the work that I have done with Ms Sally Stevenson and the committee on the bill to address a flaw in the Act. I have worked with the Illawarra Women's Health Centre for 18 months to lobby both State and Federal governments for funding to establish a domestic and family violence trauma recovery centre in the Illawarra. I am delighted to say that I played a role in securing funding for the trauma recovery centre after lobbying the Minister for Health and Medical Research. I thank the Minister for his support.

A highlight of the journey took place on 16 March 2020 when I stood alongside Sally Stevenson, the general manager of the Illawarra Women's Health Centre, and Dr Patricia Cullen from the University of New South Wales to make a very important funding announcement—the Illawarra Women's Health Centre would receive \$50,000 in funding to support the development of a business case for its proposal to establish a domestic and family violence trauma recovery centre in Shellharbour. It brought the possibility of a centre in Shellharbour officially one step closer to reality. If fully funded, the centre will be the first of its kind in the world. Victims and survivors will finally have a support resource that focuses on their long-term holistic recovery.

The \$50,000 funding will be used to establish a design for the centre. The design process will involve hearing from and collaborating with women who have lived experience of family and domestic violence, while consulting with service providers and policymakers. The final design will form the basis of the business case for the centre. I thank Sally Stevenson and the outstanding advisory team who worked on the submission to the House of Representatives standing committee that will inquire into family, domestic and sexual violence. My special thanks goes to the special advisory group made up of Ms Margherita Basile, Dr Loyola McLean, Jackie Bourke, Dr Cathy Kezelman, AM, Associate Professor Rowena Ivers, Dr Karen Williams, Roberta Allen, Dr Nithya Reddy, Sue Dignan and Denika Thomas. I also thank the Minister for Health and Medical Research for his funding proposal.

I congratulate those people who were involved in innumerable phone calls, meetings, pieces of correspondence and petitioning of governments and other organisations. In August this year I organised a videoconference in the Illawarra between myself, psychiatrist Dr Karen Williams and the New South Wales Attorney General. Its purpose was to press for a policy change to ensure that specific domestic violence concussion protocol for emergency departments would fall in line with protocols already in place when sportspeople report to hospitals with head injuries. The Attorney General thanked me and Dr Williams for our time and he said that he would be seeking further advice. I have since spoken to him and he seems very confident about the proposal. The work being done in the Shellharbour electorate to prevent family and domestic violence is both relevant and urgent. I have worked for 18 months to bring forward my bill, and I am very proud to have completed my research and advocacy to be able to bring it to Parliament. I look forward to speaking on it further and telling some of the stories that go with it.

AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (18:49:49): It is a pleasure to talk of more great news for higher education in the electorate of Seven Hills. The Australian Catholic University, or the ACU as it is known, has announced that its brand new Blacktown campus will open for the 2021 academic year just one train stop from the electorate of Seven Hills. Young people and those seeking to pursue further education in our community will now have the option of studying at the new campus right next to Blacktown railway station at 22 Main Street. Disciplines will include business studies, humanities, information technology, law, nursing, nutrition science, public health, sport and exercise science, teaching and theology.

I am aware that prospective students from Kings Langley, Lalor Park and Seven Hills have already enrolled for undergraduate, postgraduate and pathway courses at the ACU Blacktown campus. Last week the ACU held the third of three virtual open days which allowed local prospective students to get a feel for the campus experience that will be provided by the ACU at Blacktown as of next year. I would expect even more local graduating school students, and many other prospective students, to follow their lead in becoming one of the approximately 1,000 members of the inaugural cohort at ACU Blacktown.

The ACU is ranked first in Australia for graduate employer satisfaction, and is ranked in the top six for skills development and learner engagement amongst Australian universities. The new campus will bring first-class tertiary education to our community and will no doubt have a long-term positive impact on the local area. As such, I am incredibly pleased with this latest development. I thank the late former Premier of New South Wales and member of this place, the Hon. John Fahey, AC, for his service and contribution to his nation, this State and later as the chancellor of the ACU. The dividends of his leadership and decision-making will continue to enrich Australians for decades and perhaps generations to come. I also thank and congratulate the outgoing vice-chancellor of the ACU, Professor Greg Craven, AO, for his near 13 years of dedicated service in transforming the university and leading it to become the distinguished Australian educational institution that we know today.

The organisational leadership demonstrated by both the late chancellor and the outgoing vice-chancellor in bringing quality tertiary education to western Sydney, specifically on the doorstep of the electorate of Seven Hills, will have a truly transformative effect on how our community perceives itself and the life opportunities that will be available so close to home. The new ACU Blacktown campus will create new jobs, increase productivity and deliver even better services for the electorate of Seven Hills. It is fitting that on the 200th anniversary of Catholic education in Australia, the ACU is set to open its door to its newest campus—the Saint Josephine Bakhita Campus in Blacktown. Saint Josephine is a shining example and inspiration to help overcome those difficulties that are sometimes faced in our community.

Professor Hayden Ramsay is the deputy vice-chancellor of the ACU and is the coordinator for the establishment of the new Blacktown campus. His leadership will ensure that the campus will be a fantastic success and will become woven into the fabric of the local community of Seven Hills. The new ACU campus at Blacktown is committed to forging opportunities for the pursuit for knowledge and self-improvement within our local community. That will make it a natural fit and a long-term success on the doorstep of the electorate of Seven Hills. I wish all local and graduating school students, as well as local prospective students, all the best with their applications to study at the new ACU campus at Blacktown.

NATIONAL POLICE REMEMBRANCE DAY

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (18:53:49): Each year the date of 29 September holds a special significance as a time for both police officers and the communities they serve to pause, honour and remember officers who have lost their lives in the performance of their duties. The solemn occasion is held for police not just in New South Wales but also throughout Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and the Solomon Islands. This year has been particularly difficult for those who have served in the NSW Police Force, with bushfires, floods and the COVID-19 crisis. It is easy for people to forget that police officers put themselves on the line every day. They deal with the most violent in our community, the often recalcitrant and those whose own foolishness or misadventure requires the police to come to their rescue in challenging circumstances.

It is also important to remember that behind every New South Wales police officer there is a family at home who shares the stresses and grief of the day-to-day challenges that police officers face. The NSW Police Force has lost 272 of its members since the first recorded death on duty in 1803—that of Constable Joseph Lukar of the Sydney Foot Police, who was assaulted and stabbed. Also included on the police wall of honour for those who lost their life in the course of their duties is, of course, Mr Curtis Cheng, who was shot and killed in a terrorist attack outside NSW Police Force Headquarters in Parramatta in 2015.

Last year the NSW Police Force also lost Constable Timothy David Proctor. Timothy was part of class 333 and was tragically killed in a motor vehicle accident as he was returning to Liverpool Police Station after attending a range shoot. His loss was a great tragedy for his wife, Dianne, and their child as well as all his extended family and friends. In 2016 the NSW Police Force also lost Senior Constable Colin James Young and Sergeant Godfrey Graham Richardson; and in 2013, Detective Sergeant Ashley Newton Bryant, Sergeant Thomas Patrick Galvin and Sergeant Gabriella Patricia McDonald.

The NSW Police Force Wall of Remembrance, which records the names of those lost and is located near the Parliament in The Domain, is a graphic reminder of the toll taken on those who chose to serve in the NSW Police Force. Every police officer who walks out their door to start a duty shift is aware of the risk of violence or harm occurring at any time, and from unexpected quarters. This has been clear since the 1978 bombing of the Hilton hotel, where the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting was taking place, in what is considered to

be the first major terrorist incident in Australia. The bomb had been planted in a garbage bin just outside the hotel entrance and exploded when the bin was emptied into a garbage truck in the early hours of the morning. The explosion instantly killed the two garbage collectors, Alec Carter and William Favell. Constable Paul Burmistriw, the police officer who was on duty at the hotel at the time, died later in hospital from the injuries he sustained in the blast.

Since 1978 the work of the NSW Police Force has become far more complex as the world has grown smaller and more accessible and technology has changed. As the death of Mr Curtis Cheng made clear, police are now at greater risk, as they themselves have become the target—not only in Australia but also overseas—as representatives of the State. The complexity of modern policing in a pandemic—the first of its kind since the early 1900s, with all the restrictions it brings—has seen members of the NSW Police Force increasingly asked to take on tasks, particularly with the policing of public health orders, that few would have imagined would be part of their role when they joined the force. Unfortunately, over the past year police officers have been on the receiving end of significant violent attacks. There has been an alarming increase in the ferocity of violence against members of the NSW Police Force that is unsettling for both the force and the community.

It is incumbent on members of this House to do all we can to understand and ameliorate the risks that police officers face in the performance of their duties. On 29 September it is important that we take the time to pause and reflect on the loss of those who have died in the performance of their duties and remember the families and friends they have left behind. We cannot ease their pain or grief over the ongoing loss of a father, mother, sister, brother, son or daughter, but we will keep them in our thoughts. As representatives of the people of New South Wales, imperfect as we are, it is important we do all we can to ensure that when a New South Wales police officer walks out the door to do their duty they will arrive safely home again.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (18:58:28): I commend the member for Auburn for her private member's statement about police officers and Police Remembrance Day. As I have said many times in this House, every time a member of this place mentions the NSW Police Force, other members seem to flock to the Chamber to tell great stories about the fantastic work that is being done in their local community by local police and how proud their communities are of the job that police do. I note the member's comments that the dangers faced by police in their day-to-day work are not lost on those communities. In concert with her, I pass on my recognition of those officers who have lost their lives doing their duty. I will also have the opportunity to honour those officers on Police Remembrance Day. I know the member for Auburn will do likewise. She also mentioned the injuries that police sustain through assault. I remind members of the House that a public inquiry into assaults against police will commence on Monday of next week. I look forward to the outcome of that inquiry.

SERVICE NSW

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (18:59:37): We were promised 10 Service NSW centres at the last election. This included a much-needed Service NSW centre at Roselands, a wonderful multicultural community shared by my electorate and that of the member for Lakemba. After seeking information from the customer service Minister, all I have been told is that the rollout of these Service NSW centres will take place over four years. Does that mean my constituents will have to wait until after the next election for a Service NSW centre to open at Roselands? That is a long time to wait to renew a licence, register a birth or access a cost-of-living consultant, among other services. There is no Service NSW centre in my electorate so my constituents must now travel to centres in other parts of Sydney.

The customer service Minister has wasted taxpayer dollars on a vanity project, duplicating a service that already exists in the marketplace—namely, a parking app. When Minister Dominello launched his Park'nPay app in 2019 there were already several commercial app providers contracted by around 100 local councils across Australia. Some of those apps existed as far back as 2015. How many millions of taxpayer dollars have been wasted developing this app, which is only used by a handful of councils in New South Wales? It is my understanding that the commercial app providers have been shut out of the tenders. I urged my council to have an open tender.

When Park'nPay went against other parking apps in council tenders, it lost out. Last year, long before the councils had even made a decision on whether to use the app, the Minister's department announced that some councils were adopting Park'nPay. I have been advised that departmental officials have been advising some councils that they do not need to tender for the State-owned Park'nPay, despite the Local Government Act requiring independent parking app providers to go through the tender process. On this point I am happy to be told that I am wrong. The Minister should work with technology providers and app developers rather than against them in finding solutions and providing new services for taxpayers.

I am not against digital transformation, particularly the very important government service apps such as those we saw during the bushfires and recently with COVID. Those apps are absolutely vital and important for

our community across New South Wales. But I find it quite startling that a Liberal government is stifling competition and innovation. Instead of providing the certainty and confidence to allow digital and smart technology companies to flourish, grow and employ more people, the heavy hand of government—a blunt instrument—is in their way. The Government should get out of providing a parking app. There are other services the Government should be providing. The Government is stifling innovation and competition in trying to duplicate technology that is already offered in the marketplace.

The tech companies and app developers were there a long time before the Government came into the market and, even worse, the Government is trying to win contracts by bypassing the tender process that other parking app providers are required to go through. What is next? Will the Minister launch a music streaming service? Will he buy TikTok's Australian business? I would like to know. Rather than wasting millions of taxpayer dollars on vanity projects and duplicating services that already exist, the Minister should focus on rolling out and fast-tracking the Service NSW centres that were promised, creating jobs, providing services and, most importantly, ensuring that we get our Service NSW centre at Roselands. The Government should stop competing with app providers and get out of providing its parking app.

COOTAMUNDRA ELECTORATE YOUTH FUNDRAISING

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (19:04:23): This year has been an incredibly challenging year for young people across New South Wales. At the beginning of the year we saw young people respond to the horrific natural disasters of bushfires, through fundraising, volunteering and helping those in need. Just a few months ago students, teachers, families and entire school communities adapted to remote learning—swapping classrooms for video catch-ups and keeping up with their education out of the school premises. The challenges of this global pandemic continues to impact their sport, recreation and significant life events. The year 2020 has been one to remember.

Despite these enormous challenges our youth continue to step up, in ways that should inspire all of us, to serve their communities and to go above and beyond to make life better for others. In the Hilltops region Ms Albaf, a student at Young High School, is emerging as one of my electorate's young leaders. She is making her voice heard on the issues that matter to her community. Last year Ms Albaf was selected as one of 18 representatives for the New South Wales Regional Youth Taskforce and fulfilled this role with passion and dedication. But that is not all Ms Albaf has achieved in the past year. In March she was named the Rural and Regional Champion of the Year at the Innate Power of Women Forum, hosted by the Community Migrant Resource Centre at Parramatta. This inspirational young lady also attended the United Nations Youth State Conference 2020. What an incredible resume, and she is still in school. I am excited to see what she will achieve in the future.

Ms Albaf is not the only shining example of young people going above and beyond in the communities across my electorate. Two Cootamundra High School students have been nominated as delegates in the NSW Rural Youth Ambassador 2020 pilot program. Luke Dowell and Blake George will take part in this fantastic initiative, which will see them engage in six months of leadership development, advocacy and learning. I know this will set them on a path that will benefit their town, their school and their community. It is not just in leadership where young people in my electorate are stepping up. Throughout this month Beckom Public School students Tilly and Chloe, both 11, will be riding 300 kilometres as part of the Starlight Foundation's Tour de Kids appeal. They are aiming to raise \$500. Add to that the \$724 they raised in June as part of the Starlight Foundation's Stream Raiser appeal. When asked why this cause was important to them, the girls' response was, "We like to make children happy and we want to fund staff to distract the kids from the difficult time they are going through." We can learn a lot about helping others from these two year 6 students.

In Gundagai a staggering \$18,747 was raised by students at Gundagai Public School for the Heart Foundation through Jump Rope for Heart. Students skipped more than 322 hours to raise \$16,000 more than their initial target. While all 157 students at the school played their part, I want to single out Abi Pigram. Abi skipped a combined total of 17 hours and raised \$8,007, which makes her the second highest individual jump rope fundraiser in the country so far this year. An incredible effort from a kindergarten student and part of a mammoth achievement from a community still recovering from drought, bushfires and COVID-19.

The youth of the Cootamundra electorate are proud of their communities and they want to do their part to grow and thrive. I am proud to help their brilliant ideas come to life, and to create the facilities and events they need to overcome the challenges they face. Just late last year I held a series of "Pizza and Pitch" evenings, where 12- to 24-year-olds were invited to come along, to have a slice and have a say on what would make their communities better. These sessions have led to funding for a food truck for hospitality students in Narrandera High School food technology classes, redeveloped skate parks and created plans and programs for awareness days of bullying and connections created between passionate young people who want to make change in their communities. There is not enough time to speak about all the amazing young people in the Cootamundra electorate. I am proud to be their representative and I will continue to champion their causes.

COVID-19 AND CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (19:09:37): We have all been affected by COVID-19. It has meant unprecedented challenges for our communities across New South Wales. Health and safety has been the first priority of our New South Wales Government, but we have also been getting on with the job of keeping our economy strong. It is important to acknowledge that the New South Wales Government has committed just under \$14 billion to supporting our community during this difficult time. This has included \$2.4 billion towards health services, including support for health workers and extra mental health services; \$2.7 billion towards business support, including payroll tax relief; \$4.8 billion towards the State's infrastructure, including fast-tracking major capital works projects and improving our public spaces; \$250 million to support households, including land tax discounts, rent waivers and support for first home buyers; and \$903 million for education, such as the free online TAFE courses, support for preschools, childcare centres and higher education.

In addition to that, one of the welcome changes was that bike riding during COVID became a lot more popular across New South Wales and particularly in my electorate during those early COVID-19 days. It was a way that despite the distress, the anxiety and people's health being compromised, they could exercise independently and get about in a more COVID-safe way. We need to capitalise on that feature of COVID by promoting cycling as a regular, healthy and easy way to get around our neighbourhoods, to also connect with public transport and to have another alternative to driving between locations.

As physical distancing restrictions apply to our public transport services and we try to reduce congestion on our roads, this Government also wants to make it easier and safer for people to travel short distances on bikes through pop-up cycleways. As a regular cyclist, I know what a difference a good local cycleway path can make. It improves safety not only for me when I am on the roads but also for motorists and pedestrians around me. The pop-up cycleways are being introduced during this COVID period along routes where there are missing cycleway links, where there is demand for cycling infrastructure—as there is in my electorate—and where there is a recognised route to key amenities or where there is a recognised hotspot of congestion requiring more transport choices. These are all timely and sensible measures.

On 26 August I was pleased to announce plans for a new pop-up cycleway along O'Sullivan Road, Rose Bay, and Curlewis Street, Bondi. This temporary cycleway will connect the iconic Bondi Beach to the Rose Bay Promenade and Rose Bay ferry. Bondi residents, over the years I have been their member, have written to me requesting such connectivity as a way to open up the ferry access that exists at Rose Bay Wharf to those living in Bondi. The pop-up cycleway is being designed between Transport for NSW and the Woollahra and Waverley councils, with community feedback being considered during the process. The final design is proposed to be a separated bidirectional cycleway along O'Sullivan Road and Curlewis Street connecting with the existing share path on Blair Street, Bondi, and the cycleway on Birriga Road.

It was great to be joined at the announcement by Woollahra Mayor Susan Wynne, BIKEast President Mark Worthington and BIKEast members Lee and Frank Dreyer. BIKEast is an amazing local organisation that represents the interests of cyclists in the Eastern Suburbs. I acknowledge the other members of their committee, including vice-president Jim Hope, secretary Yvonne Poon, treasurer Anish Bhasin and public officer Warren Salomon. Cycleways are a crucial part of the New South Wales Government's COVID-19 transport planning, with around \$600 million to be invested into walking and cycling infrastructure over the next four years.

In the 2018-2019 budget pre-COVID, I was also gratified to secure \$1 million in funding for a shared path cycleway between Norwich Road, Rose Bay, and William Street, Double Bay. The 2.4 kilometre cycleway is going to improve cyclist safety and offer a transport option to ride to between those suburbs. The project is now in its final stages of approval with Woollahra council and construction is set to begin soon. I welcome these important cycleway projects that give our local residents alternative, safe and easy ways to travel. This is just one part of the Government's plan to help the community in this case recover from the impacts of COVID. I again thank my local community for their efforts in fighting the virus and continuing to do the right thing to keep us all safe. I commend my private member's statement to the House.

NSW BUSHFIRE INQUIRY

Dr JOE MCGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (19:14:48): Last summer we experienced bushfires on a scale not seen in our recorded history. In my region nearly half of the Snowy Valleys local government area was burnt. Lives were tragically lost, property destroyed and industries brought to their knees. The Government has now received the report of the NSW Bushfire Inquiry and accepted all 76 recommendations. It is about this report that I talk tonight. I commend the work of commissioners Mr Dave Owens, APM and Professor Mary O'Kane, AC, particularly for organising the additional meetings with my constituents to allow them to give feedback. The inquiry acknowledges the extraordinary work done by the Rural Fire Service and other emergency services. Once again I thank all those frontline workers and other volunteers who gave so much.

The report makes a wide range of recommendations and highlights the importance of ongoing research. Areas covered include data capture and use, aerial capacity, equipment and training, physical and mental support for our firefighters, evacuation centres, procedures and air quality. Importantly, it makes the point that we cannot rely on old ways to fight the fires of the future. As our climate changes so must we and so must government and the way it works with regional and local communities and people. This is what I wish to highlight tonight. The report recommends strengthened accountability, especially across agencies. The report does not recommend creating a new structure for bushfire preparation and prevention but it does want strengthened the current structure of a State bushfire coordinating committee and regional bushfire management committees.

This will mean that bushfire plans are up to date and involve the community. It also means where agencies cannot agree at the local level the matters are escalated so they get sorted in time. It is not good enough that the "too-hard" decisions are batted back and forth without a resolution. It will also allow a regional approach to hazard reduction, which the report notes is complicated and in extreme fires may be of limited value. However, hazard reduction is critical close to important assets, especially around towns and communities. Places must not be told they are "undefendable", as Batlow was told. This is about government working with and for communities. It is also about relationships.

The report recommends government agencies managing land at all levels be the "best possible neighbours". This includes maintaining fire trails, bridges, roads and communications infrastructure and undertaking weed control and hazard reduction. It means greater clarity around clearing roadside vegetation. The report describes the aspiration that "government landholders will be seen as highly desirous neighbours". I know many in my electorate would certainly welcome this and many would also welcome better communication and support for the community—not the RFS, who are fighting fires. Frankly, many farmers and landowners in my electorate felt abandoned as they fought to defend their land and communities. The report notes there are no formal protocols for the engagement and tasking of farm fire units. This is a recommendation of the 2017 Sir Ivan fire coronial inquiry, to which the Government has not yet responded.

The inquiry report notes the RFS will make farm fire unit integration a priority for 2020-21. I am concerned that this is only a limited recommendation. I strongly urge the RFS to work closely with, respect and support farmers, landowners and community volunteers. I will be watching the farm fire unit initiative closely. Speaking of relationships and communication, there is the issue of telecommunications. The report recognises the need to extend basic communications and provide backup. This is a pivotal issue. Telecommunications are absolutely critical in a crisis. Many of those most affected were left without communication for too long. Much of this was due to a loss of electricity. It is worth questioning, as the report does, whether our electricity network should be constructed on a "least cost" basis. I ask: Has there been enough consideration given to safety and the cost of rebuilding an overhead versus an underground network?

I thank those who worked in and supported the evacuation centres, especially in my electorate. However, we can train more community members to help. I heard of many people who were turned away from helping because they had not been trained. We also need an evacuee one-stop registration system and an approach that welcomes Indigenous people. I thank all those who cared for the animals of evacuees, and I note the recommendations in this regard. It is important to all those who lost their lives, to their families and our communities that suffered that we learn from what has happened. It is critical that our Government works with and for communities. I believe the report helps us to do this.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN JOSEPH FAHEY, AC

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (19:19:58): I pay my deep respect and admiration for one of my constituents who has recently passed away. This man was no ordinary constituent. He was the Hon. John Joseph Fahey, AC, the Premier of New South Wales from 1992 to 1995 and Federal Minister for Finance from 1996 to 2001. John leaves many wonderful political legacies and delivered many major reforms for New South Wales, both as Premier and as a senior member of the Greiner Government. These legacies helped make New South Wales and Australia a better place. History will fondly remember John and we will be forever grateful that he chose a career in politics after his successful career as a solicitor working in an office in John Street, Camden, and ultimately working with the Marsden's law firm in the Macarthur region.

I knew John personally and he was a mentor to me for several years, both during the 2019 election campaign and after my election as the member for Wollondilly. The advice and guidance I received during the campaign was instrumental in my election win. John always gave measured advice based on his many years of experience. Since my election, John was always willing to give his views on the current political situation and steer me in the right direction. I enjoyed the many chats we had after the 6.00 p.m. Sunday Mass at St Thomas Aquinas in Bowral. Like me, John had a deep Catholic faith which he held until the end.

John was always interested in my progression as a State member and encouraged me to strive to make my electorate and my State a better place for all. I am deeply grateful to John for all the advice and mentoring he has given me. It will stay with me and will be a constant inspiration in all that I do. There was one disagreement that we had and that could not be resolved: He played for the Canterbury Bulldogs and I am a Wests Tigers supporter. Needless to say, we were not on the same page there. One of the last issues that I discussed with John was the way we should respond to the COVID-19 crisis. It was on his advice that I established a regional task force covering the electorates of Camden, Goulburn and Wollondilly. If I can achieve only a small number of the things that John achieved I will be very satisfied.

John was a humble man who, despite his many significant achievements, was always looking at the outcome of those achievements rather than for any personal glory. This is the mark of not only a great statesman but also a genuine and caring man. John was both of these. There are many connections that my electorate has with John. He served as the member for Camden and then the member for Southern Highlands, which included parts of the Wollondilly electorate. In the Federal Parliament he served as the member for Macarthur, which also took in parts of the current electorate of Wollondilly.

Ironically, John first arrived in Australia from New Zealand and settled in Picton, which is at the centre of my electorate. Since he joined the Liberal Party in 1976, John has always stuck by the time-honoured motto "Service above self." Those many years as a faithful servant of the party took him from branch president of the local Camden branch all the way to the ultimate leadership role in our great State. Despite all that, he was the same person who had joined the party with high ideals. John fought many battles in life but always did so with dignity, grace and compassion. His health and family challenges were met in the same way.

John left us on Saturday 12 September. It was almost 20 years to the day since the opening ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. Perhaps this is one of John's best known legacies. Who will ever forget John's leap into the air when the President of the International Olympic Committee, Juan Antonio Samaranch, uttered the famous words "And the winner is Sydney"? Yes, Sydney, New South Wales and Australia were all winners for having John Fahey holding public office. To Colleen, his wife, his children and grandchildren, I offer my condolences. He was a wonderful man of our State and nation, and all of us are so much better for having John Fahey as one of our leaders. I share with his family in their loss and I will forever be grateful for having had John as a friend and mentor.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): I thank the member for Wollondilly for his very important words about a former Premier of New South Wales.

TABULAM BRIDGE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (19:24:50): I speak about the new Tabulam Bridge and, importantly, the retention of the historically rare old Tabulam Bridge. I note that yesterday the member for New England, the Hon. Barnaby Joyce, MP, held a so-called opening of the new Tabulam Bridge—it seems with his own red ribbon and scissors. This has caused some consternation in the local community, who are confused about the status of the opening and why the Federal member, whose electorate does not cover Tabulam—no Federal funds were spent there; it was all State funds—got to do the honours. I have sought assurances from the New South Wales Minister for Regional Transport and Roads on three matters: first, that this event was not official; secondly, that there will be an official opening; and, thirdly, that the community will be invited to celebrate. I have received those assurances.

Mr Adam Marshall: Barnaby is a goose.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN: I note that the Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales said some words about Barnaby, which I may not repeat.

Mr Adam Marshall: I said he was a goose.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN: He said Barnaby is a goose. So it will be in *Hansard*. I thank the Minister for his assurances this afternoon, which will reassure the local community. I now turn to an issue that I have raised in this place twice by way of private member's statements and through a series of representations to various Ministers, including the Deputy Premier, the Minister with responsibility for heritage, the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, and also the Parliamentary Secretary, who is at the table. That issue is the retention of the historically rare old Tabulam Bridge, which the Tabulam community is united in trying to save. There are some compelling reasons why.

In a 2011 report NSW Roads and Maritime Services noted that the Tabulam Bridge was assessed as being historically rare. Despite that, it was then delisted from the State Heritage Register. It is unbelievable that it was knocked off the register without the community's views being sought and without the community being informed.

The bridge is the birthplace of many members of the local Indigenous community, including Poppy Harry Mundine Walker. He was born under the bridge and is reported to be far too emotional to talk about it. I get that totally. It is a sacred space, where many members of the local Aboriginal community were born. Mums gave birth under that majestic bridge.

As the bridge was being built, local Indigenous people lived there. Many were moved in what was called the "long march" and were forced into what were called "missions" or "settlements", but in a vibrant community now known as Jubullum. This was what divided the community but, significantly, the fight to save the bridge has united the community. It has a connection to Sir Harry Chauvel, who formed the Australian Light Horse brigade. Completed in 1903, it is the longest single-span wooden bridge in the Southern Hemisphere, crossing the Clarence River to join the Bruxner Highway. John Cousins, a local cattle farmer, first approached me about this matter and persuaded me it was of fundamental importance to the whole Tabulam community to maintain the bridge as a pedestrian bridge and historical display.

The General Sir Harry Chauvel Memorial Foundation has written to the Special Minister of State, seeking his urgent approval of an order that no works be undertaken to demolish the Tabulam Bridge. I never gave up hope on it but did not want to raise the expectations of the community, so I went hard but also stepped gingerly. It is emotional and a kick in the guts, but I have to say it still could be saved. The Powerhouse Museum in the heart of Sydney has been saved from demolition, so why not the Tabulam Bridge? One can understand why people in rural and regional areas feel forgotten, overlooked and not taken seriously. I was told that the upkeep would cost \$1 million per year but I have not seen a business case for that costing. I have a question on notice to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads seeking further and better particulars. That is where the debate should have started, instead of the community being told no.

The Tabulam Country Women's Association and Tabulam Progress Association, among others, want to save the bridge. I have not met a Tabulam local who does not want to save the bridge. To add insult to injury, there is a platypus colony under the bridge and the community is apprehensive that the colony is at risk of disruption, or worse. I have made representations to Transport for NSW and to the Minister for Energy and Environment, seeking to protect the platypus colony and asking whether an environmental impact statement was done in this case. Currently a rock and bagging wall has been erected—85 metres long by 15 metres wide and three metres deep, with two metres underwater and one metre above—in readiness to demolish the bridge. I finish with the words of John Cousins, "I was also surprised at how emotional many people were about the importance of the bridge and the need to have it kept."

RURAL AND REGIONAL SUICIDES

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (19:30:00): Today I speak about an epidemic that is sweeping across rural New South Wales. Many people are dying and many families are burying loved ones, but there is no daily update on the numbers from NSW Health. There are no morning press conferences from the Premier telling people what to do to stay safe. There are no stimulus packages aimed at tackling the crisis and it is not an item on the National Cabinet's agenda. The epidemic I am talking about is suicide. The Murrumbidgee region, where I live, has the highest suicide rate in New South Wales. Over the past 10 years we have had a rate of 22 suicides per 100,000 people, which is three times the rate in Sydney. However, not one hospital in the entire Murray electorate has an inpatient mental health unit—not one. That is an area of 107,000 square kilometres, which stretches all the way from the South Australian border to the Riverina. Even the big population centres of Griffith, Leeton, Deniliquin and Wentworth lack the most basic of services.

The New South Wales Government has downgraded all our health facilities to such an extent that many hospitals have become bandaid distribution centres. The Government has privatised basic services to a degree that makes them unaffordable and it has centralised services so much that many treatments are inaccessible to those of us living in small towns. When someone is on the verge of taking their life, there is often nowhere to turn. They are put on a waitlist and are forced to wait weeks before someone might see them. They are told they need to drive three to four hours—at their own expense—to the nearest service, where they are treated away from their family. Not a week goes by that I do not hear from a grieving parent, sister, brother, husband or wife.

During the last summer holidays we were informed of five suicides by young men, including some teenagers. Last week we saw lots of outrage from National Party members who threatened to quit the New South Wales Government. Would it not be great if we heard the National Party—which calls itself the only party for regional Australia—talking about this crisis? Imagine seeing Nationals members telling the Premier that they would move to the crossbench unless services and hospitals in the bush were funded properly. We have never seen that from The Nationals, and it seems we never will. Sadly, this issue is barely on the radar of the New South Wales Government. We hear about COVID-19 and the need to prevent deaths. Every single day the Government publishes updates on the number of deaths and of cases. That is totally understandable during a pandemic. But

when it comes to suicide, the New South Wales Government is intent on covering up the numbers as much as possible. It wants to pretend that this crisis does not exist.

I recently posed a simple question to NSW Health: How many suicides occurred in the Murrumbidgee Local Health District between November 2019 and June 2020? NSW Health refused to answer the question. "Finalisation of death details may take considerable time pending determination of a coronial inquiry before a cause of death becomes official" is the jargon response it gave me. I appreciate that suicide is a complex and sensitive matter, and there are many factors and causes. But should our Government not be getting on the front foot to tackle this epidemic? Why is it not coming out to rural communities, talking to people, identifying gaps and causes, and doing its best to fix them? While the Government fiddles, I commend the many groups tackling this problem in my community.

Goolgowi is a small town that has had a rough year. The town lacks services. The nearest hospital mental health unit is 2½ hours' drive away. This fantastic community have rallied together to try to solve the problem themselves. Resident Marie Clarke recently called a community meeting and is spearheading the push for more services. I am heartened to see what she is achieving. I hope that the New South Wales Government can learn from her and give this crisis the attention it deserves.

BAULKHAM HILLS FIRE STATION

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (19:34:58):

On Tuesday 25 August I joined Fire and Rescue NSW Commissioner Paul Baxter to hand over a brand new \$760,000 pumper to Baulkham Hills Fire Station. Featuring a pump that supplies up to 4,000 litres of water per minute and a compressed air foam system, the new appliance will assist firefighters in responding to chemical, petrol and bushfire-related incidents. The new vehicle is fitted with a GPS navigation unit and an electronic message board on the back to warn motorists of emergency operations. The engine also meets stringent emission standards. The new vehicle will boost emergency responses in The Hills district and provide even greater protection for local residents.

Latest figures show that Baulkham Hills firefighters respond to over 1,100 emergency incidents each year and take part in more than 160 community safety activities to educate the local community about fire safety, so it is fitting that they receive this new pumper. Beyond The Hills district, Fire and Rescue NSW replace on average up to 40 vehicles each year with brand new and modern vehicles as part of a \$17 million annual program. As the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, I have had the privilege of travelling from Tweed Heads to Albury over the past month to see firsthand the provision of modern vehicles by Fire and Rescue NSW that provide our firefighters with top-of-the-line capabilities to protect life and property across the State.

Our firefighters are prepared for anything—whether it is rescuing you from a crashed car, providing emergency medical care to your loved one or humanitarian relief to your community during a natural disaster—and having these vehicles in our fleet means that we will be better prepared to meet the ever-growing challenges facing the world. As one of the largest urban fire and rescue services in the world, the New South Wales Government will continue to support the tremendous work of Fire and Rescue NSW in responding to a range of emergencies as part of a record \$826 million budget.

In 2018-19 Fire and Rescue NSW firefighters responded to 127,457 incidents, including more than 22,000 fires and explosions. It is only fitting that the Government continues to back our frontline emergency services workers through an investment in vehicles to improve emergency response, which was on display to the community during the horrible bushfire season we experienced over the summer. The brave men and women of Fire and Rescue NSW put their lives on the line to keep our communities safe. We thank our firefighters for their unwavering efforts over what has been a difficult 12 months in the service. As a Government we are committed to providing our firefighters with the best possible equipment and amenities so that they can get on with the job they do best—protecting the irreplaceable.

MAITLAND ELECTORATE SOCIAL HOUSING

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (19:37:18): A pink wall, with a large hole that has been patched inexpertly. She told me it happened 20 years ago. "He pushed me into the wall, and I was too scared to tell the house's, because no one believed you about domestic violence in those days. I was afraid to lose my kids, my home." There is the terrible juxtaposition of a timber dresser in the corner with leadlight doors and six willow pattern mugs hung in a row. She told me her daughter will not bring her grandchildren to her home anymore because of its terrible condition. In fact, she only called my office when they started threatening her with eviction about the state of the house. The rusted holes in the gutters and water damage to the internal ceilings, the matted greasy carpet and the varying shades of paint, the doors off the cupboards and the holes in the flooring, the vinyl tiles that have literally worn away tell the story of decades of neglect by NSW Housing, not this tenant!

In September 2019 the Hume Community Housing Association took over all government social housing in Maitland, taking a 20-year lease on 220 properties and assisting the 4,000 customers across Maitland and Port Stephens who reside in them. When I first met with Hume in 2017 I warned them of the severely dilapidated state of our social housing and the failure of this Government to maintain them. I have a dossier of the failures of this Government that I would like to table. In Maitland we have termites that have eaten through ceilings until they have literally collapsed, until floors were about to fall away; where mould has pervaded every room until it is impossible to remove; where kitchen cupboards are barely shelves; where shonky contractors have done the bare minimum again and again until the tenants are so downtrodden they do not even bother to complain anymore; where the refrigerator has to be stored beside the front door as it was the only part of the floor that could take such a weight; where a bathmat covers a rusting bath that is about to collapse through the floor; where bathroom tiles are crazed and cracked; where paint literally flakes off the ceiling; and where multiple electrical cords hang over curtain rods to provide power to a kitchen for months on end.

Hume has been outstanding in consistently attempting to engage with our community, to build trust and pride with our social housing tenants, yet the lack of concern by this Government has been appalling. Even Hume has had to put on a minor maintenance manager to fix things "outside the contract" because they simply cannot be part of system where a 69-year-old woman has to wait six months before sewage flooding grey water, and even faeces, onto her kitchen is repaired; an elderly couple has to wait five months before their broken fence latch is repaired, despite multiple break-ins; a blind disability pensioner has been trying since early this year to have holes in his walls fixed; and a woman calling Housing during a violent windstorm, with a large tree shedding branches over her house, is given the option of calling the State Emergency Service if the tree fell and calling Link2Home for temporary accommodation. I have even been told that:

... a stimulus program in the local area which was being run by DCJ and a number of properties were earmarked to be painted. Unfortunately... a number that were due to be completed will no longer be due to time and budget constraints.

The legacy of this Government's tardy, under-delivered and unfunded planned works on these aged and degraded properties has escalated into urgent ad hoc works that have put people's at risk of severe injury or chronic health conditions, or even losing their lives. I raise these issues because I am sick of the excuses, the blame shifting and the downright negligence of the Minister for Water, Property and Housing and the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services.

This Government is seeking shovel- and screwdriver-ready projects to pump much-needed jobs into our regional communities. I call on the Ministers to come Maitland and I will show them many such properties. Where is the dignity for people in New South Wales who are living in homes that are barely shelter and who have holes in the outside walls? It is a disgrace. I note the member for Clarence is tutting and is upset about me raising these issues in Parliament, but Land and Housing Corporation people get very concerned when they see the people who are outstanding members of our community live in this filth and deprivation. Their homes are a disgrace because this Government does not care.

JOSEPHINE DUNSTAN

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (19:42:22): I congratulate well-respected Richmond local Josephine Dunstan on two excellent achievements. Both occurred in July this year, although they were the fruit of years of hard work and dedication in serving the community. The month July 2020 marked the twentieth anniversary of Jo's business in South Windsor: Angel's Florist. Jo's smile, the fragrances from blooms and the flowers in her shop light up the town and our community is a brighter place. The standard of both her service and flowers have always been exceptional. I have only ever heard positive praise in the community about Jo and her family-owned and family-run business. Having seen the stunning arrangements myself, I can well understand why Jo attracts those accolades. Angel's Florist caters for all occasions but it specialises in weddings, gifts and deliveries.

The second achievement I recognise is that of Jo becoming the new president of the Rotary Club of Richmond. I am sure Jo will draw on her entrepreneurial talents and experience, particularly during these challenging times, in serving in that position. Jo's dedication and service to the community also includes being a founding member, president and board member of Hawkesbury Inner Wheel—what an outstanding apprenticeship in the lead-up to her appointment as Rotary club president. Central to the purpose of the Inner Wheel movement is fundraising for the community. Jo presided over the 2015 Ball at the Sebel, now known as the Crowne Plaza Hawkesbury Valley, where she and her team raised \$50,000 for important causes, such as the Hawkesbury Living oncology unit at Hawkesbury Hospital, Pink Finss Charity, Kurrajong Nursing Home, the Living Room drop-in centre and other community groups. Jo is also on the executive committee of the Hawkesbury Chamber of Commerce. It is truly inspiring that Jo has volunteered so much time and effort to the community whilst operating as a successful florist but, as they say, if you want something done you ask a busy person.

The Rotary Club of Richmond NSW has a strong focus on serving the community and raising money for worthy causes. I am sure that Jo's experience and successes that she drove with Hawkesbury Inner Wheel and her many other endeavours will see her preside over great results to the benefit of Rotary, the community and the important causes that Rotary champions. Serving the community and supporting charitable projects through Rotary seems more challenging than usual during the COVID-19 pandemic, and much of this voluntary work has a great impact and is appreciated even more so throughout this restrictive time. Jo has proven to be persistent during tough times. I am sure that as owner-operator of a florist business for 20 years she would have faced challenges and pressure situations over the years.

Therefore, I was delighted to hear that someone of Jo's calibre was elected to the presidency of Rotary. Jo's husband, Ernie Dunstan, is a former president himself and I am sure he will be wise counsel to Jo. I congratulate him, too, on his own success and the role he has played in Jo's success. I know that Rotary office-bearers rely heavily on the support of their partner to achieve the outcomes they strive to accomplish, and this year will be no different for Jo and Ernie. I congratulate Jo on her many achievements to date. She is an inspiration and role model to women in Hawkesbury and beyond. I wish her all the best with her florist business and her presidency of the Rotary Club of Richmond NSW, and thank her for her continued service to our community.

WARNERVALE TOWN CENTRE

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (19:46:28): Tonight I again talk about Warnervale Town Centre and update the House and the community on where the project is up to. It is exciting.

Mr Stephen Kamper: Jobs!

Mr DAVID HARRIS: I was up there with the people developing Hilltop Park and the residential and commercial areas last week and had a bird's-eye view from the top of the hill of where the development will happen. As my learned colleague the member for Rockdale mentions, lots of jobs will be generated by this project. I give credit to the Government. It announced \$8.5 million to upgrade the water supply and sewerage to make sure it is not holding back the residential section of the project. I also thank Landcorp NSW, which is developing this project. During COVID and all the bad news it is a shining light and some good news for our community.

The Warnervale Town Centre has been long awaited. As I think I have mentioned before in this House, it was first announced in 1975 and has taken a long time to eventuate. I circulated a community survey to ask what residents would like to see in the town centre, and I have handed the results to the mayor and the general manager of the council. I hope they can use that information to make sure we have the right community infrastructure in the area. The first thing I note is that 91 per cent of respondents considered the town centre to be a positive. That means people are looking forward to it happening. Respondents talked about what sort of businesses they would like to see in the area, such as a bakery, cafe, chemist, childcare centre—which is going to be built—florist and hair salon.

They want to see medical facilities, a takeaway—that got a very high vote—and a family tavern. A family tavern has been planned, so respondents will get that. It will have beautiful views across the Watagans to the west, and in the east you will be able to see the Tuggerah Lakes. The tavern is in a very good spot. The really interesting part of the survey was what sort of community facilities respondents would like to see. The number one response was an aquatic recreation centre. I know council is a bit reticent about that, but I draw its attention to the original Warnervale Town Centre drawings, which I have here before me. The drawings show an aquatic centre right in the middle of the town centre. That planned aquatic centre was drawn on not just one map but three maps, along with a community centre. The proponents want to buy the land from council for the next stage but they have offered to let the council keep some land to build an aquatic/community centre.

I urge council to consider this proposal very carefully. It has been collecting section 94 contributions for well over 15 years from the hundreds of new homes going into the area. There will be 200 new homes around this development. The council has been collecting money for an aquatic centre and this is a great opportunity for it to sell the rest of the land for housing but keep this section of land to build that facility. As I have said, the respondents to my community survey identified it as their number one priority. Respondents also want a picnic area, which they are going to get. It will be in the town park. They want a fitness park and they are going to get it—also in the town park. A teenage play area is also going to happen. Quite a few people want an art performance centre, which I think is laudable. A preschool will be built there as well. Most of the things the community wants are going to be delivered, but the one big item we still need to address is the aquatic/recreation centre.

Council has a perfect opportunity to put this in place. The developer wants to play its part in helping do that and the community wants it. Tonight I say to the mayor, the general manager and the council that the State Government has done its job in funding the infrastructure needed and the developer is putting its money up during

a recession, which is very much welcome. Now it is time for the council to deliver what was originally in the plans, which is an aquatic centre right in the middle of the Warnervale Town Centre.

SOUTHERN BORDER RECOVERY COMMITTEE

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (19:51:37): This evening marks a significant milestone after a challenging few months for our New South Wales-Victoria border communities, as restrictions are eased with the latest public health order. From the outset, I put on record my recognition of the way our communities have responded. Having been tasked with being a front line and despite being challenged, they have responded with determination and resolve. As restrictions ease, though, we are reminded that the battle against COVID has not ended. We must remain vigilant and continue to practise habits that help keep our community safe. However, we can turn our thoughts to recovery.

The formation of the Southern Border Recovery Committee was initiated by the Department of Regional NSW in August. The formation of this committee is largely due to the legacy of visits by the Premier, Deputy Premier, the small business Minister, the police Minister and the Parliamentary Secretary for southern New South Wales, the member for Cootamundra. Their leadership and willingness to speak with locals is much appreciated. I thank them for travelling to Albury and the rivers community. I also thank the Treasurer for listening to the concerns about the impacts of the border closure on business, and to a number of other Ministers and colleagues who have reached out to touch base on border issues.

Overall, the role of the committee is to seek Federal, State and local funding to find a way forward for the border community, which in some ways has been hit harder, for longer and more agonisingly than much of the rest of the State. The committee consists of outstanding people who represent major organisations in the region. Representatives come from the Department of Regional NSW, Office of the Cross-Border Commissioner, Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Premier, police, Health, Destination NSW, Murray Regional Tourism, Service NSW, Victorian Cross Border Commissioner, Business NSW, Regional Development Victoria, Education, and Department of Communities and Justice. It also values the contributions of members of the joint organisations of Riverina and Murray, Canberra and south-west.

As the committee strives to ensure that local government is recognised as a key stakeholder while working towards a staged recovery out of the border restrictions, having the joint organisations involved is important. We are committed to ensuring that local communities are well aware of our committee's work, meaning that we are determined to get the message out there in a timely fashion. The message needs to include practical solutions whilst providing hope and optimism for the future. It is about identifying measures to support New South Wales businesses and communities impacted by border closures with a focus on immediate and medium-term benefits. The committee is constantly looking for ways to support local government operations and is determined to bring together key stakeholders and local service providers to ensure that a holistic approach is adopted to problem solving and the provision of opportunities and, finally, that the committee is the focal point for consultation with the New South Wales Government.

When the committee is presented with issues that cannot be resolved locally, it makes recommendations to the Secretary of the Department of Regional NSW for action. Issues such as border zone permits and exemptions are examined carefully, particularly given the significant impact of restrictions on many in my electorate. There are many heartbreaking instances of people requesting permission to see loved ones before they pass away. Sadly, the majority of those requests have been denied. The reality of business life on the border has changed dramatically since March 2020. Businesses that have models predicated on approximately 50 per cent of clients travelling across from Victoria to spend money in New South Wales have found that that income stream largely has evaporated. That does not even address the problem of employees who have been unable to work. It is a double whammy.

A way out of this crisis now has to be front of mind as we rebuild the business and social fabric of our border communities. An important part of that is a memorandum of understanding for the cross-border. This memorandum of understanding was signed by the New South Wales Government in May this year. We still await the Victorian Government to sign. I encourage and urge the Victorian Government to sign so that we can examine ways in which to harmonise and work better across the border. There are several outstanding border locals and people from the border region who have contributed to the committee and I thank them. My sincere thanks go out to each and every one of them. I look forward to working with them as we continue along the road to recovery. I thank my community for their patience and perseverance as we move to an easing of restrictions.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (19:56:35): Tonight we had a perfect example from the member for Albury of how the State Government is working with all levels of government right across New South Wales. The member for Albury outlined the difficulties he is facing as a member who represents a border electorate. I congratulate him and his office staff, who have done an incredible job during the most difficult circumstances.

When the member for Albury was elected to this place he would not have envisaged what he and his team would be facing. I commend him for the work he has been doing with all parties across the border in Albury. He has done an amazing job under the most difficult circumstances. What we heard in the Chamber tonight is how to bring everyone together to deliver good results for the majority of people, to look after them and to keep them safe. I commend the member for Albury for his speech and I commend his staff. His work on cross-border communication with various departments, including Regional NSW, is commendable. The member also works with the Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Premier, Steph Cooke. By working together, their combined efforts have led to great outcomes to keep his community safe.

COVID-19 AND ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (19:57:35): COVID-19 has had a devastating impact on industries across our economy; however, none more so than the arts. Venues in my electorate have been forced to the wall. They include the Flight Path Theatre, the Red Rattler Theatre and the Factory Theatre, along with live music venues including the Lazy Bones Lounge, the Butchers Brew Bar and the Gasoline Pony. The arts sector is uniquely susceptible to this pandemic. Their function is to bring people together—a function that is at odds with the social distancing required to combat COVID-19. This means that arts venues were the first to close and may well be the last to reopen.

Lockdown meant our theatres, concert halls and rehearsal spaces emptied. Live music venues fell silent. Even the subdued murmuring in our libraries and art galleries petered to nothing as the doors closed. Forced to confront our fear and isolation—arguably when we most needed to reconnect with our humanity—our storytellers were pushed into the wings and onto the job queue. If that is a little bit too esoteric for members, it is also worth considering the hard economic realities. In 2018 the arts and creative industries contributed \$111.7 billion to the Australian economy but by the end of April this year over half the industry had ceased to operate. The Australasian Performing Right Association Limited [APRA] and the Australasian Mechanical Copyright Owners Society Limited [AMCOS] report that the industry has lost half a billion dollars in ticket sales alone since the lockdown began.

By June three-quarters of the industry's casual workforce were unemployed and over half of all full-time or part-time permanent employees were working at significantly reduced hours. It was initially unclear whether JobKeeper would help the sector, given the large number of sole traders and project-based casual employees. Now there are concerns that they are facing disaster with the looming transition to JobKeeper 2.0. Twenty-eight per cent of arts workers work fewer than 20 hours a week, meaning they will have to fall back to \$750 payments a fortnight with the two-tier system that is being introduced. While arts workers are relieved at the cautious reopening of arts venues in New South Wales, the uncertainty will continue unless there is clear support from the New South Wales Government.

Sadly, the New South Wales Liberal Government's response to the pandemic has shown it is no friend of the arts. Its Rescue and Restart program has proven to be nothing more than pocket money for the arts Minister to spend as he wishes. There is no eligibility criteria or assessment criteria and no deadline or guidance on what the funds could be spent. When a small company in Marrickville in my electorate sought funds to stop the company going permanently under, it was not even able to find out when or how to apply. Last week the arts Minister revealed that 84 arts organisations applied for financial support but he could not say how much of the money had been allocated or to whom it had been allocated.

The suspicion is that the funding is being used to prop up larger companies while smaller companies are left in the wings. This is unfair because arguably smaller companies have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Their usually smaller venues mean they can have fewer people at performances while providing safe social distancing and they are unable to draw on the reserves held by larger and more established companies. They should have a friend in the arts Minister. However, he has once again abandoned these smaller companies. I have to say that on this front the arts Minister has game.

In 2018 he was caught redirecting \$400,000 in funding from small- and medium-sized companies partly to the Sydney Symphony Orchestra against the express recommendations of his department. He was caught red-handed funnelling \$44 million out of a \$47 million grant pool from the Regional Cultural Fund to projects in Coalition electorates before the last State election, including to some groups that applied after the deadline had closed. Now the New South Wales Government has reduced or cut funding altogether to key organisations which include Writing NSW, Playwriting Australia, the National Association for the Visual Artists [NAVA] and Ausdance NSW. All that arts companies want is to know that when their back is against the wall they are playing on a level playing field. The industry is doing what it does best—innovating and demonstrating its boundless resilience.

The pandemic has increased our hunger for the arts. The Australia Council reported that the most popular activity during the lockdown was watching films and television programs and listening to podcasts and music. Last week one resident wrote to me to express that the arts should not be left out of the economic stimulus, proposing that we embrace a visionary and bold set of new ideas that includes the establishment of a dedicated State-run Indigenous art gallery. Those ideas are definitely worth considering because the arts are well placed to grow through stimulus spending. The industry has a proven record of transforming every cent it earns into economic activity. The work that the arts industry creates has a transformative effect on us all, healing the unspoken effects of the pandemic on our mental health and social connectivity, and supports our hope and optimism for the future.

WARRAGAMBA DAM WALL

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (20:02:56): I want everyone to take a minute to picture some of this bunch opposite sitting around a fancy table drinking sparkling water in front of a whiteboard and having a little brainstorm. They have their goal written in the middle of the whiteboard in black marker—probably a permanent marker because the Deputy Premier has taken charge—and they are working backwards, starting with the goal and then figuring out all of the steps to get them there. So what is the goal? What is written in permanent marker with a big circle around it? Development, overdevelopment, lots of it, on a flood plain. To put it bluntly, the New South Wales Government is in the pocket of property developers.

Property developers want to see residential and commercial development continue to skyrocket, despite a prediction that an additional 134,000 more people will crowd into the area and into the path of potential flooding. The problem? It is a flood plain. The Government thinks it is so good that it can and should control everything, even nature. A few steps back on that whiteboard from the end goal of overdevelopment is the raising of the Warragamba Dam wall and never mind the consequences. If the dam wall is raised, it could affect half the remaining global population of the critically endangered regent honeyeater. It would impact the diverse eucalypt species, which is one of the outstanding universal values for which the Blue Mountains World Heritage area was declared, and it could further damage koala habitats and populations. That is just to name a few things the Liberals are still hell-bent on pushing through.

The other matter that has evidently been pushed to the side is the fact that it could wipe out as many as 50 recognised Aboriginal heritage sites and cause irreparable damage and loss of country. Gundungurra traditional owner Kazan Brown has dubbed it as Sydney's Juukan Gorge. The traditional owners have not given their consent and that cannot and must not be pushed aside. Our traditional owners have firmly said in a letter that they do not give consent for the raising of the Warragamba Dam wall. I will read into *Hansard* the response of traditional owner Kazan Brown to the Government's attempt to obtain consent. She says:

We have now written to the Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians and the NSW Premier, stating that we do not give free prior and informed consent for the project to proceed. This makes it abundantly clear to all levels of government that Indigenous communities whose land this dam proposal would impact upon do not support the proposal proceeding. If the proposal to raise the Warragamba Dam wall continues to proceed, the NSW Government and its agencies will now be acting in contravention to the wishes of Traditional Owners, the Federal Government and the World Heritage Committee.

I call on the Premier to respond swiftly to the correspondence she has received, and to assure our traditional owners that her Government will not contravene their wishes, because leaked documents are suggesting that is her intention. The survey of land to be impacted by raising the dam wall was woefully inadequate. Some very senior public servants and former senior staff have raised concerns with me that require noting on the record. It is noted that the likelihood—even the inevitability—is that raising the wall will intensify urban development on the flood plain downstream, will increase community vulnerability to rare very large floods and will overwhelm capacity of evacuation routes. As I have mentioned in this place before, it is noted that the potential political interference with the flood mitigation storage component of the enlarged Lake Burratorang would compromise the mitigation benefits that are achieved—as happened with Wivenhoe Dam upstream of Brisbane in 2009.

Raising the dam will have destructive upstream environmental impacts and will not provide flood mitigation benefits downstream in severe events while simultaneously increasing the number of people to be evacuated in very big floods. I ask that the environment Minister, who recently acknowledged the cultural heritage and beauty of the Burratorang Valley while standing alongside Aunty Sharyn and other traditional owners, talk to his colleagues. In particular I ask that he talk to the emergency services Minister, who is trying to make the SES a failure in its field, and to the western Sydney Minister, who would like development for as far as the eye can see. I would like to communicate to the Government recent words spoken by Aunty Sharyn, a formidable, knowledgeable and proud Gundungurra woman. Each and every one of them should pause in their busy rat race to listen. She said, "Environment is everything. If you lose your environment, you've lost everything."

ILLAWARRA WILD DEER MANAGEMENT

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (20:08:00): I again raise an issue that I have spoken of before in this place—that is, wild deer management in the Illawarra. I acknowledge the Minister, who I have spoken to about this on a number of occasions. Wild deer cause damage to private and public property, create safety hazards for motorists and decimate the natural environment in the Illawarra and around the State. It is a growing problem and it has become worse over the past few years. Environmental degradation caused by feral deer is listed as a key threatening process under the Biodiversity Conservation Act. Deer also impact the community by being a public nuisance through grazing on garden plants and they have been the cause of significant motor vehicle and railway accidents, especially around the Illawarra. We have even had one land on our local beaches.

In the Illawarra deer have been sighted in urbanised areas, along the beach foreshore and urban parkland. There is concern that they are an attraction for illegal hunters. In my electorate of Keira constituents regularly report damage to their property and are concerned by near-miss motor vehicle accidents on some of our major roads including Mount Ousley and Bulli. In the Wollongong council area there have been increased reports of deer moving into public areas during the winter rut and regular incidents of rogue animals requiring immediate attention to maintain public safety. The 2016 Natural Resources Commission [NRC] report into pest management across New South Wales entitled *Shared problem, shared solution* estimates that farmers around the State spend around \$22 million per year to manage pest animals. The total annual spend is conservatively estimated by the NRC to be \$170 million.

In the same report the NRC identified the Illawarra as a hotspot in New South Wales requiring urgent attention with regard to the management of wild deer. According to the Department of Primary Industries, wild deer have adapted well to the natural environment, particularly the catchment land and into our escarpment. When uncontrolled, populations can double every three years. The goal is to mitigate environmental, social and economic impacts and suppress the establishment of new deer populations. Eradication cannot occur completely in the Illawarra given the vast amount of land that they breed and grow upon. This cannot be done with culling alone and efforts in the Illawarra have expanded to include research projects to develop a broad suite of management approaches.

The Government has relied on financial contributions from stakeholders and the goodwill of residents for a long time. What we need now is a real commitment through leadership and funding in the upcoming budget. If the Government is serious about reducing the impacts of wild deer then it must increase funding for the wild deer management program, which has been doing outstanding work on the smell of an oily rag. The investment it needs is considerable. We want to make sure that we try, where possible, to do what we can to manage this species. At the moment the program runs on a modest budget of around \$200,000 per year through contributions from stakeholders. It is simply not enough. The Government needs to do more to provide the resources required to effectively suppress deer numbers in the Illawarra.

Public perception in the Illawarra is largely that deer are pests and not the Bambi we see on television. The community have made it clear, through recent surveys, that they strongly support action on deer control and believe that numbers are increasing. The South-East Local Land Services Pest Animal Management Plan identifies all species of deer as a priority pest. Despite the efforts of all parties involved to manage deer, the scale of the problem and public safety issues related to operating in urban areas means that broad eradication of deer is not a viable option. We must try to mitigate them. To do that we need adequate funding. Today I am asking—well in advance of New South Wales delivering its budget—that the deer population be better managed through additional funding from the Government in the upcoming budget.

It does not require millions but it does require prioritisation. I have had this discussion with Minister Marshall before and I believe he truly understands the impact of deer in some of these communities. I ask that he and the Government advocate and prioritise the funding for the mitigation of damage by feral deer, particularly in the regions that I am fortunate to represent—the Illawarra and the South Coast. This is a growing problem that we need to get on top of sooner rather than later. I look forward to the Government agreeing to this investment in the upcoming budget.

Community Recognition Statements

GOSFORD TENNIS CLUB

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (20:13:10): In July, as the Parliamentary Secretary for the Central Coast, I had the pleasure of visiting the Gosford Tennis Club to announce on behalf of the Government an infrastructure grant of \$132,575 to install a new lighting system. The existing lighting system was 50 years old. The new LED lights are much more efficient and consume only a fraction of the energy used by the old lights. This will help to put downward pressure on the club's electricity bills. The Gosford Tennis Club is one of the

biggest sporting groups on the Central Coast, with over 2,000 members spanning from one end of the coast to the other. The facilities often host interstate tournaments as well as regular training squads and practice sessions. I thank president Chris Lees, treasurer Tony Haworth, operations manager Jackie de Vivo and the fantastic Kylie Brown, who writes the grant applications, along with everyone involved in securing the \$132,575 from the Government. I acknowledge the professional sporting body, Tennis New South Wales, for its involvement and support of the Gosford Tennis Club.

KATELYN AND HEIDI STAPLES

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (20:14:17): I acknowledge the hard work of twins Katelyn and Heidi Staples and their equestrian efforts. Katelyn represented New South Wales in the 2018 and 2019 Marcus Oldham Australian Interschool Equestrian Championships. Heidi represented the State in the 2019 championship. Katelyn and Heidi began riding as soon as they could walk and jumped their first courses at five years of age. They competed in interschool competitions and have been selected for the New South Wales State interschool equestrian team since 2015. They represented Goulburn and their zone at State level. In 2019 Heidi was State Showjumping B Grade Champion for her age. Katelyn captained the State interschool team at the Australian Championships in Sydney in 2019. She was also a member of the four senior New South Wales top riders to win champion showjumping team. Katelyn and Heidi's efforts and achievements are to be congratulated. I wish both of them all the very best with their future equestrian events and competitions.

TRIBUTE TO COLIN MARKHAM

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (20:15:23): I join with the member for Wollongong to pay tribute to a friend and former representative of our electorates, Colin Markham. He was hardworking, honest and a really nice guy. He gave the member for Wollongong and me a lot of advice. I never had his mobile number, so I always called his home phone, but he was a frequent caller to my office. On behalf of the community I represent, and I know my colleague will say the same, we mourn his passing. To Melissa and the three children, we are deeply sorry to hear of his passing. He made a great contribution and impact to the communities we represent, but he also made a lasting legacy to our First Peoples. It was a priority of his for a long time. He will be missed by me, my colleague the member for Wollongong and the entire Illawarra Labor community.

NORTH BONDI SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (20:16:31): On Sunday 23 August 2020 I attended the North Bondi Surf Life Saving Club annual general meeting. It is a vibrant club that has built a strong community alongside its surfing achievements. It is exciting that the club's new advanced surf lifesaving facility will open soon and I am gratified that I have been able to secure a \$500,000 New South Wales Government grant to support that facility. I congratulate the board of management on their election at the annual general meeting, including president Andrew Christopher, vice-president and head of education Michael Boland, head of administration Karen Stott, head of finance Danny Ekins, head of lifesaving Eloise Starr, and head of surf sports John Clothier. I also congratulate long service awardees, including Martin Simich for 25 years, Maurice Fayne on 50 years, and Gus Lievan on 70 years. As they say at North Bondi Surf Life Saving Club, they are "Ready aye, ready".

TRIBUTE TO COLIN MARKHAM

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (20:17:31): I join with the member for Keira in expressing my condolences to Melissa, Wayne, David and John and their families on the passing of Colin Markham. Colin made a huge contribution to the Carr Government, the labour movement and the Illawarra. These stretched from helping constituents through to the apology to Indigenous Australians in the House and supporting young rugby league players from the bush when they were seeking opportunities in teams in and around Sydney. I think there is no better person to sum up Colin than Norma Wilson, a long-time friend of his and his family and former Wollongong councillor. She said:

Colin Markham was first of all a family man, a loving husband to Melissa and father to Wayne, David and John and their families, a Labor True Believer, a trade unionist, a mad Steelers (later Dragons) supporter and Director, a constant advocate for the University of Wollongong and a strong voice for the region he loved. He earned our love and gratitude for his relentless service over many years. He is sadly missed.

MACDONALD VALLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (20:18:31): On 3 September 2020 I visited Macdonald Valley Public School on the outskirts of the Hawkesbury to present it with the Australian, Aboriginal, and Torres Strait Islander flags. It was fitting that it was Australian National Flag Day, which marks the anniversary of 3 September 1901 when the Australian flag was first flown. The 14 outstanding students that comprise the school were full of pride as we stood near the old school bell with the flags on display. I was lucky enough to hear the students' interesting stories. There was no doubting the love these students have for their school, community and country.

I thank Principal Melissa Date, the staff and the wonderful students for making me feel so welcome. I wish the students the very best with their studies.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE BOYD

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (20:19:31): I honour George Boyd of Swansea. An author and local historian, Mr Boyd sadly passed away early this year after a battle with cancer at the age of 84. Mr Boyd was the first pilot at Swansea Heads where he guided mariners into and out of the channel. That is fitting as the Boyd family has a long history in the shipbuilding industry in Swansea, and George followed in this tradition. In fact, he built the final vessel that was ever built at the family shipyard on Swansea Channel. George Boyd's great passion was local history and he wrote five local history books, including the biography of his grandfather James Lewis Boyd. He was also a founding member of the East Lake Macquarie Historical Society. George Boyd is a great loss to our community, but his work in preserving the history of our region is a remarkable legacy to leave to future generations. I pass on my condolences to his family.

ARCHIE KEENAN

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (20:20:36): The Daffodil Day Appeal is the Cancer Council's most iconic and much-loved fundraising campaign. It is a day for Australians to come together and donate to help stop cancer. It was heartwarming to see Camden residents and businesses getting so heavily involved in this initiative; however, I particularly recognise the efforts of some of our littlest residents in contributing to this very important cause. Gregory Hills resident Archie Keenan raised over \$500 for Daffodil Day by running a lemonade stall. This was a fantastic effort. These funds came from purchases of lemonade from Archie's stall by local residents, online donations and Archie's dad matching donations to the sales. I also note that the awareness of this wonderful initiative was made known by his mother, Claire, on a number of Facebook community groups. I commend Archie for his altruism and look forward to seeing the benefits of these funds in important Cancer Council research.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE PARRY

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (20:21:43): I pay tribute to George Parry, who passed away in August at the age of 91. George co-founded the Auburn District Cricket Club in 1951 and had a long and distinguished association with it for 42 consecutive years as a player, captain and administrator. George captained legendary Australian cricketer Richie Benaud at the schoolboy level and also captained his club to four first grade premierships. He played 205 matches for the club, scored over 6,000 runs and made 150 catches. He was widely regarded as one of the greatest all-rounders in the shire's cricket history. George's legacy will always live on in Auburn as the main oval at Mona Park was named George Parry Oval in honour of him. On behalf of the Auburn community I send my condolences to George's wife, Carol, his two daughters, Vicki and Jennifer, and the Auburn District Cricket Club. We thank him for his tremendous contribution to cricket and the local community. Vale George Parry.

ST IVES NORTH PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (20:22:41): I am pleased that St Ives North Public School, located in my electorate of Davidson, has benefited from a \$29 million major upgrade to its facilities. The upgrade includes a new three-storey building with 25 new classrooms, renovation of the special programs room and two classrooms, as well as a new canteen, toilets and courtyard. Further upgrades to learning spaces and toilets will be completed by term 4 of this year. These improvements will allow the school to cater for up to 1,000 students, and will also create a flexible, modern, technology-rich learning environment so that students and staff can fulfil their potential. I commend everyone involved in the completion of this project, including Principal Christine Taylor, past and present members of the school community leadership and local community residents for their patience, and the New South Wales Government for its financial backing.

TREE OF DREAMS

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (20:23:34): Tree of Dreams is a campaign organised by the Iris Foundation to raise awareness of suicide prevention, and is located at the Wyong Milk Factory. Every year, hundreds of messages of hope, strength, remembrance and support are placed on the Tree of Dreams, and this year attracted thousands of handwritten messages supported by those affected by suicide. The Tree of Dreams had tags available onsite at the Wyong Milk Factory until World Suicide Prevention Day on 10 September. The public gathering was unfortunately cancelled this year due to COVID-19, though the Iris Foundation placed messages on the Tree of Dreams on people's behalf. Last year there was a large crowd of local people on the banks of the Wyong River. Lighted lanterns were released to float peacefully down the river and speakers with a lived experience of suicide were given the opportunity to reflect and talk together. Every donation is of great value and

goes towards training programs and campaigns to connect people, foster hope and build resilience to reduce the risk of suicide.

MIRACLE BABIES FOUNDATION

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (20:24:37): The Western Sydney Women Awards 2020 recognises some of the region's amazing women and their achievements over the past year. I congratulate Ms Kylie Pussell, CEO and co-founder of the Miracle Babies Foundation, located in Chipping Norton. It is a charity that is celebrating 15 years of nurturing and supporting families of premature and sick newborns across Australia. Miracle Babies is responsible for developing programs and resources that are used at many special care services and hospitals across the country. Kylie has created a community of national miracle babies through the Miracle Babies website and its social media accounts. These platforms work to empower families experiencing a difficult time. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Miracle Babies established NurtureTime Online to offer support through virtual consultations for families when face-to-face appointments were on hold. Kylie has been innovative and thoughtful, and has used her caring heart to help so many families during COVID and over the past 15 years. She is very deserving of this recognition.

THE COLLAB STORE

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (20:25:40): In late 2017 mother of two Jessica Sidebottom was given a maximum of 18 months to live due to terminal cancer. Despite being taken off her clinical trial, Jessica is defying her stage 4B diagnosis to give back to a community that she feels has given her a great deal. She wants to leave a legacy that will make her children and family proud. On Friday night she will open the doors to her dream venture—the Collab Store. This will be largely supplied by local small businesspeople who have been unable to operate at markets during COVID-19. Jessica will also hold two fundraising initiatives each month. She will donate \$5 from every do-it-yourself necklace made at the in-house bead bar to a different school and she will also donate \$1 from every sale to a nominated charity or family of the month to help others as she herself has been helped. I thank Jessica for her generosity of spirit. I wish her well in achieving her dreams and I wish her family all the best. Jessica, please be assured that we will look after them.

ROSLYN "ROS" LANG

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (20:26:39): I congratulate Roslyn "Ros" Lang, the former district manager of the Mid North Coast Police District, who announced her retirement on Sunday 22 August 2020 after a remarkable 44 years of service in the NSW Police Force. There are few people in society today who can attest to a career spanning 44 years serving their community. This is what Ros Lang has achieved—and more—since joining the force on 11 February 1976. Moving to Port Macquarie on 13 June 1989, Ros cemented her position as the district manager of the mid North Coast police service. She undertook a variety of administrative responsibilities for the unit all while supporting the commander in maintaining the daily tasks of finance, human resources and business management operations. Awarded the prestigious Public Service Medal in the 2009 Australia Day Honours List, Ros was recognised by the community for her outstanding contribution to the NSW Police Force through her development and implementation of new workplace practices. These ranged from corporate policies to risk minimisation and were adopted by commands throughout the State. I wish Ros all the best in her future endeavours.

JO MASRI

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (20:27:48): I commend Jo Masri from Auburn Hospital, who is among 24 statewide finalists to be nominated for the NSW Health Excellence in Nursing and Midwifery Awards. She is a trained midwife from the Western Sydney Local Health District who oversees the education and training of all midwifery students and new graduates at Auburn Hospital. She is one of three finalists in the Midwife of the Year category. Jo was nominated for her commitment to midwifery education and for being an exemplary role model in mentoring new graduates at Auburn Hospital. She makes a real difference to the lives of patients, midwifery students and staff at the hospital, particularly during what has been a challenging year for everyone in the health services. I congratulate Jo Masri, her family and the team at Auburn Hospital on this outstanding achievement. The Auburn community is very proud.

PENDLE HILL NETBALL CLUB

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (20:28:42): I speak on the fantastic sporting opportunities available throughout the electorate of Seven Hills. There are so many clubs to get involved with, and all have a long established connection with the local community. I particularly acknowledge the work of the Pendle Hill Netball Club for what it has done during the pandemic. Since its formation in 1970, the club has grown to over 150 members who now play within the Blacktown City Netball Association. The club runs a seniors competition, which is still active and engages with the community, ensuring that the whole family can get involved in netball.

With the leadership of president Larissa Johnstone, secretary Kylie Brown, treasurer Rebecca Shaw and other office-bearers, the team has been extremely successful. I thank the Pendle Hill Netball Club for its wonderful participation across the electorate of Seven Hills. I wish it all the best in its competition this year.

ST JOSEPH'S REGIONAL COLLEGE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (20:29:39): I am proud to highlight the professional craftsmanship of the modern design woodwork pieces created by the talented St Joseph's Regional College students for their Higher School Certificate exams. As the final months of schooling near completion for our year 12 students, timber and furniture technology class students have been diligently turning their HSC practical assessments into an 80-page portfolio set to impress and captivate lovers of finely crafted modern design furniture. Through tough COVID-19 restrictions the students have spent months achieving beautifully crafted pieces, which I have no doubt could be easily mistaken for work done by a qualified furniture maker. I applaud the following students: Matthew Cheers for developing an entertainment unit for his home; Max Roods for designing a Monte Carlo cabinet; Isaac Plunkett for crafting an entertainment unit featuring a beautiful swathe blue resin; Breanna Gresham for hand making a stunning yet uniquely styled entertainment piece; and Sarah Stewart for showcasing her creative flair through a stained sideboard masterpiece. I extend my gratitude to teachers Chris Kalchbauer and Ian Lutton for inspiring the students to reach their full potential.

WE CARE CONNECT

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (20:30:48): We Care Connect has continued to operate throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. It has experienced an increase in requests from caseworkers but still ensured a quick turnaround time by sending out bundles of items as soon as possible. The items, which include clothes, toys, car seats, bassinets, bibs and prams, are 95 per cent community donated. Recently, We Care Connect provided practical support for a mum and two children who were fleeing a violent home with only a couple of bags between them. They were living in a tent throughout winter. They had nothing, but We Care Connect was able to provide them with desperately needed practical clothing and essential toiletries. The organisation enlists the help of 38 regular volunteers, and that number continues to grow. It receives on average 350 hours per volunteer worker every week. We Care Connect is an amazing organisation and it has saved over 150,000 items from going to landfill by distributing them to vulnerable families. I thank We Care Connect.

GLEN INNES CORRECTIONAL CENTRE

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (20:31:45): I commend the staff and officers at the Glen Innes Correctional Centre for being recognised recently for their outstanding efforts during last year's summer bushfire season. In November last year all 164 inmates as well as all staff were evacuated in what was the first full evacuation of a correctional facility anywhere in New South Wales. They were evacuated to avoid the flames that were part of that horrific fire season. I congratulate manager of security Rowena Mustard on being honoured with the Minister's commendation. I also congratulate Senior Assistant Superintendent Aaron Paterson and senior correctional officers Danny Kerr and Charlie Heath on being awarded commissioner's commendations for their exceptional leadership and selfless conduct during the emergency. I also congratulate the 19 staff who received assistant commissioner's commendations. The evacuation required bravery, coordination and foresight. I thank each and every staff member and officer involved for the work that they did and continue to do.

BEIRUT EXPLOSION

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (20:32:45): On 4 August a devastating explosion rocked Beirut, Lebanon, killing at least 190 people and wounding more than 6,500 others. The explosion deeply shocked the global community, including many Lebanese Australians who call Sydney's inner west home. The Inner West Council made a generous donation of \$10,000 to the Red Cross Beirut Explosion Appeal 2020 on behalf of the local Lebanese community and all inner west residents. The Lebanese Red Cross was first on the scene and has since responded bravely to the crisis. However, its efforts have been hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic and people around the world have rushed to provide critical support. The donation has helped first responders to provide victims with water, food, sanitation, shelter, first aid and other vital services in the immediate post-explosion period as well as into the future. I thank members of the inner west community for their generosity and leadership. I extend my deepest condolences to all those who have been impacted by this terrible explosion both in Sydney's inner west and in Lebanon.

CAPTURE COOLAMON SHIRE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (20:33:51): Capture Coolamon Shire is back this year, offering a chance for all novice photographers in the area to win cash prizes. There are five categories, including landscape, built environment, nature, people and events, as well as youth and open sections. There is a \$1,000 cash prize for

the image that best depicts the Coolamon Shire. The "Beyond the Boundary" bonus category is open to any photo taken anywhere. The photos in this category will be judged by the Capture Coolamon Shire Committee for \$100 prize packs. Photos will be on exhibition at the Coolamon Up-To-Date Store from 31 October to 15 November, with an opening night taking place on Friday 30 October. I am so pleased that this event is taking place this year, giving locals a chance to showcase their photography skills and exhibit the beautiful Coolamon shire region.

JOHN O'SULLIVAN

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (20:34:51): It is with pleasure that I acknowledge a constituent from my electorate the Blue Mountains, Mr John O'Sullivan. He has worked for and with our local community his entire life. John has worked in a range of community organisations, including as the founder of the Associated Sports Australia Trust and leading the Blue Wave re-enactment team. His extensive community involvement led to him receiving the NSW Government Community Service Award in 2013. Mr O'Sullivan has been a much-loved lollipop man in the Blue Mountains at Faulconbridge Primary School, where he has been keeping our residents safe—rain, hail or shine. I am not sure how many people in this place know the Blue Mountains well, but it is a place where everyone chips in and lends a hand to their neighbours. I cannot think of too many people who embody this spirit to the same level as John. On behalf of the people of New South Wales and on behalf of my community in the Blue Mountains, I congratulate John and I thank him for his ongoing contribution to the mountains. "I have a passion for life and people, for giving and for leaving a meaningful legacy for the children of the future," he said. You certainly do, John. Thank you.

REGIONAL YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICES

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (20:35:50): I am very pleased to acknowledge in this House the work being done by the Regional Youth Support Services—or RYSS, as we know it on the Central Coast—in supporting and helping vulnerable young people right across the Central Coast region. In the 84 work days between 1 March and 30 June, RYSS engaged with 171 young people, compared with 119 in the previous year. Across all services, RYSS has experienced a 44 per cent increase in the number of individuals needing help. Some of the services RYSS provides include homelessness and accommodation assistance, living skills, education, mental health help, NDIS support, family support and a lot more. Providing community services is often a thankless task, so to Kim, Gail and all the staff at RYSS, I say thank you. I am proud that the New South Wales Government is supporting RYSS with record levels of funding to enable them to continue their fantastic work.

THE FACTORY

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (20:36:51): Last week the member for Gosford, Liesl Tesch, MP, and I met with Andrew Yiasemides, owner and founder of The Factory, a New South Wales manufacturer of fine confectionery and a significant tourism business operator on the Central Coast. Since The Factory opened in July 2018, visitors have flocked to the place known as "the sweetest place on the Central Coast" to explore an immersive world of chocolate and to taste Andrew's secret nougat recipe and his marshmallows. Formerly a plastics manufacturer, Andrew turned to nougat and never looked back. His positive outlook and innovative mind have led him to develop alternative business models in his manufacturing business to help it through the downturn due to COVID-19 and to enhance his tourism offering. Andrew and his staff, Luke, Amanda and Danielle, were absolutely fantastic and gave us a factory tour. We were also the guinea pigs for a bespoke chocolate-making class to enhance the product. I congratulate and thank the entire team at The Factory. It is great to see local tourism businesses adapting so positively to COVID.

NSW VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (20:37:54): The NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards 2020 recognised some of our local heroes for their amazing contributions to the local community. The event was held virtually for the first time ever and hosted around 100 special guests, volunteers and community leaders. I especially recognise Ms Robin Gardner of Moorebank, who received the Senior Volunteer of the Year award. Robin has spent the past 50 years recording the scores at the Randwick/Petersham grade cricket games. She also volunteered her time organising events and catering for the club. Not many people can say they have volunteered with one group for five decades. I also recognise Turbans 4 Australia, whom I have acknowledged in the Parliament previously, for receiving the Volunteer Team of the Year award. The 76 volunteer members continue to support those in need during the bushfires and throughout COVID-19. I commend all the volunteers who were recognised at this year's awards and thank them for their contributions to the local community.

ALL SAINTS TOONGABBIE TIGERS JUNIOR RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL CLUB

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (20:38:57): I acknowledge the fantastic community contribution made by local sporting group the All Saints Toongabbie Tigers Junior Rugby League Football Club. Established as a merger between one of the oldest clubs in Toongabbie and one of the largest, the All Saints Tigers has quickly

grown to be a success in the local community and provides opportunities for people of all ages to participate in the great sport. As part of the Parramatta Junior Rugby League, the All Saints Toongabbie Tigers compete against clubs from the Seven Hills electorate and beyond, including the Wentworthville Magpies, Winston Hills Tigers and Seven Hills football club. Teams regularly play at the club's home field, CV Kelly Park in Girraween. The club has a dedicated executive team, including president Daryn Wilson and vice-president Mark Collison, with many more individuals who volunteer their time to contribute to our great community. I thank the players and club executive for all their efforts during this time of pandemic. I wish them all the best for the rest of the 2020 season.

LLOYD HORNSBY

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (20:39:59): I congratulate internationally acclaimed Indigenous artist Lloyd Hornsby on the recent announcement that his painting *Past Warriors* will hang at the Louvre Museum in October 2020. Lloyd has a rich cultural identity, with connections to Maori ancestors in Rotorua, the Yuin nation in south-east New South Wales and a Chinese relative dating back several generations. *Past Warriors* saw Lloyd create a cultural fusion of dreaming stories, Chinese symbolism and intergalactic constellations in a truly unique method. Through his art Lloyd explores and celebrates his cultural learning and identity. Not only will Lloyd Hornsby's artwork be hung at the Louvre but also he already has other inspired pieces of artwork travelling across Europe, following a display at the Cannes Film Festival. I commend Lloyd Hornsby on this well-deserved and important recognition of his magnificent artwork.

ANNA SAYRING

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (20:40:53): I congratulate West Wyalong mother Anna Saying, who has been chosen as a finalist in the 2020 AusMumpreneur Awards in the categories of regional business excellence, product design and people's choice product. Anna designed and created a breastfeeding pump, Milk Mate, after some initial struggles with feeding her now 21-month-old son, Tobias. Milk Mate Co. is a 100 per cent family-run and Australian-owned company. Anna is passionate about supporting other mothers who face difficulties when they start breastfeeding. Presented by the Women's Business School, the AusMumpreneur Awards recognise and celebrate Australian mothers who are achieving success in business. Well done, Anna, on becoming a finalist and best of luck in the next stage.

WYONG HOSPITAL

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (20:41:04): Tuesday 1 September marked the fortieth anniversary of Wyong hospital. On 1 September 1980 the very first patient was admitted to Wyong Hospital. Central Coast Local Health District's vision is to "Care for the Coast" and I am so proud of the four decades of care that health staff have provided at Wyong. After 40 years of service to the Central Coast community, I am also proud that Wyong hospital is undergoing a \$200 million redevelopment to prepare it for another 40 years of keeping our community healthy and safe. We know that working in a hospital is not always easy but it is absolutely rewarding. I am the very proud husband of a nurse who has spent years working at both Wyong and Gosford hospitals. On behalf of the Central Coast community, I thank all the staff who are continuing to work hard through the COVID-19 pandemic.

ANSTO NASA CHALLENGE

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (20:42:57): I congratulate Australia's Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation [ANSTO] on winning a category of a worldwide competition run by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration [NASA] to solve problems relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ANSTO team comprised staff from ANSTO and researchers from its nandin Innovation Centre. The team was awarded the top prize in the purify air challenge in the NASA Space Apps COVID-19 Challenge. The team was awarded best use of technology for its COVID-19 safe air purifying solution, which can be used in confined spaces such as elevators and public transport. As many members will be aware, ANSTO is located in my electorate. I am very proud of the work that those at ANSTO do, whether it is in nuclear medicine or other technological innovations. I am not surprised they have won this award as they always strive for excellence. I look forward to seeing more of what they accomplish in the future. I again congratulate ANSTO and the nandin Innovation Centre team on this outstanding achievement.

TOONGABBIE SEVEN HILLS LIONS CLUB

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (20:43:55): I take this opportunity to acknowledge the Toongabbie Seven Hills Lions Club. The group is a vibrant collective of terrific locally oriented volunteers who are always working to ensure that our local area—and wider western Sydney—is as good as it can be. Recently the Toongabbie Seven Hills Lions Club has been focused on events further from our local patch. The group has

assisted in collecting 19 boxes of children's books and teaching resources for bushfire-affected communities on the New South Wales South Coast. The Lions club has also been involved in gardening activities at the Bert Oldfield Public School in Seven Hills. Recently the group assisted the school's community garden and each year it helps students with environmental projects. I thank President Elizabeth Lessells and her great team at the Toongabbie Seven Hills Lions Club for their work in our great community.

GREGORY PATERSON, OAM

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—I honour the contributions of Mr Gregory Paterson to the performance arts field and congratulate him on being awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia, as part of the 2020 Queens Birthday Honours. Mr Paterson has served as the Resident Conductor of the National Theatre Orchestra since 2016 and was a founding member of the annual production *Star Struck*, *Star Struck* is a showcase of dance, drama and music performed by students from kindergarten to Year 12 from schools across the Hunter, Newcastle and Central Coast region. Mr Paterson has previously worked as a teacher at Jesmond High School and Belmont High School, along with serving as the Participation and Equity Program Consultant, Hunter Regional Office. I thank Mr Paterson for his dedication to the performing arts and education fields.

TWEED REGIONAL MUSEUM AND MURWILLUMBAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—Recently, I had a wonderful time visiting the Tweed Regional Museum in Murwillumbah. The Museum is housed within the original 1915 Shire Hall. It has extensive permanent collections, highlighting historical accounts of past settlement and development of the region. I was impressed by the Land, Life, Culture interactive exhibition, which tells cultural, biological and geological stories unique to the Tweed Valley, especially its relationship with Mount Wollumbin. I was pleased that the exhibition incorporates important local Aboriginal cultural knowledge. Thank you Museum Director Judy Kean for hosting me. I also acknowledge Museum staff Erika Taylor, Kirsty Andrew, Bev Clark and Emma Shield. I also met with the Murwillumbah Historical Society, which uses the Museum as their research centre. I was delighted to learn about their broad range of research work, covering various aspects of the rich history of Murwillumbah and its surrounding villages. I do enjoy reading *Timelines*, their informative quarterly newsletter. I thank President Di Miller for being so generous with her time and acknowledge Committee members Max Boyd, Belinda Neilson, Maris Bruzgulis, Joan Cuthel, Betty Hamill, David Taylor and Grace Bennett. Thank you for keeping the story of our region alive.

ADAPTING TO COVID-19: LAUNCH OF NIMBIN'S ONLINE HEMP EMBASSY STORE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I was pleased to visit Nimbin last month to officially launch the HEMP Embassy's new online store—shop.hempembassy.net—in Cullen Street. I congratulate HEMP Embassy President Michael Balderstone and his resident IT guru Dr Geoff Lynne on using the COVID-19 'lockdown' to create an online store. Nimbin Chamber of Commerce President Diana Roberts also spoke at the launch and afterwards we caught up on a host of local issues, including bushfire recovery, tourism and climate change. The Nimbin Good Times, the town's monthly independent newspaper, ran an article, which read:

Janelle has had a long association with Nimbin and was pleased to be opening a new small business venture in these difficult times. Janelle has always been unafraid of Nimbin, and we appreciate her cutting the ribbon for us. After the opening, Janelle and Michael sat down for a live-streamed session where they discussed some difficult issues like saliva testing drivers for cannabis, and why medical CBD is so expensive and hard to get.

The HEMP Embassy is a well-established local business which is cleverly pivoting so that its products can reach a much wider national and international audience.

AUSTRALIAN JORDANIAN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I was delighted to meet with leaders of the Jordanian community in Bankstown on Wednesday, 26th August 2020 to receive an update on the valuable initiatives of the Australian Jordanian Community Association and discuss their future plans as they continue to operate under COVID-19 restrictions. The Australian Jordanian Community Association is an important advocate for the needs of Jordanian Australians, and also organises events and other initiatives to promote and support the local Jordanian community. I commend the Australian Jordanian Community Association for continuing to advocate for and support its members during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has adversely impacted many community organisations. I thank Australian Jordanian Community Association President Mr Mohammed Alqadi and Secretary Mr Emad Asshor for keeping me informed about the Association's initiatives and I commend the Association's entire leadership team for their tireless efforts in promoting social harmony and multicultural relations within our community.

CBCC WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP WESTERN SYDNEY

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I was pleased to attend the Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce Women in Leadership Western Sydney event at Bankstown Sports Club on Monday, 31st August

2020, in celebration of women in leadership roles within our region. I acknowledge Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce CEO Mr Wally Mehanna and the entire Board of Directors and applaud them for their efforts in organising and hosting this worthwhile event, and thank them for their kind invitation and hospitality on the night. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the wonderful guest speakers, including Bankstown Girls' High School Principal Ms Suada Bilaly, Bespoke Weddings and Events owner Ms Grace Dagher, Ramada Hotel & Suites Cabramatta Managing Director Ms Fazila Farhad, Centrum Printing CEO Ms Sandra Duarte, former Sydney Metro Airports (Bankstown & Camden) CEO Ms Lee de Winton and Canterbury Bankstown Bulldogs representative Miss Samantha Economos, as well as all the other inspirational speakers and participants who contributed to the evening's success. I congratulate the Canterbury Bankstown Chamber of Commerce on the success of the Women in Leadership Western Sydney event and commend them for their promotion of women in leadership roles.

"CONNECTIONS IN THE FAR WEST" WINS STATE RECOGNITION

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)—The Far West Local Health District and Mission Australia's "Connections in the Far West" Program has won the Agency for Clinical Innovation's - Health Innovation Award for 2020. "Connections" is an Australian-first partnership that provides free social programs for people who struggle with depression, anxiety and mental illness. The program is peer-led and aimed at reducing social isolation and loneliness by improving social connectedness. Peer support workers who have a lived experience of mental illness are critical to the success of this project. The peer support worker reaches out and links the person to community activities in the evenings and on weekends when the usual mental health service providers are closed. Over 140 community members are registered and the program has been successfully running in Broken Hill for over three years. I'd like to extend my congratulations to the Far West Local Health District, Mission Australia, and all those involved in this innovative project.

JACK MCNAUGHTON OAM

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—I honour the contributions of Mr Jack McNaughton to the community and several charity organisations. Mr McNaughton has served as the Vice-President of the Northern New South Wales Federation of the Justices of the Peace since 2015 and as a Justice of the Peace since 1970. Mr McNaughton was also previously President of the Men's Probus Club of Belmont NSW and remains a member, along with volunteering his time as both a builder and bus driver for the past 20 years. I thank Mr McNaughton for his dedication to our community.

JUDE FLEMING

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)—I would like to recognise Jude Fleming's contribution to the community of Warren for her teaching of art for over 30 years. Jude teaches art lessons to both children and adults weekly, providing a creative outlet for so many people of her community. Jude also teaches online - providing our wider Barwon community a chance to access her lessons. She has also conducted regional, interstate and international workshops. Jude is a landscape devotee, whose works have been exhibited in regional and metropolitan galleries. I commend Jude on her contribution and commitment to the education of art throughout the Warren and broader Barwon community.

NEW STATE FLAG FOR NEUTRAL BAY PUBLIC

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Our civic minded Year 6 students at Neutral Bay Public School recently welcomed me to present them with a new NSW State Flag. I was impressed that these students were interested in the history and different symbols on the NSW State Flag. They were particularly surprised to learn that it is older than the Australian flag and we have been flying the State Flag since 1876. The students had spent the morning focusing on leadership within the school community, and how the school had adapted to the challenges of COVID-19. They shared some incredible insights with me, and reminded me that our primary school students are such a compassionate and resilient generation. Thank you to the students of Neutral Bay Public for welcoming me to your school. I also passed on my thanks to the teachers, staff, and parent community for all their efforts during this challenging year, which has in no way diminished the spirit of Neutral Bay Public.

VALE ROBERT WEBSTER

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I acknowledge North Sydney resident Robert Webster, who tragically passed away in early August. Robert was a member of the North Sydney State Emergency Service Unit. He made a huge impact on the community during his 18 months of service. Robert was a regular field operator and duty officer with the North Sydney SES Unit, fielding requests for assistance at all times of the day and night and organising crews to attend. Over the last few months Robert threw a lot of energy into planning the future training needs of his SES colleagues and his tremendous efforts will be his lasting legacy to the unit. Robert's entire life fitted him for service and working outdoors. He joined the Department of Foreign Affairs after

graduating with honours in political science and Indonesian and Malaysian affairs and was posted to the Embassy in Jakarta and the High Commission in Port Moresby. Robert loved the bush and was a keen walker and kayaker. He will be greatly missed by his friends and family. Vale Robert Webster.

CLAYMORE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)—The teachers and staff at our local schools really do an admirable job day in and day out. Often their dedication, passion and hard work goes unnoticed – but it was pleasing to see one of Campbelltown's school recently recognised. Claymore Public School was recently awarded a Secretary's Award for School Achievement in the 2020 NSW Minister's and Secretary's Awards for Excellence. In particular, the school was recognised for "significant improvement in educational outcomes and opportunities for students". It's an incredible acknowledgment and one that I feel has been long overdue for the teachers and staff at the school. The suburb of Claymore is in the midst of a huge transformation. What was once a suburb consisting almost entirely of public housing dwellings, is now being transformed into a suburb with a mix of private and public housing. There has often been a stigma attached to Claymore which I have found is grossly unfair. There is a great sense of comradery and pride among Claymore residents and this really is reflected by the great work occurring in the grounds of the school. Once again, congratulations to all those at the school on receiving such a prestigious award.

MACARTHUR BULLS

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)—There is a buzz in the air in Campbelltown and the wider Macarthur region at the moment as we begin the count down to the next A-League season. The upcoming season is set to see the introduction of a new club – Macarthur Bulls FC. It's a huge coup for Campbelltown and Macarthur. I have been particularly humbled to be appointed as one of the club's patrons. For many years I have advocated for professional sport to have a greater presence in our local area, and I am ecstatic to see the A-League will now call Campbelltown home. The task of leading the club into its first season will go to coach Ante Milicic. A number of key signings have already been announced including Socceroos captain Mark Milligan, Adam Federici, Tommy Oar, Matt Derbyshire and Denis Genereau. Many of those players – most notably Milligan, Federici and Oar – have already had tremendous careers and boast an impressive resume. But I am sure being an inaugural member of the Bulls squad will certainly rank among their finest achievements. I can't wait to see the team run out onto Campbelltown Sports Stadium to take part in Australia's premier football competition.

ST NECTARIOS CHURCH BURWOOD 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield)—The St Nectarios Church Burwood celebrates their 50th anniversary this year. The Greek Orthodox Parish and Community of Burwood and District Saint of Nectarios was established in 1970, providing spiritual, educational, social and cultural support to the local community. On 6 September 1970, the original Methodist church, built in 1879, in Burwood was handed over to the Greek Orthodox Parish and Community, which took place following a Doxology Service. The Church is today a landmark of the Burwood area and continues to provide as a place of worship for the Greek Orthodox community. The Parish and Community contributes to the community more widely through the celebration and promotion of Greek culture and heritage – through cultural fairs and their language school. They also provide care to those in need through their charitable work. I extend congratulations to the St Nectarios Church Burwood, Father George Liangas and their parish members on this significant milestone.

JOHN ELLIS MINER

Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield)—I bring to the attention of the House the passing of John Ellis Miner, a respected figure in the Labor Party who served a Prime Minister and two Premiers with enormous distinction. John served Paul Keating as a senior adviser. It is a measure of how highly regarded John was that before he went to Canberra he had already served both the Premier of NSW Barrie Unsworth and the Premier of Victoria John Cain. I came to know John in Newcastle. He was a friend and a confidant and someone who offered wise advice in my campaign for the seat of Newcastle and in my time as the local member. John was a man of letters, known for his sharp wit and intellect, and for his love of literature. It was with this passion that he started his journalistic career in 1977 as a cadet at *The Sydney Morning Herald*. He became the NSW Political Reporter, QLD Correspondent and Chief of the newspaper's Melbourne Bureau before becoming NSW State Political Correspondent for *The Australian* in 1984. My heartfelt condolences and those of the whole Labor movement go to his wife, Correen, his daughters, Grace and Bridget, and his father, John Ellis Senior.

JASMINE SEIDEL

Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)—Since the age of 7, Jasmine Seidel has been raising money for the community. Jasmine is currently a Year 6 student at New Lambton Public School and consistently displays compassion and care for others whilst volunteering for the community. In the last 3 years, she has raised over

\$6,600 for The John Hunter Children's Hospital Oncology Ward, Cupcakes for Kids with Cancer, HeartKids and for Multiple Sclerosis Limited. Jasmine has also recognised that not everyone has extended family members to share in festive occasions. She has undertaken gift collection campaigns to provide Christmas gifts for disability organisations within Newcastle to try and share the festive spirit across a broad section of our community. Jasmine is a humble young woman who gives freely of her time to fundraise for these charities. She has run cake stalls, created online social media awareness campaigns, and consistently performs odd jobs throughout the year to raise money, fitting all these activities in whilst participating competitively in dance and as a Nipper with the Cooks Hill Surf Life Saving Club. Thank you Jasmine for all the community work you do.

CALLAN PETERSON

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—The apple hasn't fallen far from the tree when it comes to Mark and Jenny Peterson and their son Callan. When Mark was in year 5 in 1987 at Belair Public School he received a high distinction after completing the Newcastle Permanent Primary Schools Mathematics Competition. Jenny completed the competition in 1988, when she was also in year 5 at Plattsburg Public. Last year, when Callan was in year 5 at New Lambton South Public he also completed the Newcastle Permanent Primary Schools Mathematics Competition, and received a high distinction and a district award. In August, Callan participated in the competition for the second time, along with almost 17, 500 other students from 294 primary schools. This year the Newcastle Permanent Primary Schools Mathematics Competition celebrated its 40th year of giving year 5 and year 6 students the opportunity to test their numeracy and problem solving skills. When the competition began its first year in 1981, 2337 students from 70 different schools participated that year, and half a million students have participated since. Well done Callan on following in your parents footsteps and taking such an interest in mathematics.

JOHN DOUGLAS – WANDA SLSC

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence)—I congratulate John Douglas who was recently named the 2020 NSW Volunteer of the Year for the Southern Sydney Region. John has been a valued member of Wanda Surf Life Saving Club for over 40 years. He has trained generations of nippers and made the beach a safer place for everyone. As the coach of the Rescue and Resuscitation operations, John has provided a safer experience for the local community. John has also volunteered with St Joseph's Junior Rugby League and Basketball, providing coaching and guidance to young rugby league players and basketballers. John has also volunteered with the RFS, including joining fight against the 1994 Como and Jannali bushfire. Wanda SLSC and the wider community are incredibly fortunate to have a person as dedicated as John volunteering his time.

TARA PEASE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—I would like to congratulate 13-year-old Glenmore Park resident, Tara Pease who has recently started her own business selling healthy dog treats. Tara's started her business just one month ago selling home-made dog treats to family and friends, but it has since taken off as more people catch wind of her amazing work. With the help of her mum, Jessica, Tara has created a variety of dog treat flavours and even delivers inside of Glenmore Park for free. Tara is a motivated and creative young girl who has not let her age get in the way of doing something she enjoys. Tara also has a love for animals and has turned this passion into a wonderful opportunity to learn about the importance of saving, earning and spending. Leading by example, Tara is now encouraging other young people to step out of their comfort zone and try new things! Congratulations once again on this outstanding achievement, Tara! I wish you all the best for your business and look forward to hearing of your next great achievement.

ELLY MILLER - ELOUERA SLSC

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence)—I congratulate Elly Miller (Graf) of Elouera Surf Life Saving Club on her induction to the Surf Life Saving Australia Hall of Fame for her outstanding achievements in the Beach Events Area. Elly is an inductee to the SLSA Hall of Fame in the 'Competition' classification. This a well-deserved achievement after her past 14 years as a National Beach Sprint and Beach Flags individual champion then in the Relay events, making her inclusion into the Hall of Fame unanimous. The induction is highest recognition her chosen sport can render. Elly is not only an athlete on the beach, but also a mentor through training, guiding, encouraging and assisting young female competitors, at beach clinics, surf carnivals and club competitions and on social media. Elly is the first member of Elouera SLSC to receive this recognition by the SLSA Board.

MARGARET WHYTE

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—It is my privilege to recognise an amazing Murray Darling community warrior, Margaret Whyte. Having lived in and around Wentworth her entire life, promoting the regions flora, fauna and social history is her passion. Margaret is a true pioneer in many ways, from starting the animal

nursery at the Wentworth Show some 28 years ago to the successful 'Wearable Art' parade where 'woolpacks' are converted into dresses by young budding fashion designers, now in its 18th year at the Show. Margaret has been acknowledged for her commitment to the region as recipient of the Women of the River, Murray Darlings and Women of the West together with awards from the National Trust for her contributions through the Wentworth Branch including the President positions. Today Margaret is creating unique cards, books and calendars all designed and painted by hand and sold locally through a community store Ruby's Cargo where she also volunteers. Margaret loves to share this passion, humour and knowledge of this unique environment and I am honoured to be able to celebrate Margaret today.

ALLAN BREUST

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I wish to acknowledge Mr Allan Breust, from Bectric who has been nominated for the 2020 NSW/ACT Regional Achievement and Community Awards which recognise outstanding contributions to community. Allan has been an enthusiastic, active and dedicated member of the Bectric Hall Recreation Reserve and Hall for many years. His building skills and expertise have often been called upon to assist with the upgrade, restoration and maintenance of the historic Bectric Hall. Thank you Allan and the passionate, valued volunteers who have worked so hard to preserve the 116 year old Bectric Hall which is the last standing pise hall in Australia. May there be many more happy functions and events at this significant recreational reserve and hall.

YEAR 12 2020 – FAIRVALE HIGH SCHOOL

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—On behalf of the Fairfield Electorate I would like to acknowledge the efforts of Year 12 from Fairvale High School during the 2020 academic year. The year began with high expectations and much optimism for a memorable end to 13 years of compulsory school education. The COVID 19 pandemic unfortunately caused unnecessary stress to Year 12 due to the continuous interruptions to teaching and learning of the HSC curriculum. The final year of schooling brings with it much cause to celebrate through special events, assemblies, sport carnivals, extracurricular activities and inter school competitions, this was either cancelled or modified due to the COVID-19 restrictions. As the 2020 Higher School Certificate examinations approach I would like to express since gratitude to Principal Ms Kathleen Seeto, teachers, support staff, parents and students for supporting each other during this difficult year. I, along with the Fairfield Electorate, hope for a fitting farewell for Year 12 in Term 4 2020. They rightfully deserve it.

JOSIE DOUGLAS

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation)—I congratulate 17 year old Tamworth gymnast Josie Douglas who I recently presented with her NSW Government State Representative Award. Josie represented New South Wales at the 2018 and 2019 Gymnastics Border Challenge. Josie started gymnastics as a two year old and has devoted 15 years of hard work and determination to follow her passion of gymnastics. Her favourite events are the vault and bars and she is currently a level 9 gymnast. Josie has represented NSW twice and has travelled to America and Singapore to compete in international gymnastic competitions. Representing Tamworth in Singapore at the Prime International Gymnastics competition Josie was awarded 1st overall for the women's gymnastics competition which includes vault, bars, beam and floor. She also competed in the Texas Prime meet in January this year and placed 6th overall. Josie is coached by her grandparents, Jan and Steve McGinnity who started Tamworth Gymnastics Club 30 years ago. Tamworth children from two to 18 years old attend Tamworth Gymnastics Club each week to learn strength, fitness, flexibility and discipline. I congratulate Josie on her gymnastic achievements and wish her all the best in her future competitions.

YEAR 12 2020 – MARY MACKILLOP COLLEGE, WAKELEY

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—On behalf of the Fairfield Electorate I would like to acknowledge the efforts of Year 12 from Mary Mackillop College, Wakeley during the 2020 academic year. The year began with high expectations and much optimism for a memorable end to 13 years of compulsory school education. The COVID 19 pandemic unfortunately caused unnecessary stress to Year 12 due to the continuous interruptions to teaching and learning of the HSC curriculum. The final year of schooling brings with it much cause to celebrate through special events, assemblies, sport carnivals, extracurricular activities and inter school competitions, this was either cancelled or modified due to the COVID-19 restrictions. As the 2020 Higher School Certificate examinations approach I would like to express since gratitude to Principal Ms Gilda Pussich, teachers, support staff, parents and students for supporting each other during this difficult year. I, along with the Fairfield Electorate, hope for a fitting farewell for Year 12 in Term 4 2020. They rightfully deserve it.

THANK YOU FOR SHARING THE DIGNITY

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—I rise today to thank those Maitland individuals, organisations and businesses who rallied during August to support Share the Dignity and help women and girls experiencing

period poverty. Across the globe, pressures of the COVID-19 pandemic have driven many individuals and families to financial desperation. Yet in Maitland the great generosity of spirit kept donations tumbling in. I would also like to make special mention of four exceptional acts. Maree Hunt and Kay Pritchard, from the Rotary Club of Maitland Sunrise, dropped off boxes of women's feminine hygiene products plus 30 hand-sewn, three-layer cloth face masks. This gift was worth more than \$550. Alexandra Haggarty and the team from David Haggarty First National came in with five bags of women's toiletries, filled with \$400 worth of donations. Local businesswoman Gina Wilks and her clients at Achieving Solutions donated 12 boxes of incontinence undergarments, worth around \$600, and had them delivered to my office. And finally our wonderful Share the Dignity 'Shero', Trudy Hungerford, who made multiple trips to and from my Maitland office to collect and distribute our donations. Thank you all for your marvellous contributions to this important cause.

MICHELLE COCKBAIN'S LEGACY LIVES ON

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—This Saturday marks the first anniversary of the passing of Michelle Cockbain, a Morpeth mother of four with a heart of gold and a laugh that lit up the room. Michelle was a passionate supporter and sponsor of Maitland Rugby Club and Hunter Valley Grammar Rowing and a local business owner. She lived by the words: "It takes a village". When breast cancer struck, Michelle called on her village to raise funds so that breast cancer researchers could one day help other families from losing their beloved. Michelle set up Maitland Loves Your Sister and set a fundraising goal of \$100,000. She passed away before hitting the target but a group of passionate friends worked on in her honour and exceeded her goal. The funds keep rolling in. Jane Craig of Bolwarra Heights and her father, Jon Wilkinson, have just completed a five-day trek from Michelle's hometown of Dubbo to Morpeth. This raised another \$13,000 for Maitland Loves Your Sister. My heart goes out to Michelle's beloved husband, Andrew, and their children, Sophie, Lauren, Erin and Angus. I acknowledge your tremendous loss and thank you for sharing the memories and legacy of your incredible mother.

MAISIE WILDE

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Better Regulation and Innovation)—I congratulate 14 year old Tamworth gymnast Maisie Wilde who I recently presented with her NSW Government State Representative Award. Maisie was a member of the New South Wales team at the 2019 Australian Gymnastics Championships. Maisie has represented New South Wales twice at the Australian Gymnastics Championships. Maisie represented Tamworth Gymnastics Club at the Prime International Gymnastics Competition in Singapore competing in the women's gymnastics competition which includes vault, bars, beam and floor. Maisie placed third overall in this meet. Maisie also travelled to America to compete in the Texas Stars International Gymnastics Competition in January 2020 arriving home just in time before the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Maisie's favourite event is the beam and has devoted many years of hard work and determination to follow her passion of gymnastics. Maisie is part of the Tamworth Gymnastics Club and coached by Jan and Steve McGinnity. Jan and Steve started Tamworth Gymnastics Club 30 years ago and provide gymnastics classes including kinder-gym, recreational gymnastics and competitive classes. I applaud Maisie on her gymnastic accomplishments and wish her good luck in her future competitions.

CLINTONS TOYOTA

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—I would like to congratulate Kurt Kordovolos and his team at Clintons Toyota for having been awarded the 2019 Toyota Australian Metropolitan Dealer of the Year award as well as the Toyota Eastern Region Metro Dealer of the Year award and the Toyota President's award. I note that whilst this was the first National win for Clintons Toyota in 35 years as a Toyota dealer, they have won regional awards and accolades for three consecutive years. I wish Kurt and his team continued success as a local dealership in in the Macarthur region including Camden, Gregory Hills, and Campbelltown.

ST CLARE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL – JUMP ROPE FOR HEART PROGRAM

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—I acknowledge the tremendous effort from St Clare's Catholic Primary School's Jump Rope for Heart Program, which raised \$40 000 for the Heart Foundation to fund research and heart health programs. St Clare's was the top fundraising school out of 630 schools across the country, with 585 students participating in the program. St Clare's students skipped a collective total of 412 logged hours and two of the school's Year 1 students, Amira and Jaxon are ranked among the top individual fundraisers nationally. I commend St Clare's for this fantastic accomplishment, particularly sports teacher Megan Parkes who ran the Jump Rope for Heart program. I acknowledge St Clare's principal Marg Foldes, who entered the school into this program. \$40 000 in donations would not be possible without the competitive efforts of St Clare's students and the contribution of St Clare's community. This feat is truly a testament to the generosity and drive that can be found within this school community.

LOCAL POET GORDON HAYDON

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I recognise local bush poet of 80-plus years, Gordon Haydon for his remarkable achievements encapsulated in poetry of history lived. Originally from Delungra, West Inverell, the now 96-year-old Port Macquarie poet is famous for putting pen to paper to describe a tale of yesteryears through the amazing composure of his verse. Growing up in Taree on a dairy farm, Gordon recalls writing his first piece of poetry in 1939 called *My Heart is on the Battlefield* after he was declined from enlisting in the army. Since then, Gordon has written literally hundreds of poems over the years, recalling his life experiences from careers including a dairy hand, horse-breaker, log cutter, local government bridge carpenter and a powder monkey. Gordon's minimal education as a result of leaving school at the age of 12 has not deterred him in the slightest from pursuing his love and passion for writing, describing his hidden talent for poetry, "just naturally and effortlessly flowing" like painting and drawing a profound personal image into literature. I congratulate Gordon for his invaluable contribution to local bush poetry spanning over 80 plus years in our region.

TONY WORTON – SURF LIFE SAVER OF THE YEAR

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I congratulate Camden Haven's Anthony Worton for taking out the renowned Surf Life Saver of the Year award at the annual presentation evening held on Saturday 29 August. Recognised as a mentor and role model by his peers, Tony was elated when accepting the pinnacle of awards for his outstanding volunteer efforts over the 2019-2020 season. Tony is often acknowledged as the backbone of the Camden Haven Surf Life Saving Club, dedicating his time and expertise in performing literally hours of routine surf patrols, while training the next generation of volunteer lifeguards. In 2017, Tony received the Meritorious Award from Surf Life Saving Australia for his selfless act of bravery that saved a young mother in distress. Overall his record in patrolling our beaches in the Camden Haven is simply remarkable, recording 700 hours of service in the past five seasons alone. It is no wonder that Tony was selected to be this year's Surf Life Saver of the Year. I applaud his dedication and commitment over many seasons in maintaining the safety and welfare of the community on our local beaches.

APOLLO KITCHENS

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—It was an absolute pleasure to visit Apollo Kitchens factory in Smithfield where they fabricate kitchens for apartment complexes, housing developments and individual homeowners. Apollo Kitchens is a leader in manufacturing innovation in Australia and supports keeping manufacturing jobs in in our community. Apollo Kitchens has been providing employment in our community and services to the building industry for over 50 years. During that time, their commitment to quality products has ensured their continued success in the face of increased overseas competition. During my recent visit, I was accompanied by NSW Opposition Leader Jodi McKay MP. It was a pleasure to witness the high tech manufacturing systems that Apollo uses. Their continued investment in Western Sydney manufacturing is an important sign of faith in our community and highlights the ability of local manufacturing and design workers. Thank you to Mr Peter Bader, Chief Executive Officer and Mr George Bousamra, Operations Manager, for giving us a tour of Apollo Kitchens and discussing the issues facing local manufacturers. I look forward to working closely with Apollo Kitchens and the manufacturing Industry to ensure the continued development and growth of manufacturing jobs in the community.

GOOD360

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Good360 is a fantastic local not for profit based in the Electorate of Prospect, which procures surplus consumer products from businesses, donors, funders and partners across Australia and distributes them to local charity partners. Good360 is a matchmaker, providing essential products to the most vulnerable members of our society. To date, Good360 has distributed \$150 million high-quality products right across Australia and has supported over 2000 Not for Profits and Schools that are assisting disadvantaged members of our community. The dedicated staff and volunteers of Good360 and the generosity of businesses is extremely important during the COVID-19 pandemic. With increasing unemployment, it is important that charities are able to access products to provide to disadvantaged members of our community. These often-basic goods, such as nappies and toys for domestic violence shelters, notebooks for schools, and clothing and toiletries for residential centres, are vital to ensuring the health and well-being of our community. I would like to sincerely thank Founder and Managing Director, Alison Covington, and the staff and volunteers at Good360 for the incredible work they undertake to support the most vulnerable in our community.

CARE AND CONCERN MINISTRIES

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)—I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the work of the Care and Concern Ministries within my electorate of Castle Hill. The Charity operates out of Dural and sees to the needs of the community as they arise, and are always mobile, happy to help wherever they can. In the past this

has resulted in them working in such areas as legal assistance, indigenous education and assisting local youths. The Men's Shed program is perhaps their most well-known endeavour, spearheaded by Chris Thomas, who was also previously the recipient of a NSW Government Community Service Award. It was recently my pleasure to assist them in their most recent project, updating the security and communications of the Shed, including a reliable Internet Connection and security cameras. They received \$5,000 from the NSW Government for this purpose, as part of the \$300,000 provided to my electorate in the 2019 round of the Community Building Partnership Grants.

CASTLE HILL HIGH SCHOOL P&C

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)—I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the work of the Castle Hill High School P&C Association within my electorate of Castle Hill. As well as operating the school canteen and uniform shop, the P&C have worked hard in recent years to develop their building fund, with the goal of upgrading their hall and kitchen. Furthermore their support for the wonderful Hills Relay for Life very much shows the character of the organisation. It was recently my pleasure to assist them in their most recent project, the refurbishment of the schools' multi-court surfaces, which have recently fallen into disrepair, such that we can ensure students can remain safe when they go to school each day. They received \$30,000 from the NSW Government for this purpose, as part of the \$300,000 provided to my electorate in the 2019 round of the Community Building Partnership Grants. I would like to thank all involved with the P&C, notably President Liga Hegner and School Principal Vicki Brewer who has always supported the organisation.

SPEAK OUT

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government)—I was recently joined by the Attorney General Mark Speakman at the Bombaderry Hotel to raise awareness about domestic violence and support the Speak Out campaign, which encourages victims of domestic violence to seek help. The pandemic has increased the potential for domestic abuse in homes across the South Coast community, so we want to ensure help is available and accessible at this crucial time. I was pleased to announce a funding boost by the NSW and Commonwealth Governments which will ensure local support services in Shoalhaven have the resources they need.

South Coast specialist support services will receive a funding boost of over \$285,800 for:

- Nowra Domestic Violence Intervention Service
- South Coast Women's Health and Aboriginal Corporation (Waminda)
- Shoalhaven Women's Homelessness and Domestic and Family Violence Support Service; and
- Staying Home leaving Violence Shoalhaven.

This comprehensive \$21 million package responds to a range of issues raised with the Government during this pandemic and aims to protect women and children and ultimately save lives. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic or family violence, please contact the Domestic Violence line on 1800 65 64 63 when it's safe to do so.

BEN MCMAHON – NSW YOUNG AUCTIONEER 2020

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales)—I recognise Ben McMahon of Inverell's Lehman Stock and Property on being named the 2020 Australian Livestock and Property Agents Association's NSW Young Auctioneer at the competition held in Dubbo recently. Ben took out the competition from a field of 10 competitors from across NSW following two previous attempts at claiming the title. While the competition is traditionally held at the Sydney Royal Show, with COVID-19, the competition was postponed and moved to Dubbo. At this year's competition, finalists sold one steer and two heifers from the catwalks of the saleyards in contrast to the rostrum at the Royal Show in Sydney. Competitors were judged according to their diction, values, voice and manner, presence and unique style by a panel of experienced and respected auctioneers. I congratulate Ben McMahon on his determination, talent and well-deserved success.

KU-RING-GAI COUNCIL HOUSING STRATEGY

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—I acknowledge those members of my local community, especially the Support Lindfield group, who have challenged what I believe is an inappropriate proposal for overdevelopment in the Ku-ring-gai Council's area, which covers part of my electorate. Further to my Private Members Speech on 30 July, on 22 September Ku-ring-gai Council will again consider its draft Housing Strategy to 2036. The current draft is unacceptable to the local community and has potential to result in irreversible damage to the character and amenity of local town centres such as Lindfield. I agree with the community that the height and number of dwellings proposed are inappropriate, with Council downplaying recent history of substantial new development

under earlier rezonings. As previously indicated by the Member for Ku-ring-gai and myself, Council's officers have overstated certain positions relating to targets and rezonings required to meet alleged State Government requirements. I thank the Planning Minister for recently writing to clarify matters, which should assist the elected Council to revise current proposals on behalf of our mutual constituents.

KU-RING-GAI COUNCIL COMMUNICATION AWARD

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—I am pleased to acknowledge Ku-ring-gai Council has been recognised for its bushfire awareness campaign at the 2020 RH Dougherty Awards. Out of ten nominees, the '2019-2020 Get Ready Ku-ring-gai Campaign' won the large council category. It aimed to raise awareness of the need for residents to prepare for the bushfire season, including a 3D simulation tool showing how a bushfire can spread, and workshops conducted by staff and RFS volunteers. They were also supported by the SES. The campaign was boosted through social media and videos, and Council has been recognised for its use of innovative tools like the simulation to educate and spread awareness. I commend the staff of Ku-ring-gai Council as well as the RFS and SES volunteers for their important roles in the campaign. Their valuable work has helped protect homes and lives across NSW. Well done to all concerned.

OPENING OF COMMUNITY COLLEGE NORTHERN INLAND – MOREE CAMPUS

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales)—I congratulate Community College Northern Inland Inc. on the official grand opening of their new Moree campus. I had the great honour of attending the opening on Friday, 11 September 2020. The new Moree campus is freshly renovated following a \$71,000 ACE Infrastructure Maintenance Grant from the NSW Government. The renovations involved remodelling the internal layout of the building and creating new learning spaces for local business, visiting specialist training organisations and the Colleges' own work skills and self-development programs. Investing in not-for-profit community education providers is a valuable investment in our local communities and from employing local tradespeople in the renovation stage to ensuring teaching jobs stay local, the long-term benefits for adult education in the Moree community are fantastic. The Moree campus is one of seven in rural and remote communities across the Northern Inland cluster and has continued to provide valuable training and support for businesses and individuals throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and into a changing future. Congratulations to Moree Campus Co-ordinator Catherine Davis and her mazing team on this new campus.

4K'S BOWRAL

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—I would like to mention the Kollege of Knowledge Kommittee for Kids affectionately known as the 4 K's which has raised funds to help disadvantaged and special needs children in the Southern Highlands. The children's charity has raised more than \$2.5 million over the last 30 years for the region's special needs and disadvantaged children. They support ASDESI, a support program providing services for families caring for autistic youngsters. They have helped organisations, including Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Shepherd Centre, Child flight, Clown Doctors, and Camp Quality. Recently they have helped Bowral family Amanda and Aaron Fowler and their daughter. Their 10-year-old daughter Lilah has severe autism and Down syndrome. Caring for Lilah can be particularly challenging. With assistance from the 4 K's a pool deck was provided enable her to have better access to the therapy pool at home. This is an important part of her daily program. Thank you to founding member Tony Springett and all at the 4K for all that you do for the community.

WOLLONDILLY COUNCIL MAYOR

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—I would like to congratulate Cr Robert Khan on his election as the Mayor of Wollondilly. I would also like to congratulate to congratulate Cr Michael Banasik on being elected as Deputy Mayor. Both Councillors have worked to represent their community. I look forward to working closely with Cr Khan to ensure that the many challenges facing the growth of Wollondilly Shire can be addressed in a positive manner with the State Government. The development of Wilton and major infrastructure issues such as the upgrade of the Picton Sewerage Treatment plant and the Picton Bypass will be those issues I am sure Council will want to see resolved. I would also like to thank the outgoing Mayor Cr Matthew Deeth for his collaborative approach to working with me since my election in 2019.

BEROWRA RSL SUB-BRANCH SWIMMING CLUB

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment)—Berowra RSL Sub-branch Swim Club reached a significant milestone this year celebrating their 50th anniversary. It is a wonderful achievement and a testament to the hard working committee both now and those who have proceeded them. They currently have 120 members and focus on fun and enjoyment in the pool rather than just winning. They don't aim to turn out Olympians, rather an emphasis on ensuring all members enjoy themselves and become confident swimmers. The club is run entirely by parent volunteers and is currently headed up by President Martin Stephen. I would like to congratulate and thank these volunteers who ensure the club is able to continue to run and give

kids a place to improve their swimming skills. The 50th birthday celebrations, which were held earlier this year, included Berowra Resident John Wright, the inaugural Swimming Club President. Due to COVID the club could not hold their Presentation Day so Martin presented trophies to recipients at their homes. Including Erin Donnelly who was awarded the Jim and Roberta Hughes Award. Congratulations Berowra RSL Sub-branch Swim Club on 50 years and I have no doubt you have many great years to come!

SYDNEY SECONDARY COLLEGE BLACKWATTLE BAY P&C

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)—Today I recognise the Sydney Secondary College, Blackwattle Bay P&C for their inspiring commitment to school solar initiatives. I was delighted to award the P&C with a Community Building Partnerships grant of \$18,500 for the installation of a 92kW solar power system at the school last year on top of a \$19,480 grant in 2018 to refurbish their basketball courts. I want to commend the school community's leadership in promoting renewable energy and for educating the next generation of caring and resourceful students. I would particularly like to acknowledge the following P&C members who have spearheaded this project: 2019 President Suzanne Kendall, Secretary Lisa Healy, Deputy Principal Janice Cuke and Solar my School Coordinator Jodie Savage. These dedicated parents and community members are championing sustainability in the Balmain Electorate and I know I speak for everyone in the community when I thank the Blackwattle Bay P&C for protecting our environment for years to come.

FREEMANS FITNESS

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment)—Today I would like to acknowledge a couple who are helping to keep locals in Hornsby fit and healthy. Daniel Freeman and his wife Julie own Freemans Fitness which is located in the heart of Hornsby. The gym, offers both personal training and small group fitness training session and is open to everyone of any age to help them reach their fitness goals. Daniel's approach is tailored to individuals rather than a one-size fits all program. Daniel has a passion for helping people live their best life. His book Fit For Life encourages a holistic approach and brings health and fitness to the forefront not just exercising. Being closed for 3 months was tough on Daniel and his family but now they are re-opened, adhering to all COVID Safety guidelines and their clients are back in the gym again. His wife Julie has also started a Mums and Bubs class for parents in our area. I want to congratulate Daniel and Julie on being able to navigate this difficult time and wish them continued success for their business.

CAROLINE BAUM- OLDER WOMEN'S NETWORK

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—Congratulations to Ms Caroline Baum, who was recently appointed as the NSW Ambassador for the Older Women's Network. The Older Women's Network has been promoting the rights, dignity and wellbeing of older women for over 32 years. The Network supports thousands of older women across NSW, connecting them with vital support services and social connections. In her esteemed career as an author and journalist, Caroline has focused on her experiences of family violence, ageing, ageism and aged care. After being appointed, Caroline noted the pervasive ageism that so often sidelines or limits older women, with wide-ranging impacts on housing, health care and employment opportunities. Covid-19 has been a stark reminder of just how important it is to support older women, who have been amongst the most vulnerable throughout the pandemic and lockdown. Older Women's Network volunteers are currently sewing up a storm, selling fabric masks with proceeds going towards building housing for homeless women. Thank you to all Older Women's Network volunteers, Older Women's Network Chair Beverly Baker for tireless advocacy on behalf of older women in NSW, and congratulations to Caroline Baum on her exciting appointment.

GREEK ORTHODOX PARISH OF SAINT NICHOLAS

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—The Greek Orthodox Parish of Saint Nicholas in Marrickville has been at the centre of the Greek community life in the inner west for almost 60 years. The Parish was established in 1961, coinciding with the first wave of Greek migrants to call Marrickville home. In 1975, Prime Minister Gough Whitlam attended the consecration of what was then the Greek Orthodox War Memorial Church, dedicated to Greek lives lost in the two World Wars. Today, St Nicholas stands as a Marrickville architectural landmark, with its byzantine character and melodic bells. Unfortunately, its copper dome finial is in urgent need of repair, after decades of service. Urgent funding is needed to protect this vital heritage asset for the Marrickville community. Along with my colleague Sophie Cotisis, Member for Canterbury, I recently meet with Father Christodoulos Economou to learn more about the important work conducted by the Parish during COVID. I will continue to work with all levels of Government, the Parish and the Marrickville community to ensure this beautiful and growing parish remains a strong Marrickville institution and look forward to celebrating 60 years of St Nicholas and 200 years of Greek Independence in 2021.

COOGEE SLSC AGM

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—Congratulations to Coogee SLSC who recently held their 114th Annual General Meeting in August. As part of the AGM, the club paid tribute to some of their most dedicated members who have passed over the past year. These legends included Life Members Charles 'Barrie' Cribb ASM and Barry 'Bolla' Telford as well as long service Members Norman 'Nob' Hill, Lawrence 'Lobster Bob' Rigby and Jeffrey 'Sayley' Sayles. Also remembered was Felicity Brown (nee Breene) who was one of the trailblazing women who joined the club in the first cohort of female members in the 1981/1982 season. Congratulations to previous and long serving secretary of the club, Pat Garcia, for his elevation to Life Member of the Coogee SLSC. Pat has worked tirelessly for the club for many years and is a deserving recipient of this honour. I would like to acknowledge the two outgoing executive members, Deputy President, Sharon Deans and Secretary, Rachel Garcia. Thank you both for your dedication and service to this great club.

TAMARAMA SLSC AGM

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—Congratulations to Tamarama SLSC who recently held their Annual General Meeting and celebrated the 112 years that they have been patrolling and saving lives at Tamarama Beach. I would like to congratulate Michelle Cowans who was the 2019 / 2020 recipient of the EE Pop Weird Trophy for Club Member of the Year and thank her for her fantastic contribution to the Tamarama SLSC community and to the beach goers at Tamarama. Michelle is also the Chief Instructor at Tamarama SLSC and does a fantastic job at developing our emerging local surf life savers. I would like to acknowledge the executive members of the club, President, Tim Murray, the Hon. Secretary Daniel Qualischefski and Treasurer Robert Foulkes. They have each done a wonderful job in supporting the great work of the club and I take this opportunity to thank each of you for your dedication and service to this great club.

HELEN KATHLEEN REDWOOD 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—It is with great pleasure I extend my congratulations to one of my constituents Mrs Helen Kathleen Redwood on the occasion of her 100th Birthday which was celebrated on the 11th of September 2020. I wish you happiness and continued good health into the future and hope you have a special day celebrating with friends and family.

WAGGA WAGGA CITY COUNCIL

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—The contribution women make to local government is widely acknowledged and invaluable, yet in many areas women remain under-represented on councils. Thankfully, work is being done to change this. In Wagga Wagga, where the 2016 Census shows 51.5 per cent of the population is female, only two of the nine councillors are women. But Wagga Wagga City Council is working hard to increase female representation on council and its efforts have now been recognised. The council has won the Employment Diversity Award in the 2020 Local Government minister's awards for women in local government 2020. The award recognised the pre-election program the council developed to achieve an equitable, diverse and culturally inclusive council. The program, which was developed before the postponement of the 2020 elections due to COVID-19, focuses on providing support and information for women considering standing for election next year. It includes initiatives to increase the participation of women in community leadership. It is now due to recommence in April and early May of next year. With the local government elections now delayed until 2021, I look forward to more women putting their hands for community leadership and a role in local government.

MEG KELLY

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—Every year Mid-Western Regional Council joins with the University of Wollongong to provide a scholarship to enable a person from the Mudgee region to pursue their dream career. The scholarship is supported by not only the council and UOW, but also Wilpinjong Coal, Mollarben Coal Operations and Club Mudgee, and this year it was awarded to Gulgong's Meg Kelly. Meg is a nursing student who plans to specialise in radiology after completing her degree, and she hopes to use the skills she learns in her home region. Since 2017, the scholarship has allowed three students from the region to further their studies in the health sector, and of course it is hoped they will find their way home and provide quality and accessible health care. This is a wonderful collaboration between organisations that are geographically different but working towards a common goal of providing wonderful opportunities for regional students. I am sure Meg will do wonderful things in her chosen career and I wish her all the best for her studies in Wollongong.

ALFORDS POINT PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—The Alfords Point Public School community has demonstrated tremendous resilience throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. During Education Week, Alfords Point Public School undertook a number of initiatives along the theme of 'learning together', focusing on ensuring the school

community felt connected and shared a sense of belonging. The school established a fence line art gallery to showcase a piece of artwork from each student to their peers, parents, carers and local residents. Students across year groups connected through introduced peer reading sessions with older students choosing a Premier's Reading Challenge book to read to a younger student. Mixed year groups were also established to build on the existing sense of community, with students participating in a scavenger hunt, rotational art, drama, robotics and STEM activities. I acknowledge Principal Annette Wein for her leadership, the dedication of teaching and support staff, and the efforts of students to contribute to the community sense of belonging. In particular, I recognise student leaders Talia, Jessie, Elijah and Ali for their leadership and support of their peers. I commend the Alford's Point Public School community for banding together at this unprecedented time.

MIRANDA MAGPIES NETBALL CLUB

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda)—I bring to the House's attention one of the Shire's most well established netball clubs, the Miranda Magpies. Having celebrated their 60th anniversary in 2018, the Miranda Magpies were a founding member of what was the Sutherland Shire Girls Basketball Association and are one of the largest netball clubs in the Shire today. The Magpies pride themselves on being a family club that supports players to enhance their skills in all aspects of the great game of netball, be it playing, offering in-house skills sessions, coaching, mentoring, training or courses to become coaches and umpires themselves. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the volunteers who comprise the executive committee and work tirelessly so that our girls may reap the benefits of netball. I recognise President Julie Norman, Vice President and Australian netball legend Lisa Beehag, Secretary Belinda Moroney, Assistant Secretary Matt Moroney, Treasurer Gayle Pagano, Publicity Officer Laura Dolos, Vanessa Kutcher, Sarah Marnovic, Suzanne Williams, Erin Howard, Marie Meehan, Helen Barker, Gabby Grahame, Zoe Sharan, Cathee Loveday and Jayne Ray. I extend my best wishes to the entire Miranda Magpies family for the rest of the 2020 season.

FUNDING FOR WESTERN SYDNEY MIGRANT RESOURCE CENTRE

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy)—I speak about the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre and the critical relief funding the centre received as announced by Acting Minister for Multiculturalism, the Hon. Geoff Lee MP. The funding is to support organisations, such as Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre, who assist vulnerable, temporary visa holders, in the local community. The centre provides crucial services to these members of the community, and this funding will ensure that the essential services and emergency relief support continues to be offered. The funding will foster emergency relief support such as assistance with telecommunications, and also food and medicine, especially during this difficult time, when people need support most. I commend Acting Minister for Multiculturalism, the Hon. Geoff Lee MP, for implement this funding that directly supports organisations that assist vulnerable members of the community especially during COVID-19. Thank you.

HARRIS COMMUNITY CENTRE

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—I commend the work of the Harris Community Centre in Ultimo, and thank them for ongoing work to support a strong community and provide practical help to vulnerable people. Under Uniting Care and linked to the Mustard Seed Church, the centre has a long history in the Ultimo community. Like many community centres, the Harris Centre provides information, referral and a range of services to individuals, families, groups and the community. This includes individual support, social and recreation activities like tai chi and dancing, and collective community events like the annual street fair. Reflecting local demographics, the Harris Centre has a strong focus on families with children and people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. They run English classes for parents, carers and children, with whole family programs. The playgroup and op shop with local volunteers and donations, while building community support. The centre provides emergency relief for people in need, making sure they can pay bills and have food. Like other community services, the Harris Centre has adapted to COVID-19 conditions, with online programs and safety measures to protect those involved with the centre. I thank them for this vital work.

TRIBUTE TO MOWLANA HABIBULLA

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—Today I acknowledge the passing of Hayat Mahamud's father. Hayat is a kind and active member of the Kogarah community. His father, Mowlana Habibulla was born in 1931 and spent his life fighting for education and language rights for the people of Bangladesh. He served as a social worker, and was a published writer. He will be particularly remembered for his service to his community in rescue and recovery following the 1970 Bhola cyclone that devastated Bangladesh, Pakistan and India. This is a trait that has been passed on through his family, with his grandchildren now active members of the NSW SES Kogarah Unit. Mowlana had six children, and 16 grandchildren. He was very much loved, and will be sadly missed. My thoughts are with Hayat and his family.

MS LEE SIBIR

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt)—I would like to bring to the attention of the House the outstanding work and commitment of Ms Lee Sibir, Principal of Eastern Creek Public School. Ms Sibir is a proud Aboriginal Educator, whose belief is one of working together towards reconciliation, to pave a brighter and more inclusive future for all Australians. Her care and commitment to her school and students should be applauded. During an unprecedented year, Ms Sibir has had to navigate her school through a number of challenges, including a school wide flooding incident, plumbing issues, and fallen branches from strong weather, all while tackling the Covid-19 Pandemic, and keeping her students safe. Ms Sibir is a strong and compassionate leader in my community, and I take this opportunity to commend her work and thank her for her service to the students of the Eastern Creek Public School.

DADS OF NEWCASTLE

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—There are few losses harder to deal with than miscarriage but Lake Macquarie man Nathan Andrews has created a support network for fathers and fathers-to-be to help them through difficult times. Nathan and his wife, Hannah, had been trying for a baby for 18 months when she fell pregnant. Unfortunately, they lost the baby. Nathan then fell into a deep depression and wasn't sure where to turn. It took some time for Nathan to shake the depression. He set up the "Dads of Newcastle" Facebook group to fill the support void. Nathan told the *Newcastle Weekly*, "There is light at the end of the tunnel, that's what I was trying to get across to everyone. I want them to know that they are not alone—if they are going through something, they have support. No matter how brave a dad looks on the outside, they've still gone through it on the inside." Hannah fell pregnant again soon after the miscarriage and the couple now have two children, son Noah and daughter Ava, with a third on the way. I offer my congratulations to Hannah and Nathan on turning adversity into opportunity and wish their young family well.

ANN-MARIA MARTIN AND SURVIVORS R US

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—I would like to recognise the extraordinary work of Ann-Maria Martin, the founder of Survivors-R-Us. Maria is a single mother, former chef and restaurateur, who was inspired to action after surviving an abusive relationship. I've met Maria on many occasions—she dreams of living in a region where everyone feels warm and safe, is clothed and fed and has a roof over their heads. That is a dream many of us share but through her charity Survivors-R-Us Maria has made it a reality for hundreds of people in the Charlestown electorate and the Hunter Region. Survivors-R-Us is a charity based in Cardiff which offers support to people fleeing domestic violence or experiencing unemployment or homelessness. Maria and her volunteers offer free cooked breakfasts, a food warehouse, on-site counselling, a weekly men's group, sewing groups, an op shop, workwear supplies, access to washing machines and showers as well as free bread and fresh produce. Survivors R Us is totally judgement free. You don't have to qualify, you just show up and grab what you need. I would like to thank Maria for her hard work and inspiring generosity of spirit.

MID-WESTERN SYDNEY 2020 VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown)—I draw the attention of this parliament to the Centre for Volunteering 2020 Volunteer of the Year awards ceremony for the Mid-Western Sydney region. The awards were held virtually this year and it was great to attend the ceremony to recognize the incredible work of our local volunteers. The NSW Volunteer of the Year Awards is an annual program which recognises volunteers in NSW for their outstanding contributions to the community. We congratulate the hundreds of nominee's this year and all of the winners. We want to specifically recognise the Newtown electorate's own Louise Evans who won the award for Adult Volunteer of the Year. Louise is responsible for creating the incredible and highly successful Women in Sport Photo Action Awards which has significantly improved the way the media and the public perceive women in sport. Louise has also volunteered extensively for Women Sport Australia, the national not-for-profit advocacy body for women in sport. I would like to thank CEO of the Centre for Volunteering, Gemma Rygate, and her team for their tireless work recognizing the all the amazing volunteers in our community.

EDDIE WOO

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer)—Today I want to pay tribute to an inspirational teacher in my electorate, Eddie Woo. Eddie, who has been teaching mathematics for 12 years and now teaches at Cherrybrook Technology High School, has a strong passion for the subject. In 2012 Eddie started filming his lessons in order to record a class for one of his students who was seriously ill with cancer. Since then, Eddie has become a YouTube sensation with his channel now boasting over a million subscribers and more than 64 million views worldwide. Eddie continues to teach at Cherrybrook Tech, while also serving as an education ambassador for The University of Sydney, as well as a policy advisor for the Department of Education. Of all the many awards Eddie has won, perhaps the most notable came in 2018 when he was named Australia's Local Hero, and then listed

as one of the top 10 teachers in the world by the Global Teacher Prize. I had the pleasure of sitting down with Eddie before Christmas to discuss the Half Year Budget Review and I can confirm you'll never meet a nicer bloke. Thank you Eddie for inspiring us all, and keep up the great work.

DES SCHRODER

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence)—I offer my congratulations to Des Schroder who recently received a Highly Commended at the NSW Local Government Awards. Des is Clarence Valley Council's Director of Environment, Planning and Community and received his recognition for his outstanding individual contribution to Excellence in Leadership. This is as a direct result of the leadership that Des showed in addressing mental health issues and the tragedy of youth suicide within the Clarence Valley. This award is recognition of the wonderfully caring nature of Des and I wish him well in his continued endeavours in this area.

DARCY ROAD PUBLIC SCHOOL P&C COMMITTEE

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills)—I recently visited Darcy Road Public School in Wentworthville. I was very pleased to hand over a one-off, \$2,000 grant from Premier Gladys Berejiklian to Darcy Road Public School P&C Committee members. The grant will assist the Committee-run uniform shop purchase a laptop for their online functions. The laptop will also help the Committee with fundraising and organising community activities. I thank the Committee's uniform shop co-ordinators Brajmala Kumari and Shivani Sharma for their work. I also want to acknowledge the whole Committee, including: president Somvir Bhatti; vice presidents Sadia Khan and Sheila Naidu; treasurer Kiran Sirikonda; secretary Vaibhavi Dave; executive officers Dimple Mehra, Gopinath Rao, Gouri Banik, Noor Ali, Pratibha Arya and Priya Sharma; and school banking co-ordinator Sindhu Kangokar. I thank the parents of Constitution Hill, Pendle Hill, Wentworthville and Westmead for their support of the Darcy Road Public School community.

WENTWORTHVILLE POLICE STATION

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills)—I rise to speak on new investments in safety and security for the Seven Hills Electorate. Earlier this month, I celebrated the \$2.1 million rebuild of Wentworthville Police Station. This station is an important facility upgrade which will support our local community and Parramatta Police Area Command. As a former Western Sydney police officer, I know the important work that members of the New South Wales Police Force do around the state. Police play a vital role in local communities and it is fantastic to see more state-of-the-art facilities delivered in my electorate. I note electorate suburbs of Constitution Hill, Northmead, Old Toongabbie, Toongabbie, Winston Hills, Wentworthville and Westmead will have two new probationary constables via Parramatta Police Area Command as part of the recent 197 New South Wales Police Academy graduates. I thank the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, David Elliot MP, and the Commissioner of the New South Wales Police Force, Mick Fuller, for joining me in Wentworthville for the special occasion.

BARK RUN IN SUPPORT FOR LOCAL KILLARA RFS BRIGADE

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai)—Earlier this year, I joined community members and their canine friends at Claude Cameron Dog Park in Wahroonga, to support the efforts and resourcing of the newly established Killara Rural Fire Service Brigade. The Brigade have been working closely alongside our other local and well established Ku-ring-gai Brigade for the past two years. The event drew in a large crowd and was certainly a barking good afternoon enjoyed by dogs and owners alike. Through the sausage sizzle, donations, raffle tickets and bandana sales, the 'Bark Run' Fundraiser collected over \$700 for the Brigade. It was a day that showcased the power of true community spirit. This sum is in addition to the over \$60,000 raised by our community through donations with the Turramurra and Lindfield Community Bendigo Bank for the Killara RFS Brigade. I thank all participants who enthusiastically took part in the events and everyone who was involved, particularly Turramurra resident and the 2020 Ku-ring-gai Young Citizen of the Year, Katherine Bowditch, who organised this successful day.

PEAKHURST SOUTH PUBLIC 2020 SCHOOL LEADERS

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—I would like to congratulate the newly elected school leaders for 2020 at Peakhurst South Public School, one of the local primary schools in my electorate of Oatley. To be elected as a school leader, is an opportunity for children to understand the qualities that make for a good leader as well as help students develop skills, such as confidence in public speaking, communication and leadership styles. Which are all important life skills, they will most certainly use and develop throughout High School and the work place. I commend the teaching team and principal at Peakhurst South Public School, Ms Felicity Young, for allowing the elected students to experience and learn from this great opportunity. I had the pleasure of meeting with the new student leaders, Captains, Robert Mansour and Emma Watts and Vice Captains, Daniel Hayek and Samantha Aley; and I wish them all the best in their roles this year, and their journey into High School next year.

THE RETIREMENT OF SUE WALKER

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—I recognise the distinguished career and retirement of Sue Walker, Byron Bay Area Manager of the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and her 37 years of service improving outcomes for Aboriginal people and protecting the environment. Sue's career highlights include; finalising the World Heritage nomination for Eastern Australian rainforests, Wilderness Assessment Reports for most of our now protected wilderness areas in NSW, and delivering additions to the Broken Head and Cumbebin Swamp Nature Reserves. Sue worked closely with Arakwal elders to establish the Arakwal National Park and to protect the Ti-Tree Lake Aboriginal Area. The Arakwal National Park was recognised by an International Union for Conservation of Nature Award in 2003 and in 2014 the Arakwal National Park and the Cape Byron State Conservation Area were the first reserves in the world to be included on the International Union for Conservation's Green list for best practice in management of a protected area. Sue has championed the end of logging in the Blackbutt Plateau, Mount Jerusalem National Park and Whian Whian. On behalf of our community I thank Sue Walker for her dedication and wish her a wonderful retirement.

JODI RODGERS (LOVE ON THE SPECTRUM)

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I recognise the success in promoting inclusiveness by Jodi Rodgers, a qualified sexologist, counsellor and special education teacher. Jodi features in the television series *Love on the Spectrum* which screened on ABC last year and has recently achieved global exposure on Netflix. *Love on the Spectrum* is a unique reality dating show that helps to dispel some of the stigma surrounding autism. It has been applauded by Oprah Winfrey, showcasing an Australia that is open and forward thinking around this taboo subject. The series' compassionate and humane celebration of difference exhibits empathy toward the participants and expands viewers' awareness of the condition. Ms Rodgers features as a counsellor to several of the participants, bringing a rare combination of qualifications and experience to this groundbreaking field. She set up Birds and Bees after 25 years of working within the education, disability and sexuality fields in Australia and internationally in schools and adult and community settings and in disability and sexual health organisations. Public understanding in this field is lacking and Jodi's counselling and education programs make learning about this complex area of sexuality in the differently abled comfortable and relevant.

OEEGA NSW INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY EVENT

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—I had the honour of attending the Organisation of Hellene and Hellene-Cypriot Women of Australia's International Women's Day luncheon on 8 March in Brighton-Le-Sands. International Women's Day is a time to celebrate and acknowledge the accomplishments of the women in our lives, and the contribution they have made to society. It was an honour to attend the event that paid tribute to four women in particular for their outstanding contributions to the Greek and Cypriot community. I want to congratulate all the women who received Awards of Excellence on the day and thank them for the tireless work they do to ensuring our community is a better place for all women. A special thank you also to Irene Anestis OAM, President of the Organisation, for the invitation, along with Mayor of Bayside City Council, Councillor Joe Awada and Councillor Vickie Poulos, who also attended.

HINDI DIVAS CELEBRATION

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—Every year the Indo-Aust Bal Bharathi Vidyalaya Hindi community language schools come together to celebrate Hindi Divas and the achievements of the students across eight schools. Due to COVID, they participated in the celebrations online this year. India's national Hindi Divas falls on September 14 every year. It is celebrated to remember the Hindi language which was adopted as the official language of India by the Indian Constituent Assembly on September 14, 1949. People all over India, schools, government and NGOs all celebrate this day with a tribute to a language which is the second most spoken language in the world. This day helps the Indian community in my electorate hold onto their culture while uniting them with the community and their Australian identity. Awards are presented to all outstanding students for excellence in achievement in Hindi and their participation in community events. Well done all involved for an excellent community event.

**The House adjourned pursuant to standing and sessional orders at 20:45 until
Thursday 17 September 2020 at 09:30.**