



**New South Wales**

# **Legislative Assembly**

## **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)**

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament  
First Session**

**Thursday, 10 June 2021**

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Thursday, 10 June 2021**

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

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

*[Notices of motions given.]*

## *Bills*

### **ROAD TRANSPORT LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2021**

#### **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) (09:46):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to speak to the Road Transport Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. The bill proposes amendments to the Road Transport Act 2013 and the Motor Vehicles Taxation Act 1988 that will create a more flexible legislative framework to enable the Government to more readily respond to the needs of farmers in times of drought, flood and other natural disasters. The bill will also propose amendments to a range of New South Wales Acts and other instruments that reference the Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989 of the Commonwealth—which will be replaced by the Road Vehicle Standards Act 2018 on 1 July 2021—and the Point to Point Transport (Taxi and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016 to clarify that the Point to Point Transport Commissioner should be treated as a "public officer" for the purposes of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986, and an amendment to the Interpretations Act 1987 to extend an existing provision under the Act.

The amendments proposed to the Road Transport Act 2013 and the Motor Vehicles Taxation Act 1988 will create a more flexible legislative framework to enable the Government to more readily respond to the needs of farmers in times of natural disasters. These amendments are an example of the Government's commitment to modernise legislation and remove inconsistencies and red tape to better serve the needs of New South Wales farmers. The amendments will not change the manner in which primary producer vehicle registration concessions are currently calculated. Importantly, the amendments will rectify a longstanding legislative anomaly caused by a drafting error which incorrectly applies a monetary cap on heavy vehicle primary producer registration charges.

Introduced in 1998, the policy intent was for the cap to apply only to primary producer light vehicle charges so that the motor vehicle tax for these vehicles would not be greater than the national registration charge for a heavy vehicle—more than 4.5 tonnes. It was intended that the monetary cap was not to apply when calculating the registration charge concession for primary producer heavy vehicles. That means whichever is less of either the uncapped tax or the registration charge will apply. However, as currently drafted this cap would provide a disproportionately larger concession for primary producer heavy vehicles and that outcome would be out of step with the administration of other registration concessions. The amendments will also strengthen the customer enrolment framework to ensure that primary producer vehicle registration concessions benefit genuine farmers. This will be achieved through the introduction of an income threshold that will require confirmation that at least 50 per cent of total income is earned from primary production activities in normal seasonal circumstances.

The income level threshold is adopted from and aligned with other New South Wales government agencies that provide financial assistance to primary producers, such as the NSW Rural Assistance Authority. Transport for NSW will also develop protocols for sharing information with other government agencies, where the customer has provided their explicit consent to do so. This is one more step towards "government made easy" as customers will not have to resubmit documents or other information previously submitted to another government department; they will have to tell us only once. The amendments will also provide increased information-gathering powers for authorised officers to improve the compliance and enforcement capability of Transport for NSW in the administration and enforcement of registration concessions, registration conditions and other registration requirements.



Penalties will also be increased from \$2,200 to \$11,000 for corporations that attempt to register a vehicle by making a false statement. The increase is necessary as the value of the primary producer concession can be almost \$10,000 for a heavy vehicle, creating a large financial incentive for ineligible customers to seek to exploit the concession. A new offence with equivalent penalties will also be created for falsely claiming a registration concession. Finally, the amendments will provide a single point of reference for all heavy vehicle registration charges and consolidate the Minister's exemption powers within the Road Transport Act by removing duplicative provisions in the Motor Vehicles Taxation Act. The primary producer vehicle registration concession administered by Transport for NSW is a prime example of a longstanding Government commitment to support New South Wales farmers and primary production businesses.

The concession is second only to the pensioner vehicle registration concession in regard to the number of customers that are assisted through a reduction in registration costs. In April 2021 there were approximately 137,000 vehicles receiving the primary producer concession, including 101,000 light vehicles and 36,000 heavy vehicles. Concessions are available when registering both light and heavy vehicles. For light vehicles, primary producers pay 55 per cent of the business rate of motor vehicle tax, capped; and for heavy vehicles, the lesser of either the national registration charge or 55 per cent of the business rate of tax. The total value of the concession for the 2020-21 financial year is approximately \$67 million. The definition of a primary producer under current road transport law is a person who uses their own or another person's land for agricultural production of any kind; as a nursery; for rearing cattle, sheep or horses; or for gathering and distilling oil from leaves.

Eligibility for the primary producer registration concession is currently based on an application from a customer who self-declares that they satisfy the eligibility criteria to qualify for the concession. The eligibility criteria includes the supply of tax-related documents or a declaration signed by a registered tax agent or accountant confirming that the customer meets the definition of a primary producer under road transport law. Under the proposed changes, a primary producer will need to confirm that they earn at least 50 per cent of their total income from primary production activities under normal seasonal circumstances. For example, a first-time applicant for a primary producer vehicle registration concession will be required to provide a declaration from a tax agent or accountant confirming that they meet the definition and income threshold.

Transport for NSW is aware that some large transport companies that may have only a single token aspect of their business involved in primary production are currently claiming the concession for their entire fleet of vehicles. Typically most, if not all, of those companies transport goods that have no direct relationship with primary production. As the primary producer registration concession for a single heavy vehicle can be as much as \$10,000 per vehicle, the incentive to falsely claim eligibility for the concession is high, especially across entire fleets of vehicles. In the interest of ensuring a level playing field for transport operators and responding to stakeholder concerns on this issue, it is essential that the concession is granted only to genuine primary producers who can demonstrate they satisfy the eligibility criteria. It is important to note that the Minister can waive some or all of these requirements in unforeseen circumstances, such as drought.

The Government recognises the variety of environments and challenges faced by primary producers in their primary production activities and the need for flexibility. Transport for NSW will work with the NSW Farmers Association to refine processes to support the implementation of these changes, including the design of declaration forms and other communication material, to ensure farmers receive clear and concise messages about the changes and to deliver a positive customer experience. The objective of the amendments is not designed to reduce the number of eligible primary producers; rather, it is to ensure that genuine primary producers receive the concession while preventing exploitation or gaming of the concession, which could give some road transport operators an unfair business advantage over others.

Under the reforms, primary producer heavy vehicles will only be permitted to be used solely in the context of primary production. Broader light vehicle use will continue to be permitted for primary producers, including use for household activities such as shopping or taking children to school. This continues to accommodate the needs of farmers and their families who have only one light vehicle. The current requirement that primary producer vehicles cannot be used for let or hire will remain in place to maintain a level playing field, so as not to disadvantage road transport companies that are not entitled to receive the primary producer concession. Penalties for breaching such a condition, including registration suspension, currently exist under road transport law. The statutory rules will also be able to prescribe non-eligible vehicles such as large street motorcycles, identified through compliance and enforcement activities, should the need arise.

The current legislative framework provides Transport for NSW with limited powers to investigate matters related to a registered operator's eligibility for a registration concession or their compliance with a registration condition or other registration requirements. Amendments to the Road Transport Act 2013 will allow an authorised officer to require documents or information from a vehicle's driver, or from any other person, to determine whether the vehicle's registered operator is eligible for a registration concession or is complying with

any other vehicle registration requirement or registration condition. These changes will provide for roadside checks and back-office investigations by authorised officers. For example, currently at the roadside a driver of a heavy vehicle may be required to present journey or transport documents ordinarily carried in the vehicle, such as a load manifest, delivery order or work diary, but not information about the vehicle's registration.

The amendments will permit an authorised officer to require the production of documents about the vehicle's registration, including any registration concession. Another example is the logbook that is a requirement of some conditionally registered vehicles, such as historic vehicles, which records the limited use of the vehicle on the road network as prescribed by the conditions of operation. Similarly, back-office investigations will be made more effective through the ability to require documents from the consignor or receiver of a vehicle's load in cases where the vehicle is suspected of transporting goods other than primary produce but is receiving a primary producer registration concession. The new compliance and enforcement capability will be supported by the introduction of appropriate penalties for failing to comply with a direction from an authorised officer to produce documents. The penalty will be \$2,200 or 20 penalty units for individuals and \$5,500 or 50 penalty units for corporations, which is consistent with penalties under other road transport legislation covering heavy vehicle operations.

To increase deterrence to lodge a fraudulent application for registration, the maximum penalty for corporations attempting to falsely represent matters in registering a vehicle will be increased from \$2,200 to \$11,000. Those penalties are considered necessary to deter fraud and unlawful behaviour and are aligned to similar level penalties imposed on corporations under road transport law for offences, including knowingly providing false or misleading information to enable the amount of registration charges to be determined, failure to pay the full amount of registration charge for a vehicle, or using a vehicle with unpaid registration charges on a road. As there are no specific offence provisions currently available under the legislation for falsely obtaining a concession on registration costs, a separate offence will be created for falsely claiming eligibility for a registration concession, with a maximum penalty of \$2,200 for an individual and \$11,000 for corporations. Penalties for corporations will not apply to farm partnerships or trusts where the vehicle is registered in the name of an individual trustee or member of the partnership.

It is also proposed to relocate the definitions of "primary producer" and "primary producer's vehicle" from the Motor Vehicles Taxation Act 1988 to the statutory rules of the Road Transport Act 2013 to enable a more agile approach by the Government in responding to farmers in times of need. During stakeholder consultation, a key issue raised was the lack of a clear and consistent definition of "primary producer" across government agencies. The relocation of the definition of "primary producer" to the statutory rules will permit Transport for NSW to adopt any future government-wide definition of "primary producer" and "primary producer's vehicle" that might be developed by the Department of Primary Industries as a result of its upcoming review of the New South Wales Rural Assistance Act.

The amendments will also rectify a legislative anomaly regarding the calculation of registration charges for some primary producer heavy vehicles. In 1998 a legislative amendment was made to New South Wales road transport law to apply a cap on the motor vehicle weight tax charged for a primary producer light vehicle so that the motor vehicle tax for those vehicles would not be greater than the national registration charge for a heavy vehicle—more than 4.5 tonnes—introduced in the mid-1990s. However, the legislation was drafted in such a way that an unanticipated consequence also resulted in the capture of heavy vehicle charges, which inadvertently gained the benefit of the cap under a strict reading of the law. The policy intent was for the monetary cap not to be applied when calculating the registration charge concession for primary producer heavy vehicles—that is, primary producers would pay whichever is less of the uncapped tax or the registration charge when registering that heavy vehicle.

The drafting error remained undetected following the passage of the legislation. The relevant IT systems were changed by the former Roads and Traffic Authority to reflect the policy intent of the Government, and the concession has been administered in the manner that was intended by policy, but technically contrary to the legislation. New South Wales farmers who operate light vehicles have continued to receive the concession as the Government originally intended, and the monetary cap has not applied when calculating the registration charge concession for primary producer heavy vehicles. Let me also illustrate why the legislation must be corrected to reflect the longstanding policy intent of the Government in calculating the concession to ensure that all citizens of New South Wales receive a fair go with respect to registration concessions. Heavy vehicle registration charges are applied nationally across Australia and aim to recover heavy vehicle related expenditure on roads from heavy vehicle operators to allow governments to invest in building and maintaining productive and safer roads.

The annual registration charge for a medium combination truck with four axles that weighs seven tonnes unladen—but can have a total weight of up to 20 tonnes when fully loaded and using the road network—is \$10,320. The current concession for a primary producer reduces the registration charge on this vehicle to \$1,803.

However, if the registration charge was calculated in accordance with the current legislation, the registration charge would be further reduced to \$745 for that same vehicle. To put this in perspective, the annual motor vehicle tax for a large four-wheel drive vehicle that weighs around 2.5 tonnes and is operated by a non-primary producer business is \$745, but that vehicle is substantially smaller in weight, size and impact on the road infrastructure. As registration charges are levied to recover expenditure used to maintain our roads, the legislation must be rectified to support the policy intent of the Government. Some members may recall that this longstanding legislative anomaly was raised in the Chamber in 2018 by the member for Orange, who called on the Government to fix the anomaly.

That is exactly what the bill seeks to do. The amendments will correct the drafting error by removing the nexus between the Road Transport Act and the Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, and relocating the primary producer heavy vehicle provisions in the Road Transport (Vehicle Registration) Regulation. Those changes will provide a single point of reference in the statutory rules for the calculation of heavy vehicle registration charges. Let me remind members of the action this Government has taken to address the unintended consequences created by the legislative anomaly since it was identified in 2018. In 2018 the former Roads and Maritime Services issued vehicle registration refunds dating back three years to more than 9,000 farmers affected by the error at a cost of some \$42 million. The Government has also waived registration fees for all primary producer heavy vehicle operators for the past three years at a cost of more than \$100 million as part of our support for farmers during drought. Motor vehicle tax from light vehicles is used to fund the New South Wales roads program. Currently, the details of motor vehicle tax amounts are set out in schedule 1 to the Motor Vehicles Taxation Act.

In order to improve customer access to view the changes in those amounts as a result of movements in the consumer price index, it is proposed to relocate schedule 1 to the statutory rules. To manage any potential impact on revenue, both the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads and the Minister for Transport and Roads will need to consult with the Treasurer prior to seeking any amendment to change the manner in which the indexation provision currently operates. Those changes will provide a clearer, publicly accessible option for viewing motor vehicle tax that is increased annually to reflect the consumer price index adjustment. Finally, to further simplify and clarify the legislation, the changes will consolidate the Minister's exemption powers within the Road Transport Act 2013 by removing duplicative provisions that currently exist in the Motor Vehicles Taxation Act 1988. The NSW Farmers Association, the Livestock, Bulk and Rural Carriers Association and the National Road Transport Association were all consulted during the development of the proposed reforms. All agree on the importance of clear, consistent rules for primary producers and a level playing field for commercial road transport operators.

As I said at the outset, the bill will also propose amendments to a range of New South Wales Acts and other instruments that reference the Commonwealth Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989, which will be replaced by the Road Vehicle Standards Act 2018 and the Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016 to clarify that the Point to Point Transport Commissioner should be treated as a public officer for the purposes of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986. On 1 July 2021 the Commonwealth Road Vehicle Standards Act 2018 will replace the Commonwealth Motor Vehicle Standards Act 1989. Those Acts regulate the provision of road vehicles to the Australian market and national road vehicle standards. Schedule 5 updates references across the statute book to reflect the transition to the Commonwealth's Road Vehicle Standards Act 2018. Those amendments will make consequential changes to refer to the new Act and also make provision for the transition from identification plates, also known as compliance plates, which were required under the Motor Vehicle Standards Act, to the new Register of Approved Vehicles under the Road Vehicle Standards Act.

The new Register of Approved Vehicles will act as an online, publicly searchable database of information for vehicles approved for use on Australian roads under the Road Vehicle Standards Act. The amendments to be made to the New South Wales Acts and instruments will ensure that New South Wales remains in line with the current Commonwealth laws and the New South Wales Acts and instruments continue to operate as intended. The bill will also amend the Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016 to clarify that the Point to Point Transport Commissioner should be treated as a public officer for the purposes of the Criminal Procedure Act 1986. It has always been the Government's intent that the commissioner be treated as a public officer, given that taking enforcement action is one of the commissioner's statutory functions; however, the commissioner can only commence proceedings as a private individual. As a result, the commissioner does not have the benefit of the indemnity that public officers enjoy.

Public officers are indemnified in respect of any costs awarded against them personally in proceedings in which they are acting in their capacity as a public officer. The amendment will ensure that the commissioner continues to be effective in ensuring the safety of the point-to-point transport industry. The final amendment of the bill will be a minor amendment to section 30A of the Interpretation Act 1987 to extend an existing provision under that Act. Currently, section 30A provides that any operation or meaning of a provision that is transferred from an Act or statutory rule to another Act is not affected by the transfer. The proposed amendment will extend this provision and clarify that any operation or meaning of a provision that is transferred from an Act or an

instrument to the Act or the instrument, or to another Act or another instrument, will not be affected by the transfer—putting beyond doubt that the meaning of a transferred provision is preserved and remains consistent with its original meaning in legislation. I commend the bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

## **PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS AMENDMENT BILL 2021**

### **Consideration in Detail**

#### **Consideration of Legislative Council amendments.**

*Schedule of amendments referred to in message of 18 March 2021*

**No. 1 AJP No. 6 [c2021-002H]**

Page 4, Schedule 1[11], proposed section 30B(2), lines 20 and 21. Omit all words on those lines.

**No. 2 AJP No. 7 [c2021-002H]**

Page 5, Schedule 1. Insert after line 2—

**[13A] Section 31AA**

Omit the section. Insert instead—

**31AA Prohibitions for persons convicted of certain offences**

If a person is convicted of an offence against section 79, 80, 530 or 531 of the Crimes Act 1900, the person must not—

- (a) purchase or own an animal, or
- (b) engage in work, whether paid or unpaid, involving direct contact with, or care of, an animal.

Maximum penalty—400 penalty units or imprisonment for 1 year, or both.

**No. 3 GRN No. 3 [c2021-006E]**

Page 5, Schedule 1. Insert after line 4—

**[14A] Section 34(4)**

Omit "12 months". Insert instead "3 years".

**[14B] Section 34(4)**

Omit "alleged to be the date on which the offence was committed".

Insert instead "evidence of the alleged offence first came to the attention of an officer".

**[14C] Section 34AA Authority to prosecute**

Omit the section.

**No. 4 GRN No. 4 [c2021-006E]**

Page 5, Schedule 1. Insert after line 4—

**[14D] Section 34A Guidelines relating to welfare of farm or companion animals**

Insert after section 34A(4)—

- (5) The Minister must, before 31 May 2021, cause a revised version of *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding dogs and cats*, ISBN 978 0 7347 1945 4, to be published.
- (6) The revised version, when published, is taken to be adopted by the regulations.

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (10:08:3):** I move:

That:

- (1) Legislative Council amendment No. 1 be agreed to.
- (2) Legislative Council amendments Nos 2 to 4 be disagreed with.
- (3) The following further amendments be agreed to:

**No. 1 Prohibiting persons convicted of certain offences**

Page 5, Schedule 1. Insert after line 2—

**[13A] Section 31AB**

Insert after section 31AA—

**31AB Prohibitions for persons convicted of certain offences**

If a person is convicted of an offence against the *Crimes Act 1900*, section 79, 80, 530 or 531, the person must not—

- (a) purchase or own an animal, or
- (b) engage in work, whether paid or unpaid, involving direct contact with, or care of, an animal.

Maximum penalty—400 penalty units or imprisonment for 1 year, or both.

**No. 2 Prosecution of offences**

Page 5, Schedule 1. Insert after line 4—

**[14A] Section 34(4)**

Omit "12 months". Insert instead "3 years".

**[14B] Section 34(4)**

Omit "alleged to be the date on which the offence was committed".

Insert instead "evidence of the alleged offence first came to the attention of an officer".

**No. 3 Adoption of Code of Practice**

Page 5, Schedule 1. Insert after line 4—

**[14D] Section 34AB**

Insert after section 34A—

**34AB Code of practice for breeding dogs and cats**

- (1) The Minister must, before 31 August 2021, cause a revised version of *Animal Welfare Code of Practice – Breeding dogs and cats*, ISBN 978 0 7347 1945 4 (the **current code of practice**), to be published.
- (2) A reference in any Act or instrument to the current code of practice is taken, on the publication of the revised version of the current code of practice, to be a reference to the revised version. I realise that this debate will be interrupted shortly and I hope that we can come back to this at a later hour. I advise the House that the New South Wales Government does not oppose Legislative Council amendment No. 1; however, I make some points of clarification about that amendment. We know that disqualification orders are a useful tool to protect the welfare of animals. The bill introduces a new court order—an interim disqualification order. As I mentioned in my second reading speech, an interim disqualification order is a new order that will be available to the courts under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act [POCTAA] and the Crimes Act. The interim disqualification order will allow a court to prevent a person charged with an animal cruelty offence from having control or influence over additional animals until court proceedings in that matter are finalised. Following the passing of amendment No. 1 in the other place, the court may make an interim disqualification order to prevent a person against whom proceedings have commenced in a court from acquiring or having control over animals for the duration of the proceedings if the court is satisfied the person is likely to commit another animal cruelty offence.

To make it clear, the amendment passed in the other place goes beyond preventing a person against whom court proceedings are in play from acquiring any new animals subject to the court's determination, to giving the court the ability to have all animals under that person's care or control removed from them over the course of those proceedings. Amendment No. 1 passed in the other place removes new section 30B (2), which provides that an interim disqualification order would not apply to animals currently in the possession of a person at the time the order was made. As a result, it will give the courts the ability to impose an interim disqualification order should it choose to—although it is not required to—to prevent a person from acquiring or having control over newer animals or any animals already in their control.

The Government and I make it very clear that this amendment leaves the application of any orders completely at the court's discretion when it is entirely appropriate. The Government envisages, as I hope the Parliament does, that that power would be used in extreme cases and sparingly. Courts will be able to use their discretion in applying an interim disqualification order. It will not be automatic. The scope and application of the order will depend on the facts of each case. It is important to note that before making an interim disqualification order the court must be satisfied that, if the person were to be in charge of an animal, they would be likely to commit another animal cruelty offence. If this threshold is not met, then the court cannot make an interim disqualification order.

Secondly, I will mention instances relating specifically to livestock as I know there has been some level of concern around the amendment in relation to the treatment of livestock and primary producers. I remind the House that in serious animal welfare situations the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act [POCTAA] already contains powers within section 24J that allow inspectors of enforcement agencies to immediately seize all animals under the care of an owner. That Act already gives power to the RSPCA, Animal Welfare League, New South Wales police and any persons authorised as inspectors within those bodies under this Act to immediately seize one, two, three or all animals under the care of a person whom they are investigating and whom they are thinking of prosecuting for breach of POCTAA. So amendment No. 1 passed in the other place does not introduce a new power that does not exist in the Act currently. It simply gives a court that power to make the order in addition to the power that enforcement agencies already have under POCTAA contained within section 24J.

Further, part 2B of POCTAA already allows for the formation of a stock welfare panel to address stock welfare concerns at the request of a POCTAA enforcement agency. We saw that used to great effect during the worst drought in living memory in our State where we had some 35 stock welfare panels stood up. Thankfully, only five out of those 35 cases proceeded to court—that is, the most extreme situations—because in 30 of those cases those welfare concerns were adequately addressed by working with the owners, enforcement agencies, NSW Farmers, the Department of Primary Industries and all the other bodies on the stock welfare panel. Those panels are very effective and their membership is very well known. They are the experts.

Even under these arrangements, if the Parliament agrees to the amendment passed in the other place, the stock welfare panels still exist under part 2B. They will have to be stood up and the process gone through with them before a matter is taken through the courts. A number of safeguards and processes will still exist under the legislation. Indeed, as I said, that power to seize all animals already exists under section 24J. In fact, that is why the Government established part 2B and the stock welfare panels: to give the enforcement agencies more options rather than simply seizing hundreds of head of livestock each time there was a complaint against a farmer. That process has been working very well.

Amendment No. 2 passed in the other place establishes a prohibition on owning or working with animals for people who have been convicted of a crime under the Crimes Act 1900 for animal cruelty offences. That amendment also omits existing section 31AA of POCTAA, which gives the Minister the power of recognising interstate disqualification orders. After discussions with the members who moved that amendment in the upper House, it is not the New South Wales Government's view that that was the intent of the upper House. So the Government is disagreeing with the amendment and is instead putting another amendment in its place that restores the intent of the upper House in moving that amendment. It will not remove section 31AA. Why is it important not to remove section 31AA? It is important that in New South Wales we have the ability to recognise people who have been convicted of cruelty offences in other jurisdictions, not just those convicted of offences exclusively in New South Wales.

The Government does not support amendment No. 3 passed in the other place. The proposed amendment would see the authority to prosecute provision omitted from POCTAA in its entirety. That provision allows for appropriate qualified agencies, the enforcement agencies and individuals to bring forward prosecutions and, as such, is an important part of the current laws. The Government is introducing an amendment to change amendment No. 3 passed in the other place that retains the approach to the statutory limitation period proposed by the amendment but does not delete the authority to prosecute provision currently outlined in POCTAA. That is crucial as well.

**Debate interrupted.**

## **RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT (REASONS FOR TERMINATION) BILL 2021**

### **Second Reading Speech**

**Debate resumed from 6 May 2021.**

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (10:18):** There is a history of no-grounds eviction being used to evict tenants in retaliation for asserting their rights, such as on overdue repairs or maintenance, or because of discrimination. This week I received a message from a woman I know from Merrylands in my electorate. Her name is Teresa. She had been given a 90-day vacate notice for her unit in Merrylands, which she believes is in retaliation for requesting maintenance. It is 90 days under the terms of the moratorium. The moratorium is not actually a moratorium on evictions; it just gives people an additional 30 days to relocate. It is very unfair. This happens over and over again. In a very tight rental market, combined with price pressures and landlords wanting to put the prices up, if less than 1 per cent of properties are vacant, one can easily rent out a property with quite obvious maintenance issues for more money. One can make more money and make people feel too afraid to complain about the maintenance needed in their homes.

Without addressing no-reason eviction, it is possible that landlords will evict tenants during this transition period over the next six months and afterwards in order to re-let property at higher weekly rent and potentially expose evicted tenants to overheated rental markets across the State—we are seeing that now. Ending no-reason eviction is the cornerstone of introducing greater security and stability into the rental market. Evicting tenants now to enable landlords to re-rent in overheated local markets, especially in the regions, is not fair or right. That ends with the passage of this bill. Changes to no-grounds evictions are not to the detriment of landlords since the private member's bill includes additional specific grounds for termination, such as the premises needing renovation or the landlords moving in themselves. The changes will only disadvantage those landlords who use no-reason eviction to get out of doing the right thing by their tenant. I commend the bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

## **ANTI-DISCRIMINATION AMENDMENT (RELIGIOUS VILIFICATION) BILL 2021**

### **First Reading**

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

### **Second Reading Speech**

**Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (10:20):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

It gives me great pleasure on behalf of the Labor Opposition to introduce the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Vilification) Bill 2021. The object of the bill is to make religious vilification of individuals unlawful. It does that by amending the Anti-Discrimination Act. That Act already lists a number of attributes of individuals in relation to which vilification is unlawful. This bill proposes to add religion to those other attributes. Proceeding in this way has the advantage of building upon a structure that is already there with a jurisprudence that has been developed over time. In technical terms, it is a minor amendment rather than a wholesale restructuring. It is, however, in substance very important to many groups within the community.

There was an attempt to make illegal some types of religious vilification in the Anti-Discrimination Act in a 1994 amendment. Section 20C of the principal Act rendered racial vilification unlawful. Vilification against a person or a group of persons on the grounds of the race of the person or persons was, and is, unlawful. As a result of the 1994 amendment, section 4 of the Act defines race as including ethno-religious origin. This was according to the second reading speech of the then Attorney General, Jim Hannaford, intended to include Sikhism, Judaism, and Islam. There was a clear attempt made, at least in relation to some religions, to make religious vilification unlawful. Hannaford said, "The effect of the amendment is to clarify that ethno-religious groups such as Jewish people, Muslims and Sikhs have access to the racial vilification and discrimination provisions of the Act." This formulation built upon a report to the other place by the Hon. James Samios in 1992.

In that sense, the present bill is an incremental increase on the earlier intent of those provisions to which I have just referred. In practice, section 20C has not worked in the way intended. Despite the crystal clarity of the second reading speech, there have been judicial doubts about what, if anything, "ethno-religious origins" mean. There have been decisions saying that Islam is most certainly not covered by the provision. There was section 20D as well, which was a criminal sanction. It was of no real utility and no-one was ever prosecuted under its provisions. It was replaced by section 93Z of the Crimes Act, which has been equally un-useful. The only two prosecutions of which I am aware under 93Z had to be annulled because the prosecuting police were seemingly unaware that they had to obtain the consent of the Director of Public Prosecutions before a prosecution commenced.

So, in this sense, the bill before the House is justified because it implements the original intention of the Parliament. Over and above that justification, however, there is a clear need for this bill. A convenient way to appreciate that is to look at some of the evidence and submissions to the Joint Select Committee on the Anti-Discrimination Amendment (Religious Freedom and Equality) Bill 2020. The New South Wales Jewish Board of Deputies Ltd, in a letter to that committee dated 27 October 2020, stated:

Firstly we recognise without qualification that members of several faith communities, and not only the Jewish community, currently face serious forms of harassment and vilification based on religion. With the exception of Jews and Sikhs there are no legal protections in New South Wales or Federally for those who are targeted by such behaviour unless there is an associated act of violence, or a threat or incitement of violence. The concerns of members of faith communities who currently lack such protection are in our view entirely justified.

The reference in that extract to protection of Jews and Sikhs is, of course, a reference to the definition of race as including ethno-religious origins to which I referred earlier. The Board of Deputies, relying on the advice of Mr Peter Wertheim, made interesting comments about the utilisation of chapter XI of the Western Australian Criminal Code Act 1913 as a possible model on which to build a criminal offence of religious vilification. I thank

them and Mr Wertheim, in particular, for their contributions on that. At present I am more attracted to what is a civil penalty regime rather than criminal sanctions. The thrust of the board's letter though is undoubtedly correct—many communities are facing serious forms of harassment and vilification based on religion with no effective legal protection.

These concerns were also raised in other material before the joint select committee. The Australian National Imams Council and some other signatories lodged a submission dated 21 August 2020. They pointed out that, while Jews and Sikhs were covered under the ethno-religious origin provision, Muslims were not. They referred to the Sonia Kruger case, known as *Ekeremawi v Nine Network Australia Pty Limited* [2019] NSW CATAD 29. The submission noted that the Australian Muslim community had been experiencing an increase in anti-Muslim sentiment. This view was echoed in the submission by Muslim Women Australia, which stated in part, "It is unquestionable in our submission that Australian society has become more intolerant of minorities, and religious minorities specifically, over the last 2 decades." It also cited data from the Scanlon Foundation *Mapping Social Cohesion* report in 2017 in support of the submission. It argued that "the issue of vilification of people of faith, generally, and the protections afforded against it, is of vital importance to our social future".

The Lebanese Muslim Association also urged that the provisions of section 20C of the Act be extended to religious vilification. The incidents propelling these arguments can be seen in the Islamophobia in Australia reports. There are two of these. The first covered the period 2016-17 and was released in 2019. The second covered the period 2017-18. The reports have been significantly based upon the Islamophobia Register. The reports are a collective effort and involve Charles Sturt University and the Islamic Services and Research Academy, among others. The register records a quite horrifying list of incidents directed at Muslim Australians. Physical attacks, such as the brutal assault of the 38-week pregnant woman wearing the hijab at Parramatta in November 2019, are of course simply criminal behaviour that go well beyond vilification. Having said that, hate speech is often argued to be a gateway or precursor to assault—that is, there is a link between vilification and violence. At the very least, vilification can provide the climate in which violence can occur.

One of the sobering conclusions from the Islamophobia reports is that incidents seem to frequently involve women as victims, often with children near them. Incidents are directed at women wearing the hijab, which so obviously marks them out as being of the Muslim faith. The majority of perpetrators are men. The majority of victims are women. Echoing evidence to the joint select committee to which I referred earlier, the register was started in 2014 because of growing anecdotal evidence showing a rise in Islamophobic incidents. Mariam Veiszadeh, who compiled the register, also made these points:

Where religious groups or individual believers are subjected to vilification, it can have deadly hurtful effects and create considerable fear within religious communities. It also feeds into a vicious cycle. Islamophobia, if left unchecked may serve to erect barriers to Muslim inclusion in Australia, increasing alienation especially among young Muslims. Not only would such a situation do grave damage to our social cohesion, it would simultaneously expand the pool of recruits for future radicalisation.

At a more basic level, the primary rationale for anti-vilification legislation—to use the language of a 1997 NSW Law Reform Commission report—is to protect the right of a person to live free from hostility and violence. The justification goes further than that. To quote directly from that report:

One of the aims of vilification legislation is to reduce the threats to social cohesion and reduce public disorder by encouraging and preserving tolerance. This may assist in reversing the inferior status of historically disadvantaged groups.

Additionally, a clear legislative expression that says that some behaviour is wrong can help to influence behaviour. There are a number of arguments I anticipate might be prosecuted against the proposed bill. One is that attitudes, opinions and views that we deplore are changed by debate and education, not by legislation. If that were a determinative argument, then there would not already be vilification provisions in the Anti-Discrimination Act; nor would ethno-religious origins have been inserted into the Act by the Liberal Government in 1994. Another potential criticism is that this is simply instituting a blasphemy law. As best I can tell, there has only ever been one prosecution for blasphemy in New South Wales—that against William Lorando Jones in 1871.

There is some doubt as to whether the offence still exists in this jurisdiction, despite the reference in section 574 of the Crimes Act. In any event, it related only to Christianity or, more likely, to Anglicanism or, more likely, to Anglicanism as it was at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth. But this bill does not propose to introduce a blasphemy law. This bill is not to protect religious beliefs but believers. This is not protection given in this bill to theology; the protection is provided to individuals. Any blasphemy criticism of the bill simply misrepresents what the bill does.

Another potential criticism is that it stifles free speech. The truth has always been that free speech, while an important civil right, has never been an absolute right. It is a question of determining where the boundaries are. As I have pointed out several times, the principal Act—the Anti-Discrimination Act—already has vilification provisions in it, and in 1994 an amendment was made to extend that to ethno-religious origins. So the right to free



speech has already had boundaries placed on it in this space. This bill proposes to move those boundaries incrementally.

The detail of the bill is quite straightforward. I say that because it is modelled very precisely on the provisions of the existing section 20C, which was the first of the vilification provisions in this legislation. The other vilification provisions in the Act were based upon this. This means that most of the bill is not novel. The phrase "religious belief or affiliation" in this bill is the same phrase used in section 93Z of the Crimes Act. So we are using the Government's drafting. The section 4 definition means that the phrase "religious belief or affiliation" includes holding or not holding a religious belief or view. The provisions in proposed new section 22AA about "public acts" are based upon the existing provision in section 4 of the Act.

Using the existing architecture of the Act means that unlawful behaviours can then be dealt with under the provisions of part 9 of the Act—that is, a complaint can be made to the President of the Anti-Discrimination Board and proceed in the way other vilification complaints do, most frequently by conciliation. There is also the option, in accordance with the Act, of a referral to the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal. There has been significant advocacy on this topic from community groups. I have referred to several of them already. I particularly wish to acknowledge here the advocacy of Bilal Rauf, who has played a quite important role in getting the bill to this stage. This is an important bill to fill a gap in the law. It tries to deliver on the Parliament's intention from 1994. It meets the request of advocates and will encourage a more tolerant society. I commend the bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

## **CANTERBURY PARK RACECOURSE (SALE AND REDEVELOPMENT MORATORIUM) BILL 2021**

### **Second Reading Debate**

**Debate resumed from 6 May 2021.**

**Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (10:32):** I make a contribution to debate on the Canterbury Park Racecourse (Sale and Redevelopment Moratorium) Bill 2021. In doing so, I note:

The object of this Bill is to provide for a 5 year moratorium on the sale or disposal of certain infrastructure at Canterbury Park Racecourse and the carrying out of certain redevelopment activities on Canterbury Park Racecourse land.

The member for Canterbury and I actually want very similar things for the future of Canterbury. I think this is an area where all members of this place are after very similar objectives. I had the opportunity, at the invitation of the member for Canterbury and the member for Summer Hill, to meet with members of the Canterbury Racecourse Action Group at Canterbury Park Racecourse last week. I thank all the members for their warm welcome and their genuine interest in informing me of their views about the future of the racecourse, what it means to them and the importance of open space in that community, which has seen a lot of growth and change in recent years. I have also had the opportunity to have conversations with Jamie Barkley from the Australian Turf Club [ATC], who is ultimately the owner of the site of the racecourse.

Like all of the above, particularly the member for Canterbury and the member for Summer Hill, I want to see great development outcomes in Canterbury. Like members of the Opposition, I understand how fatigued the Canterbury community must be as a result of poor development outcomes around Canterbury station. Like the member for Canterbury, I am appalled by the behaviours of the former Canterbury council, which, as the Independent Commission Against Corruption found, had made very questionable decisions that contributed to a poor urban design. I think that is very clear to see for anyone who visits that area. There are many beautiful parts of Canterbury but in some central areas there have been some poor urban outcomes as a result of poor local government decision-making. Like the member for Canterbury and the member for Summer Hill, I want to make sure that any future for Canterbury Park Racecourse includes as its centrepiece a new regional public park which, unlike at present, is accessible to the public 365 days of the year.

However, I do not believe the way to achieve this is with a bill to provide a five-year moratorium on the sale or disposal of racing-related infrastructure at Canterbury Park Racecourse and the carrying out of certain redevelopment activities. The bill as drafted is riddled with red tape and exclusions for the racecourse. It seeks to prohibit for five years the sale or disposal of racing-related infrastructure at the Canterbury Park Racecourse, which includes but is not limited to land, buildings or other facilities, including racetracks, training grounds, spectator or member stands, stabling areas and car parks owned by the Australian Turf Club at Canterbury.

But a quick search indicated that "racing-related infrastructure" refers to a whole lot of permanent and movable objects, including bits, chaps and bridles. The bill would have extraordinary reach on the ability of the Australian Turf Club to sell or dispose of anything, including some old boots, for example. The bill is

extraordinarily heavy handed in relation to its very broad drafting, which would severely constrain the private property rights of a private company. That is both extraordinarily heavy handed and inconsistent with other statements members of the Opposition have made in relation to limits, as they see it, on private property rights of owners in other areas of Sydney or New South Wales. The bill seeks to prohibit any redevelopment preventing race meetings at Canterbury Park Racecourse during the five-year moratorium. It seeks to identify residential development as a type of development that would be prohibited on land owned by the Australian Turf Club at Canterbury Park Racecourse during the moratorium and then provides for the introduction of regulations to guide the application of the above.

The Government is opposed to the bill for a range of reasons, which I will go through. There is a strategic opportunity for Canterbury Park Racecourse to deliver more and better regional scale open space in the Campsie and Canterbury area. This opportunity is being considered by Canterbury Bankstown council in collaboration with the Greater Sydney Commission and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment in the master-planning work for the area currently being undertaken. This bill would have the effect of stopping that regional park opportunity from being realised or work toward that aim being realised for another five years, which would exclude the community from use of this land, other than as prescribed for the purposes of horseracing, for another five years.

The proposed prohibition of residential development at Canterbury Park Racecourse is redundant, as this use is already prohibited under the site's existing land use zone in the Canterbury Local Environmental Plan 2012. The bill is seeking to prohibit something that is already prohibited. The bill would also unreasonably restrict development at Canterbury Park Racecourse for uses that are currently permissible under the Canterbury Local Environmental Plan 2012. This would include things like recreation facilities, community facilities and markets—things that I think the Canterbury community would be happy to consider in an appropriate democratic process. This bill would stop these things from even being considered, which I do not believe would be in the public interest.

For those reasons, among others—and that is not an exhaustive list—I believe the bill has a number of very significant unintended consequences. In prohibiting something that is already prohibited, it would constrain consideration of a whole range of community uses when I think its motivation is to look at opportunities for community uses. To that extent, the bill seems to provide for an outcome that is in direct contradiction of what I think is its purpose in the first place. The other concern I have is how we, as a Parliament, can consider supporting a bill that would shut off the beneficial use of land that not only is privately owned but also has such rich historical and community significance.

When I attended the racecourse with the member for Canterbury and the member for Summer Hill the community raised an issue with me in relation to the ownership of the site and whether the Australian Turf Club can be understood to be a private owner in a legal sense. That work has been commissioned, and I will get back to the member for Canterbury with an answer that she can communicate to the community. But my understanding at this point is that it is private land and I note, to that extent, that the bill makes no provision for compensation for limiting existing rights over the use of land. The bill proposes a moratorium of five years to prevent any beneficial use of that land without offering any compensation to the landowner, which I believe is also, from the point of view of public policy, a somewhat repugnant outcome.

The rich history of the site is certainly something to consider in light of understanding the importance of this land to the local community and to the broader community. Racing has been a very significant use of this site for a very long time. I understand that racing began on the site in 1884 when the present site was leased from the Jeffrey's estate as the headquarters of the Canterbury Park Race Club and gardens. A recreation park and a racetrack seven furlongs in circumference were laid out and a grandstand capable of holding 700 people was built. I make the point that this bill would also have the effect of limiting the ability to augment the racing facilities that are already there as it prohibits selling or disposing of any racing-related infrastructure. How on earth can one upgrade the existing grandstand, for example, if one cannot dispose of the existing infrastructure?

The bill basically sets the site in aspic, as it were, and it can only deteriorate if there is no capacity to either use it beneficially or restore or renovate it. Again, I think that would be a somewhat unintended consequence of this bill if it were to pass. The first race meeting on Saturday 19 January 1884 I understand was very successful, with the records telling us there was an attendance of approximately 3,000 people—attesting to its broad use within the community and the community's affection for it. I guess in one sense that, while private land, it has been used for a broader public purpose. For the first 11 years the racecourse and park were looked after by George Monk, a gardener of great talent whose specialty was growing pansies. He lived in the rustic Gothic gatehouse that had been built for Canterbury House near Unwin Street.

During the Second World War, Canterbury Park Racecourse was requisitioned by the Australian Army and from 1940 to 1944 it was used for a number of purposes, although race meetings continued to be held—again,

attesting to the broad range of uses to which the site has been put. On Saturday 18 April 1942 just after the start of the first race 16 American fighter planes buzzed the course, presumably to let Australians know that they had arrived to defend them from a possible Japanese invasion. The effect backfired because the sports-loving Aussies were annoyed—war or no war—at the races being disrupted. In 1943 the McKell Government—a Labor Government—legislated to discontinue "proprietary" licences to constitute the Sydney Turf Club to direct all profits from operations back into the sport through prize money and the development of facilities and amenities. In 1944 the club purchased Canterbury Park Racecourse and took possession on 1 January 1945.

Facilities have been much improved over the years, although I have already noted the effect that this bill would have in relation to the restoration of those facilities in the future. Canterbury Park Racecourse has been the scene of many innovations: the first photo-finish camera in 1946, the first mobile barrier stalls in Sydney in 1948, the first metropolitan racing success for a woman trainer in 1957, Sydney's first TAB meeting in 1964 and the first night racing meeting in Sydney in 1999. The Sydney Turf Club acquired Canterbury Bankstown Racecourse in the 1940s, established under the Sydney Turf Club Act. The club was the result of a merger of the two clubs in 2011, which is regulated by the Australian Jockey and Sydney Turf Clubs Merger Act 2010. Clause 23 (2) of the Act states:

The merged racing club may not sell or otherwise dispose of any of the necessary racing infrastructure of a racecourse to which this section applies within the 10-year period commencing on the merger finalisation day

The council's Local Strategic Planning Statement indicates that if the Australian Turf Club's operations cease the site will be investigated and master planned to determine an appropriate balance of uses including, importantly, open space and the creation of a new park. On 28 July last year the City of Canterbury Bankstown council resolved to commence a master plan process for the Canterbury racecourse and to seek the cooperation of New South Wales government agencies. Subsequent to that commitment, the council has established the Canterbury Racecourse Coordination Committee to develop a planning strategy for the site.

Earlier work had also been undertaken by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment as part of the planning for the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor, which identified the critical shortage of open space in the area—which is something I understand local residents are particularly passionate about. Certainly the location of the racecourse land adjacent to the riparian zone could lead all the way down to the riverfront, opening up opportunities for the activation of public space. I understand that this part of the river is in pretty poor condition and there could be incredible opportunities for restoration and rehabilitation of parkland and opening that up to the community. A master-planning process could really explore and liberate these opportunities. I am committed to ensuring that the future of this site results in the delivery of a large regional public park that would benefit all the Canterbury community.

I strongly believe a master plan for the site is the right way to achieve this outcome, while a five-year moratorium will achieve nothing—in fact, it will do the opposite because the existing momentum and pressure to deliver a great community outcome will stall and nothing at all will happen for five years. That is a shame because I believe there is a bipartisan vision to create a city within a park and that extraordinary opportunity to create a large public park would be delayed for another five years—another five years in which the community would be largely restricted from using the site. Of course, the development of the park will take some time to envisage and to co-create with the community. So, rather than just five years, it would be delayed for many years and kids born now may be deprived of the opportunity to use the parklands simply because, if the bill were agreed to, we would sit around doing nothing for five years.

I believe a master plan also presents the opportunity to have a great public urban design outcome. It presents an opportunity to look at how the site and Canterbury town centre can better connect with the river, and an opportunity to provide the community with a better and more pleasant recreational experience on the waterfront. One of the challenges of land-use planning in Sydney is the way in which this modernist approach is deemed to be about separate uses—to put fences around everything and say this bit is used for this thing and this bit is used for another thing, when what we know about great, integrated planning outcomes is that there is a need to blend and mix uses and better connect communities. While a large, activated private recreation site such as a racecourse with a big fence around it exists in that state, it can be of no further benefit to the community.

I believe the opportunity is there to remove that fence and to open up the site and provide great public access to what could be—with some vision, some master planning and some buy-in by the community—reimagined as the centrepiece of a big regional park for the community. The ideas of design theorists Rittel and Webber identified in 1973 that changing the urban environment can often be a wicked problem. In their original work, Rittel and Webber suggested that wicked problems are typically those pertaining to governmental, social, or policy planning. One example of a wicked problem that they talk about is urban renewal.

The urban renewal of Canterbury is a wicked problem due to the road that cuts through its heart and to questionable decisions of the former council. We are held hostage by previous decisions often made on the basis of ignorance. Canterbury Road has historically been known as a traffic sewer. It is not conducive to creating a great urban environment, and that can impact businesses, residents and visitors to the place. It is clear that the area also lacks large regional open space. The master planning process creates an opportunity to see whether we can redirect the town centre away from the busy road by turning it the other way around. Turning it towards the river and the racecourse will create the opportunity for a renewed town centre that has a more pedestrian-friendly environment and is leafy and green.

I remember some years ago reading a piece that said in the 1960s Sydney city discovered that it was built on a harbour, which had been seen as a great receptacle of waste and residue. Suddenly people woke up and realised that they were facing the wrong way and they should be looking towards the magnificent harbour that was placed at the heart of the city. That put Sydney on the pathway to being the great global city that it is today. I think the same opportunity exists for Canterbury to look to the riverfront to see the opportunities that emerge rather than looking at the road. Doing that will involve critically looking at the future of the racecourse. Postponing the discussion would be a shame and a missed opportunity when we can achieve things right now.

Rittel and Webber found that to solve wicked problems it is important not to approach them as though they were maths equations but to seek out collaboration, and that is exactly what the council, the Greater Sydney Commission and the department is looking to do through the master planning process. Susan Fainstein's theory of the just city also provides a useful framework for conceptualising any future changes to the use of Canterbury Park Racecourse. The just city theory tells us that planning and land use are powerful tools in promoting equity, democracy and diversity. In the case of Canterbury Park, we have a heavily involved local community with strong views about the future planning of their local area and the rich tapestry of Indigenous and other communities' histories. That tapestry of heritage could be built upon by reimagining what the racecourse could be used for.

This is a part of Greater Sydney that features high social and cultural diversity, and mixed socio-economic status and opportunities, but suffers from below-average levels of access to green open space. That is what the racecourse, if reimagined, could provide. Unlike planning processes past in New South Wales that have overridden local democracy and participation, we have an ideal planning model that brings together government, council, landowners and the local community to consider and deliberate over the future nature of Canterbury Park. A moratorium will not help that process; it will only hinder it. It will only delay the realisation of what could be some terrific community outcomes. Although these groups come to the planning process with diverse interests and resources, a significant benefit can come to everybody through land use change. There will be a genuine win-win outcome if this process is allowed to proceed. Should the ATC choose to proceed and develop the land—and that is not determined, as I understand it, at this stage—redevelopment of the Canterbury Park site could result in significantly increased accessible public open space and an improved, renaturalised frontage to Cooks River. That is the objective that we really want to achieve.

Using the master planning process to turn Canterbury town centre from the road to the river also reminds me of a new theory emerging in urban design. The principles of transit-oriented design, or TOD, have been well developed since the 1990s, and the work of Peter Calthorpe is valid. There is also an alternative theory emerging that I have become interested in due to my role as public spaces Minister—that is, greenspace-oriented design, or GOD for short. GOD is about ensuring that urban renewal correlates with substantial upgraded public green spaces or parks that are also well serviced by public transport. They are green led rather than transport led, recognising that both are important. Greenspace-oriented development builds upon the now well-recognised array of benefits of green space for urban dwellers. Most importantly, it underpins approaches to making our cities more sustainable and livable. Imagine if we could look at transforming Canterbury racecourse into a regional, publicly accessible park should the Australian Turf Club choose to one day leave the site. Imagine if we could re-wild the racecourse and introduce more landscaping, trees and critical habitat for wildlife in the city in a reimagined, reactivated space.

As the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, I am committed to ensuring that open spaces continue to grow, which I believe is an aspiration shared by members opposite and by all members of this place. This Government has put its money where its rhetoric is and has been investing record amounts of funding in public spaces in communities right across New South Wales. The consideration of open space is key in supporting the delivery of the Greener Public Spaces Premier's Priority to boost accessibility and walkability to quality green open and public spaces from homes by 10 per cent in urban areas across New South Wales by 2023, benefiting over half a million citizens. The Premier has set this priority because of the many benefits that result from great public spaces, including creating walkable, active and connected spaces for the community to enjoy.

Green spaces promote wellbeing by enhancing culture and recreation opportunities for the community. They also bring people together by creating welcoming, inclusive and diverse spaces for the community and they provide vital shade that reduces ambient temperatures. They improve our air quality by removing fine particles

from the air and they increase the biodiversity of our cities by extending habitat for animals and birds. Green spaces help us adapt to the impacts of climate change, including the urban heat island effect, and they foster a strong sense of identity, character and attachment to place. They also ensure that places are safe by activating them. It is important to recognise that parks cannot sit in isolation from their community; they must be integrated into the fabric of an area so people have the opportunity to live and work and recreate in and close to parks. Those other uses are just as important as activating parkland.

To support the delivery of these incredible outcomes, council has invited the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to participate in the committee to develop the master plan and the department has accepted council's invitation. The department can bring guidance to the committee, having delivered a series of successful programs across the State and unlocked valuable open space for the people of New South Wales. The sorts of outcomes the department has been able to achieve demonstrate its expertise and just what it can do by being involved in the master planning process. The programs include the \$15 million Streets as Shared Spaces Program through which grants of up to \$1 million were provided to eligible councils for open space projects, such as widening footpaths and cycle lanes and creating pop-up parks.

Canterbury Bankstown council itself received \$1 million in funding for its Streets as Rooms for Living: Micro Rooms project, which will see up to 10 micro rooms set up in town centres across the City of Canterbury Bankstown. While not all 10 locations have been confirmed as yet, I understand that nearby Campsie town centre will have a micro room pop up soon. Each micro room will be centred around a specific theme, which extends the idea of home into the public domain that I was speaking about earlier. They will create opportunities that will speak to the changing nature of our lifestyles and our interaction with and understanding of streets as public spaces so we will see them more as seamless connections with the living and working spaces around them. Micro rooms will convert car-dominated streets into spaces for people. They will activate our town centres to support businesses recovering from the pandemic. Canterbury Bankstown council also benefited from the \$15 million Your High Street Program.

We have a strong record of working with council, and that is exactly what we seek to achieve by participating in the master plan for Canterbury racecourse. An amount of \$1 million will go to nearby Haldon Street in Lakemba for footpath widening, seating, tree planting and artwork. I acknowledge Mayor of Canterbury Bankstown Khal Asfour. I also acknowledge the great advocacy of the member for Lakemba for increased public space and open space outcomes for his community. His is another area that has historically not benefited from access to the type of open space about which people from other parts of Sydney, including my own community at Pittwater, have long been justly proud. We want to make sure that those opportunities are spread right across the city because we know that access to public open space can improve people's physical and mental health and wellbeing. That access can have great social benefits by connecting diverse communities and creating a context where people from different backgrounds can come together and better understand each other. It can also have great economic outcomes by activating our streetscapes and providing more opportunities for people to trade in goods and services and ideas.

The Mayor of the City of Canterbury Bankstown, Khal Asfour, said that the street, which usually plays host to the Ramadan night markets, was definitely in need of some TLC. He said, "It is the perfect street to see if we can improve the amenity for our community." I am delighted that the new Canterbury Bankstown council has been so successful in securing funding for the community in very competitive programs. That speaks to how those bigger councils, with the benefits of economy of scale, are so well placed to put forward articulate, strategic and well-resourced programs for interventions that we know will produce great public outcomes. It is a testament to the council's urban design team and their passion for delivering great public spaces for the community.

The NSW Public Spaces Legacy Program is another example of the Government's commitment to delivering great public spaces for the community. The program, which announced 100 projects last week, will deliver a legacy of safe, quality public and open spaces. There is funding for planning, design, construction and land acquisitions for new and existing public open space for up to 68 eligible councils across New South Wales. As part of the program Canterbury Bankstown council received \$5.5 million to deliver stage one of the Paul Keating Park Master Plan. That will provide enhanced open space and support amenity including enhanced tree coverage, integrated seating, improved connections and a destination place based in the Bankstown CBD. Those are just some examples of how collaboration between government, council, community and landowners can achieve great outcomes. A moratorium would actually stop those sorts of collaborations from happening. It would stop that creativity and that realisation of what the community is aspiring to achieve.

Another example, through the Government's Metropolitan Greenspace Program, will also provide council with \$200,000 to prepare the Cooks River open space corridor, recognising the need for those linear parks to join those big regional parks together so that people can spill out. That will also allow us to activate surrounding land areas with housing and opportunities for new shops, which will create new jobs. Parks will be the centrepiece of

those communities. I have full faith that the master plan committee will deliver on that agenda and vision for a park in a city, alongside guidance provided by the department and the expertise of the public spaces team, which is led by the irrepressible Dr Caroline Butler-Bowdon. With that approach the community will benefit from the strategic opportunity for Canterbury Park Racecourse to deliver more and better regional-scale open space in the Campsie and Canterbury area. That will be a driving factor in the council's master planning work.

I acknowledge the role the former NSW Government Architect, Peter Poulet, is playing with the Greater Sydney Commission in guiding that master planning work. Frankly, one could not ask for someone more visionary or exciting to deliver great urban outcomes. Quite honestly, he is someone who would have my full confidence in leading a groundbreaking and city-shaping piece of work like that. That is why the department is so excited to be involved on that coordination committee. It must be noted that the council is leading the master plan process to help inform the best outcome at the site for the community. That is why the committee has been established: In order to incorporate the best expertise in the future of the racecourse for the local community.

Opportunities to reorient the planning system and understand the value and investment of public space is paramount to ensuring that local communities continue to thrive. A five-year moratorium also means a five-year stalemate for the site, as the bill is also opposed to allowing the master planning for the site to continue. Slapping a five-year moratorium on a privately owned piece of land not only sets a terrible precedent for all other private landowners across the State, but in this case it will also delay the master planning process that was decided by a democratically elected council.

A draft master plan for Canterbury Park Racecourse is expected to be reported to council in just a few short months. The community will also have an opportunity to have its say when it goes on public exhibition later this year. That democratic process should continue in order to get outcomes and so that the community can have its say as to the shape of that project, informed as it is by world-class architecture and planning expertise. There is little point pre-empting the council's draft master plan. The bill would effectively prohibit and shut down any action to release or use the racecourse for the long-term good of the community. If that is ultimately the outcome that we seek to achieve, if that is ultimately the core of what the bill is all about—to reimagine a site that could be the centrepiece for the Canterbury community for the reasons outlined in my contribution—then I believe the bill does precisely the opposite of that. Those are the reasons why the Government will not be supporting the bill.

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (11:04):** I am proud to contribute to debate on the Canterbury Park Racecourse (Sale and Redevelopment Moratorium) Bill 2021. I thank the member for Canterbury for bringing it to the Parliament and I thank the member for Strathfield for her support. The bill seeks to extend the moratorium on the sale or disposal of infrastructure at Canterbury Park Racecourse for another five years, with the objective of halting residential redevelopment on the site while a holistic master plan is being undertaken by council. The initial 10-year moratorium on selling or disposing of racing assets was first implemented in 2011 with the merger of the Sydney Turf Club and the Australian Jockey Club. It was designed to shore up the viability of the newly merged Australian Turf Club and to protect Sydney's racecourses from encroaching development. Ten years later and that threat is stronger than ever.

Extending the moratorium will allow the current master plan process for the site to continue. We reject the notion the planning Minister put this morning that the moratorium will halt the process. Indeed, the process began while the former moratorium was in place. We want that to continue without the threat of development to give the local community confidence that their voice, not that of developers, will be heard in guiding the future of that incredibly important site for the inner west. Communities surrounding the racecourse have borne the brunt of overdevelopment over the past decade. High-rise apartments now stretch the length of Canterbury Road. As we know, much of that development has been subject to poor planning and dodgy development deals, frankly with despicable behaviour from people across the political spectrum—make no bones about it, there has been some dodgy development.

Amid the ever-growing number of apartments is an incredible oasis: 35 hectares of precious open green space that to date has been protected. Horseracing has been a fixture at the site since the 1840s. The racecourse was formally constituted in 1871 and was zoned as recreational land. It was listed on the State Heritage Register in 1955 and was recognised for its importance to horseracing and to the communities that surround it. Night racing began at the site in 1999 and that has only grown in popularity. Friday nights are now filled with family entertainment, night food markets, live music and, of course, racing. The Australian Turf Club owns and operates the site. However it is no secret that the future of horseracing at the site is an open question.

Local residents are rightly concerned that the land will be sold off bit by bit for high-rise residential development, which would have a disastrous impact on adjoining suburbs including Ashbury in my electorate. Ashbury is a beautiful heritage suburb of about 3,500 people. Although it is small, it speaks with a loud and determined voice, particularly when threatened by development that seeks to undermine the heritage character of that close-knit community. I especially acknowledge the persistence and tenacity of the Ashbury Community

Group and the Canterbury Racecourse Action Group, or CRAG, for working effectively to inform and organise local residents about proposals for the site.

I stress that those groups and local residents on the whole are not anti-development, but they demand proper planning processes that are transparent, fair and conducted in full consultation with the community. That is hardly a big ask. They understand that the activities currently undertaken at the racecourse may have a limited future and that there may be scope for some residential development at the site so long as it is accompanied by a significant commitment to public infrastructure and open green space. But they will not accept developer-driven proposals that circumvent the planning process or that come via whole-scale rezonings like that proposed by the State Government in its Sydenham to Bankstown Urban Renewal Corridor Strategy, which lists the racecourse as a priority precinct.

So much of the development residents have seen in their communities has a cloud hanging over it, with multiple ICAC investigations exposing the lengths to which dodgy councillors and politicians have gone to make a buck in their backyard. Residents have had a gutful, and they refuse to be ignored any longer. We are thankful that the Canterbury Bankstown council and its mayor have listened to residents and understand that any change at the racecourse site must be considered holistically and informed by community voices. The council has initiated a master-planning process to guide future planning for the site and has established a Canterbury Racecourse Coordination Committee that includes a community voice panel made up of local residents.

The committee is chaired by the Greater Sydney Commission's respected Central City and South District Commissioner, Mr Peter Poulet, and I had the pleasure of speaking with him and others about this process. There is concern in the community, however, that representatives on this committee are prevented from discussing their deliberations publicly. That undermines public confidence in the process and I ask the Minister to look into this aspect, because the community needs confidence. The publishing of a timetable for the process would increase confidence and provide further transparency.

Master planning of the site is broadly supported, as we have heard, by the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. I thank the Minister for visiting the site with the member for Canterbury and me as well as many local residents, particularly the activists within CRAG. In that meeting residents raised a number of questions and concerns with the Minister, including issues around who owns the land. It is an ongoing issue of debate and I thank the Minister for indicating that he is looking into those matters. Residents also demanded that parcels of the land be included in the master-planning process. We want to ensure this is holistic. They also raised important questions about the transparency of the process.

Importantly, residents asked the Minister to investigate the creation of inner west parkland at the site. I believe cooperation between State and Federal governments here is critical and provides a significant opportunity. I thank the Minister for making the time to meet with local residents. But one of the strongest signals we can send to residents—and frankly to developers—is to pass the bill before the Parliament today. It does not halt the master-planning process—indeed, that process began while the moratorium was in place—but it provides confidence to the community. If there is broad support for a master-planning process, why must we extend the moratorium on the sale or disposal of infrastructure at Canterbury Park Racecourse?

The short answer is we need to give the community confidence. We need to guarantee that the Australian Turf Club cannot sell off the land, piece by piece, and we need to guarantee that developers cannot throw up badly designed and poorly constructed high-rise towers. In 2017 the Australian Turf Club submitted a development application to amend the permitted uses of the area 6 car park on Princess Street. In effect, the application sought to deem the car park as surplus to the needs of night racing at the racecourse, thereby allowing it to be offered for sale. At the same time, the Australian Turf Club and Mirvac signed a deal to develop surplus land at the site, and the community was horrified when Mirvac began advertising the partnership in early 2018.

The deal hearkened back to similar proposals put forward by Mirvac for towers of 20-plus storeys along Carrington Road in Marrickville in my electorate. It was rightly met with strident opposition by local residents, who declared our suburb was called Marrickville not "Mircav-ville". The sheer audacity of the proposals was breathtaking, particularly given that they were announced in glossy advertisements before any planning approval had been granted or any community consultation had been undertaken. The local mayor said:

The entire racecourse isn't even zoned to allow for residential housing, so it's outrageous a developer can openly start to market a housing development which has not even been lodged with council, let alone approved.

It is unsurprising that the community is sceptical. It is just another example of the outrageous developer-driven overreach that has come to be the norm in our community, and this bill seeks to protect residents from that. Earlier this year, in the height of summer when nobody was paying attention, the application to declare the area 6 car park as surplus land was back—unsurprisingly, right as the existing moratorium expired.

Residents were rightly appalled and saw the application for what it was: an attempt to carve off a piece of the racecourse for high-rise development right as the council's master-planning process was due to get underway. The member for Canterbury, the member for Strathfield and I immediately wrote to the Australian Turf Club and Canterbury Bankstown council asking that the application be withdrawn. Thousands of residents joined us and signed petitions echoing calls for the master-planning process to be allowed to continue without the threat of piecemeal development at the site. [*Extension of time*]

I again acknowledge the extraordinary passion and hard work of the Canterbury Racecourse Action Group and Ashbury Community Group, both of which immediately activated their members to put pressure on the club. Thankfully, the Australian Turf Club succumbed to that community pressure and withdrew its application. While this is a huge win and source of relief for the local community, it is by no means a guarantee that there will be no further overreach by developers or threats to the master-planning process. In so many ways the damage has already been done, with the application sowing confusion and undermining community confidence in the master-planning process for the site.

The strongest way to reaffirm community confidence and protect the master-planning process is to support the bill and extend the moratorium. I make no apology that I would like to see open recreational green space at the heart of any change to this site. Canterbury and the inner west have among the lowest ratios of open space in the city, and residents are crying out for open spaces and parks. We need inner west parkland. We have seen during the COVID-19 pandemic just how important quality open green space is for local communities, especially those like Canterbury that have been subject to decades of overdevelopment. I note that the Federal member for Watson, Tony Burke, has called for the site to be retained as recreational open space, and I add my voice to calls for the racecourse site to be preserved as a landmark to rival Central Park.

Whatever the future of the site, change must come only through fair, transparent and holistic planning processes driven by local residents and not developers. I call on the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and all members opposite to do the right thing by residents and support this bill, to give the community the confidence to work together to achieve a much-needed grand open space for inner west residents.

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (11:16):** It is a pleasure to make a very short contribution in relation to the Canterbury Park Racecourse (Sale and Redevelopment Moratorium) Bill 2021. The bill proposes to place a five-year moratorium on the sale or disposal of racing-related infrastructure at Canterbury Park Racecourse and the carrying out of certain redevelopment activities, as well as to prohibit any further development—specifically residential development—during the moratorium period. By way of background, the bill was introduced by the member for Bankstown on 25 March. Prior to my contribution today we heard from the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and the member for Summer Hill, who both quite eloquently outlined the history of the Canterbury Park Racecourse.

That brings us to the heart of why it is important that we all get this right. This is a valuable piece of the city and its future certainly is very much in the heart of all members in this House. As the Minister said quite eloquently, members on this side of the House oppose the bill because we disagree with the process. I oppose the bill introduced by the member for Canterbury. I start by setting out the planning context in which the issues of the Canterbury Park Racecourse exist. The racecourse land is zoned as RE2 Private Recreation under the Canterbury Local Environmental Plan 2012. The bill would unreasonably restrict the carrying out of development at the Canterbury Park Racecourse for uses that are currently permissible under the Canterbury Local Environmental Plan 2012. That includes open space, outdoor recreation facilities, art galleries and even museums.

The proposed prohibition on residential development at Canterbury Park Racecourse is also redundant as that is a prohibited use under the site's existing land-use zone in the Canterbury Local Environmental Plan 2012. Any proposed change to the permissible uses on the site would be subject to the statutory plan-making process and extensive public consultation in accordance with the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. A proposed land-use change would also require a strategic merit assessment, having regard to the Greater Sydney Commission's South District Plan and Canterbury Bankstown Council's local strategic planning statement *Connective City 2036*. There is no evidence that this analysis has been undertaken to inform this bill. It is not appropriate for this private member's bill to usurp long-established statutory functions of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. Limiting the sale or transfer of the land is unreasonable, given that the previous moratorium has expired.

The sale or disposal of the land was prohibited for 10 years from the commencement of the Australian Jockey and Sydney Turf Clubs Merger Act 2010. The prohibition was put in place at the time that the Australian Jockey Club and the Sydney Turf Club were merged. The moratorium under the Act expired on 7 February 2021. This Government values the importance of public spaces and what they mean to local communities. The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces spoke about that at length. That is why we have legislated that we need to cherish and create more great public spaces. To impose restrictions on land uses on the site through this bill would



undermine the democratic process already underway to allow Canterbury Bankstown council to master plan the site—a democratic process that is in place so members of the community can have their say. The bill undermines that process and stalls anything from happening on the site, all so the member for Canterbury can make a political point against her local council.

I highlight the opportunity the council and community now have in planning for the future of Canterbury racecourse. The Government's new approach to precincts also promotes stronger collaboration with councils, enabling them to lead precinct investigations where they are best placed to finalise the investigations quickly and consistently with strategic plans. This is part of the Government's work to centre the planning system around people, places, public spaces and the environment, putting greater responsibility for planning in the hands of councils and, importantly, local communities. As part of this new approach to precincts, Canterbury Bankstown council has been empowered to plan for its local area because it knows its community best. This leads to the work the council is currently undertaking throughout its master planning process.

On 28 July 2020 the City of Canterbury Bankstown council resolved to commence a master plan process for the Canterbury racecourse and to seek the cooperation of government agencies. Subsequent to that commitment, the council has established the Canterbury Racecourse Coordination Committee to develop a planning strategy for the site, including receiving feedback and advice from the department. It is because of this new approach to planning that councils are able to better deliver on community expectations in their local areas. In order to continue that commitment, the Government opposes this bill that may restrict any potential benefits the site could deliver back to the community.

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (11:22):** I thank my colleague the member for Canterbury for bringing forward the important Canterbury Park Racecourse (Sale and Redevelopment Moratorium) Bill 2021. Canterbury Park has been a fixture in Sydney racing for well over a century. Racing commenced on the site—or in Canterbury at least—in 1884. As the shadow Minister with responsibility for racing, I am open to saying that I do not want to see racing cease at the site. It seems everybody is looking towards a rosy future when there is no more horseracing at Canterbury, but I do not think that is the most rosy or wonderful outcome that could occur. If racing does move off the site then of course I would like it made into public parkland and have an end put to the disgraceful planning processes that have gone on in the Canterbury area. We have seen that play out at ICAC. Corruption has led to huge unit blocks all along Canterbury Road.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Aldi bags full of cash.

**Ms JULIA FINN:** Corruption was on both sides of the chamber at Canterbury council, and facilitated by Daryl Maguire, who sat on the other side of this Chamber until not that long ago.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services will come to order. The member for Granville will direct her comments through the Chair. The member for Granville has the call.

**Ms JULIA FINN:** As we recently saw in ICAC's final report on corruption at the former Canterbury council, both sides of the chamber were involved in facilitating the building of giant unit blocks all along the Canterbury Road corridor, along with the former Liberal member for Wagga Wagga, who strangely spent more time trying to fix things in the Canterbury area than in his own electorate. That means that we need a five-year moratorium before we figure out how planning can best be adjusted. The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces spoke in high-level theoretical ways about how to build beautiful, green-oriented design. He was talking as though there is nothing in Canterbury—no buildings, no racecourse and no people. He referred to a greenspace-oriented design, or GOD. But what we are talking about is demonic overdevelopment, not God. We need to see how bad things get when these buildings are built and develop a master plan that compensates for the corrupt actions of the former Canterbury council.

I return to my concerns about what we might lose in racing and what has occurred in recent years. Night racing is a fixture at Canterbury Park. It commenced in 1999 and the merger bill that this Parliament considered under the former Labor Government came into effect in 2011, with a 10-year moratorium on the sale of land. It sought to placate the concerns of people in Rosehill where I live, people in Canterbury and people all over Sydney that they might lose their beloved racecourses and get more units put in their place. It delivered a strategic plan for Sydney racing that led each of the four racecourses to develop its own identity. Canterbury is known for night racing. Royal Randwick is beautiful and thriving. Rosehill, which is just down the road from my house, is also thriving and has become a seven-day-a-week events facility. It still hosts the Golden Slipper, which everyone feared we would lose. Warwick Farm has a hotel development and now hosts the yearling sales. The plan has given each of those facilities its own unique identity.

It is about time that the Government developed a new strategic plan for Sydney racing so we do not lose racecourses and so that development pressures are not seen as being inevitable. We can come up with things that are better and better for the industry. There are 27,000 people working in the industry in New South Wales, and 17,000 of them work in regional New South Wales. There have been huge changes in racing in the past 10 years. Thankfully, through wagering reforms, some of the money that had been lost to online wagering is now being returned. We have seen huge increases in prize money and we have The Everest and The Kosciuszko. Even across country New South Wales prizemoney is increasing. There is no reason to assume that racing will be leaving Canterbury except that people want to put more ghastly units there.

Thoroughbred racing in New South Wales contributes almost \$3.6 billion to our economy. It is a substantial generator of investment and jobs, and a big part of that is Canterbury Park. It held 22 race meetings in 2019-20, the last year that was not affected by COVID restrictions. Almost 54,000 people went to the night races. It is really popular, and I do not want to see it go in a hurry. Some people might argue that selling off one car park will not be an impediment to attendance at the races and they might be right, but a piecemeal approach is not what is needed. I am glad that the Australian Turf Club has removed the development application for the car park. There are other complicating factors. Canterbury racecourse commenced as a private Act, not one of the usual Acts that we have here. The Canterbury Park Racecourse Company Limited was established in 1911 by an enabling Act, and that Act has not been repealed. It is an Act that sets up the current boundaries of the racecourse. The long title says it is:

An Act to enable the Canterbury Park Racecourse Company, Limited, to close certain streets in the municipality of Canterbury, being James-street and Arthur-street, and portion of a certain street in the said municipality, being a proportion of Frederick-street, and in lieu thereof to dedicate for the use and for the purpose of public roads or streets certain pieces or parcels of land in the municipality of Canterbury aforesaid; and for other purposes consequent thereon or incidental thereto.

A private Act is a statute exclusively for the settlement of private and personal interests, of which courts do not take judicial notice—unlike the Acts that we usually pass in this place. That Act established the current boundaries, which would have been incurred upon by selling off the car park. I am a strong supporter of racing throughout New South Wales and I want to see racing continue at Canterbury. If it does move away then I want to see the space still enjoyed by the general public. It is not closed off from the public at the moment; 54,000 people per year go to the races there and they really enjoy the facilities.

There is a need for more day-to-day, public open space in the area—a need made far worse by the corruption we saw play out at Canterbury council and supported by Daryl Maguire. We need good planning, and this moratorium gives time for good planning that will allow for fallout from all the development approvals that should never have been granted. We will see what we are left with, what capacity is there and how desperate the need is for livable space. We are not working off a blank canvas, as the planning Minister implied. I know that theoretical town planners write everything like it is 1946 in Coventry, when the whole place had been bombed and they could start from scratch. This is a community; people live there and there are things about the community and those spaces that they really like. That is the problem with town planners: They like to treat everything as year zero and never think there is anything about a place that someone might like and want to keep. I want to keep the racing at Canterbury racecourse.

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (11:31):** I speak against the Canterbury Park Racecourse (Sale and Redevelopment Moratorium) Bill 2021. Through the bill, the Opposition proposes a new five-year moratorium on the sale or disposal of racing infrastructure at Canterbury Park Racecourse and a prohibition on development that would prevent the use of Canterbury Park for racing. The restrictions proposed under the bill are not only redundant but also unnecessarily burdensome and unreasonable, as they seek to usurp the long-established statutory functions of transparent planning processes and hinder the democratic voice of the community. The bill was introduced by the member for Canterbury on 25 March this year and its proposed scope places onerous restrictions on businesses and the community. The land is currently owned by the Australian Turf Club [ATC] and is regulated by the Australian Jockey and Sydney Turf Clubs Merger Act 2010, which contains a clause that states:

The merged racing club may not sell or otherwise dispose of any of the necessary racing infrastructure of a racecourse to which this section applies within the 10-year period commencing on the merger finalisation day.

City of Canterbury Bankstown council's Local Strategic Planning Statement indicates that if Australian Turf Club operations cease, the site will be investigated and master planned to determine an appropriate balance of uses, including open space and creation of a new regional park. On 28 July 2020, City of Canterbury Bankstown council resolved to commence a master plan. A draft master plan for Canterbury Park Racecourse is expected to be reported to council in the second half of this year. Any change in use of the Canterbury Park Racecourse cannot occur until a master plan has been approved, the land is rezoned and there has been consultation with the community, Racing NSW and ATC members.

The racecourse land is zoned RE2 – Private Recreation under the Canterbury Local Environmental Plan 2012. The bill proposes to restrict the carrying out of development at Canterbury Park Racecourse for uses that are currently permissible under the Act, including plans for open space, outdoor recreation facilities, art galleries and museums. The bill would disrupt the master-planning process for another five years and prevent the realisation of regional open space for public use by the community. Despite being presently permissible under the current framework, the bill would restrict ideas for future development from ever being considered and consequently unfairly prohibit growth within the community.

I turn to considerations around the Australian Turf Club. A previous 10-year moratorium on the sale or disposal of any necessary racing infrastructure at Canterbury Park Racecourse was included in the Australian Jockey and Sydney Turf Clubs Merger Act 2010—legislation led by those opposite when in government. As the member for Wyong stated at the time on behalf of the then Minister:

This is a safeguard that has been included at the explicit request of the AJC, the STC and Racing NSW to demonstrate that there is no intention to resort to a fire sale of land.

The original moratorium expired in February 2021. The ongoing use of Canterbury Park Racecourse is a matter for the Australian Turf Club, as owners of the land, and its members subject to legislative requirements and local and State planning controls. As a registered club, the ATC is also subject to the requirements of the Registered Clubs Act 1976, which restricts the disposal of registered club core property, including by requiring the approval of a majority of club members. The Government cannot support a bill that seeks to inhibit the use and development opportunities of the racecourse. There is no need to push through legislation to extend what is effectively a ban on the use of the site as superior, enhanced public space that can be appropriately assessed through the planning system. According to the ATC's *2020 Annual Report*, its core property includes:

... the premises owned or occupied by the Company on Canterbury Park Racecourse comprising facilities, provided by the Company for the raceday use of members and their guests.

In the years since the merger between the Sydney Turf Club and the Australian Jockey Club, the ATC has been a success story, creating exciting new racing and non-racing events that have generated thousands of jobs and contributed over \$682 million to the New South Wales economy each year. A further five-year moratorium on any potential sale of Canterbury Park Racecourse land is not necessary and would set an undesirable precedent.

Why is the Opposition pushing for the bill? A master-planning process is already underway with City of Canterbury Bankstown council and relevant New South Wales Government authorities, with council stating that it will not allow spot rezoning or development at Canterbury Park Racecourse while a master-planning process involving community consultation is underway. The bill represents a concerning precedent where the future uses of privately owned land would be governed not by a transparent planning process under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 but by a standalone piece of legislation made by the Parliament. At present, the land is zoned for private recreation under the Canterbury Local Environmental Plan 2012, which prohibits residential and most commercial and retail development. Should the ATC choose to develop the site, the only way it can do so is through a transparent process with council, government and the local community, and that is a much fairer process than a blunt prohibition under an Act of Parliament.

In July 2020 the council committed to form the Canterbury Racecourse Coordination Committee, to be chaired by Greater Sydney Commission Central City and South District Commissioner Peter Poulet, and including the ATC and the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. The coordination committee has been established to agree on a way forward to deliver a clear vision for the racecourse lands in the event the ATC ceases to use the land for horseracing and to support the council's master planning process as part of the broader Canterbury local centre work. The ATC has been a willing and positive participant in the master planning process. I note that the coordination committee will also be informed by a community voice panel, which has been formally engaged in the process. The coordination committee and the community voice panel are due to report to council in mid-2021 with a preferred option for the site.

I turn now to the council master-planning process. As we know, the council is in the process of master planning the area, incorporating feedback from the local community. I stress that the council is an independent body, responsible for determining the future of the site in the best interests of its local community. That approach is why the department has significantly changed the way precinct planning is delivered across New South Wales in its new approach to precincts, to ensure that local councils are better able to deliver land, infrastructure and open spaces to their local community. However, with the department's involvement in the committee, council and community will benefit from the expertise and guidance that the Government will bring to the future use of the racecourse. There is no need to stifle the already considerable work going into the draft master plan only to have it delayed for half a decade. I emphasise that the future of the racecourse is being incorporated into council's master planning process as we have heard, which includes feedback from the community. However, it needs to

be said that the decision on the future of the racecourse ultimately lies with the ATC and Racing NSW within the confines of local and State planning controls. [*Extension of time*]

I turn now to the master planning of the ATC. It is important that we allow the master-planning process to deliver for this site, rather than restrict and prohibit development under onerous legislation. The Opposition must stop adding to the complexity of something that is quite clearly and responsibly protected under New South Wales legislation. Should the bill be passed, there is no doubt that it would represent a significant risk to the confidence of doing business in New South Wales, hindering the certainty and transparency of regular planning processes. There are checks and balances to ensure that such a prized and significant site will not be subject to the whim of an elite few. The controls are steadfast and protected under the ATC legislation.

At its core the bill is redundant. The ATC will not be in a position to make any decisions on the future of Canterbury racecourse until a master plan has been approved, the land is rezoned and there has been consultation with the community, Racing NSW and ATC members. This is an extremely heavy-handed and poorly drafted bill that will only place unnecessary burdens on businesses and the democratic say of the community. On the balance of the current and responsible framework in place in comparison with the clear deficiencies of the Opposition's restrictive and unreasonable bill, the Government does not support the Canterbury Park Racecourse (Sale and Redevelopment Moratorium) Bill 2021.

**Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield) (11:43):** I make a short contribution to debate on the Canterbury Park Racecourse (Sale and Redevelopment Moratorium) Bill 2021. I thank the member for Canterbury for bringing the bill to the House, and I acknowledge the member for Summer Hill. Although the Canterbury racecourse is in the Canterbury electorate, there is an unusual confluence of the electorates of Summer Hill, Canterbury and Strathfield that involves the Canterbury and Ashbury communities. The three of us have worked well together to support the local community. The community group Canterbury Racecourse Action Group [CRAG] has done a terrific job in highlighting the issues and making sure that we as MPs are kept informed and are able to meet the requirements that they would like us to. The bill is one of those. I also acknowledge the Federal member, Tony Burke, who has also been terrific. State and Federal MPs are working together and the bill is part of that.

To understand why the bill is necessary, though, we have to look at the importance of the Canterbury racecourse to the local community. It has been in operation since the 1850s continually as a racecourse, although it was also a speedway, a golf course and zoo. It has been a racecourse and it is much loved. Even when night racing was introduced in the 1990s and there was some concern from the community about noise and congestion and how that would play out, the community was able to work through that with the local council and achieve something that was of benefit to the racecourse and residents. It is a shame that the situation we are in now has not been able to be worked through until this point. As the member for Canterbury and the member for Summer Hill have pointed out, we have now reached a point where there is some belief that there is a willingness to consult with the community on this and get a good outcome for the community.

We know that the Australian Turf Club [ATC] needs to provide racing, but we also want to make sure that the community is taken on this journey and that an open space site like this, which I think is about 35 hectares, is protected to get the best possible outcome in the future. The member for Canterbury has outlined some of the bad developments that have occurred in her area—and we know how that manifested itself in the Independent Commission Against Corruption. We do not want to see that happen on this prime recreation space. Whatever the future of this space holds, it must be done in conjunction with the community to achieve an outcome that recognises our lack of green space and the opportunities that this site provides. The bill is about continuing the moratorium. The moratorium we are seeking is an extra five years, which would allow for the master plan process to be carried out. It would also give residents piece of mind that nothing will happen to that site. They are rightly anxious and concerned because the pattern of behaviour that has occurred to date has been one that leaves them with a sense that something will happen that is not in the interests of the community.

This occurred in January 2014 when the Canterbury Racecourse Action Group was formed and a development application was put in for a piece of land beside the Canterbury racecourse that was part of the racecourse and used as a car park. If members wish to know a bit more about the racecourse, the CRAG website is a great repository for information on the history and heritage of the site. The website explains the history of the legislation and why the bill is necessary:

Up until 2010, Canterbury Park was owned and managed by the Sydney Turf Club (STC). In 2010, the State government managed to negotiate a deal between the STC who owned Canterbury and Rosehill and the Australian Jockey Club (AJC) who managed Randwick and Warwick farm to merge into one club to consolidate assets, pool resources and eliminate inefficiencies ... The new merged club was called the Australian Turf Club (ATC).

To make sure there was not a fire sale of assets, the then Government established a bill that proposed a 10-year moratorium. In that bill three paragraphs of clause 23 are important:

- (2) The merged racing club may not sell or otherwise dispose of any of the necessary racing infrastructure of a racecourse to which this section applies within the 10-year period ...
- (3) The necessary racing infrastructure of a racecourse is any lands, buildings or other facilities ...
- (4) The regulations may make provision for or with respect to the kinds of lands, buildings or facilities ...

But what is important is the word "necessary" in clause 23 of that bill. That has largely been at the heart of the issues that have arisen: What is necessary and what is not necessary to racing. We have argued that the whole racecourse is necessary. The car park is a piece of land—I think the site is just over one hectare—that is necessary to racing and the racecourse. That is why we have fought that. The original development application, which argued that it was not necessary, basically came about as a result of a deal with Mirvac. The first the residents knew of it was a glossy sign that went up advertising, "Apartments for sale". There was no consultation with them. Then began the argument over what is and is not necessary to the continuation of Canterbury racecourse as it is laid out under the original moratorium bill.

We have been able to argue, I think very successfully, that the whole of the racecourse is necessary. If we are going to look at the future of the racecourse, then we have to look at the whole of the racecourse to get the best possible outcome. Recently the ATC put in another development application [DA], which the member for Summer Hill and the member for Canterbury have spoken about. It tried again. As a result of the member for Canterbury giving notice of the bill we are discussing at the moment, it then ended up withdrawing that and realising that there was an overwhelming sense from the community that it had to do it right and, if it did not do it right, we were going to keep proposing this. The three of us took that position along with the Federal member. All we and the community want is a master plan process. I think it is incredibly reasonable.

During that master plan process, two important things have to happen: The community must be consulted and must be part of any outcome, and nothing should happen at all until that is completed, and that could take a couple of years. We understand that. If we have 35 hectares, we want to get the very best outcome. It is going to take a long process of working with both the State and local governments and, of course, the residents. We know that is going to happen. But the bill before the House is about making sure that the residents have that peace of mind that nothing at all is ever going to happen while the process is underway. The ATC can say it and promise it. The State Government can say, "We are going to make sure this happens." But to date the pattern of behaviour, as I said, has been, "We are going to keep trying to make this happen. We are going to put up another DA." I note that the other side has said that this is a superfluous bill that is not required—

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** Heavy handed.

**Ms JODI McKAY:** —that it is heavy handed and that the outcome will be there anyway. But at the heart of getting good outcomes for the community is the need to always respect their wishes and make sure that the process is protected. The bill seeks to do that. I support it wholeheartedly. I am pleased that we have been able to work with the member for Summer Hill and the member for Canterbury to get the very best outcome. The member for Lakemba will speak on the bill as well. He also feels strongly about this because we have all seen, living in the inner west and moving into western Sydney, what can happen when development goes wrong. Before us is an extraordinary opportunity to get green space, and create and build something for the community that will be treasured and cherished long into the future. I hope that the crossbench members can support this bill. I again thank the member for Canterbury for all the work that she has done in bringing the bill to the House. It is great and it is important because it is a community bill.

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (11:53):** The Government opposes the Canterbury Park Racecourse (Sale and Redevelopment Moratorium) Bill 2021. If passed, it would put the future of the racecourse at a standstill, and limit the opportunities for increased and improved open spaces for the people of Canterbury. The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces has been working collaboratively and constructively with the member for Canterbury to get an outcome for the site that is favoured by the community. This included a visit to the site last week with the member. The Opposition's insistence to press ahead with the bill is a little short-sighted. I honestly believe we should not be interfering with a council process to properly master plan a key site that has the strategic opportunity to deliver more and better district-scale open space in the Campsie and Canterbury area. Why would the Government support a bill that ultimately overrides that council process? As we have heard, the department has made a considerable effort in its new approach to precincts to aim to support councils make better decisions on behalf of their local communities.

The Opposition is going against local councils when it should be supporting them in the decision-making process. How can we say we are serious about letting councils be responsible for their local planning decisions when we use the power of Parliament to step in when we do not like something? Council is doing the right thing. There is a master-planning process that will refine options for the site as part of the broader planning for the Canterbury local centre. Let us stop adding to the complexity of something that is quite clearly protected under

New South Wales legislation. One of the arguments for the bill is to protect public spaces. But when we look more closely, the outcomes of such a bill would be far worse for public spaces. The Government is committed to public open spaces. For the first time we have a public open spaces Minister committed to ensuring that they continue to grow. The Government has put its money down and said it is prepared to spend to expand our public spaces. This must remain our priority.

Opportunities to reorientate the planning system and understand the value and investment in public space are paramount to ensure local communities continue to thrive. The consideration of open space is key in supporting the delivery of one of the Premier's Priorities—greener public spaces—to boost access and walkability to quality green, open and public spaces from homes by 10 per cent in urban areas across New South Wales by 2023, benefiting over half a million citizens. I emphasise the Government's expertise in contributing to this priority, having delivered a series of successful programs across the State, unlocking valuable open space to the people of New South Wales through the \$15 million Streets as Shared Spaces program and the NSW Public Spaces Legacy Program, which is wonderful. By incorporating the New South Wales Government into the master-planning process for the Canterbury racecourse site, the community will benefit from the strategic opportunity for the site to deliver more and better district scale open space in the Campsie and Canterbury area.

Ultimately, the bill is redundant. A change in use of the Canterbury racecourse cannot occur until a master plan has been approved, the land is rezoned and there has been consultation with the community, Racing NSW and Australian Turf Club members. Checks and balances ensure that the future of such a prized and significant site is decided by the people who use and cherish it most. Let the people of Canterbury Bankstown and New South Wales view the draft exhibition. Let them have their say and have their views thoroughly considered by council and government planners. It is important that we allow council to go through this process so that we make much better decisions on behalf of the Canterbury community.

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (11:58):** Given the short time I have to speak, I will acknowledge a few things. First, I acknowledge and thank the member for Canterbury for bringing this bill to the House, as well as the member for Summer Hill. We have just heard from the member for Strathfield. They have been working exceptionally hard on this with the Federal member for Watson, Mr Tony Burke. My experience with this is closely related. People in my community also live around that area, pretty much on the border. I also acknowledge the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, Rob Stokes. I think his intention to make things better is sincere and genuine. It is no secret that I have a lot of time and respect for Minister Stokes. I will pick up on his idea that he wants to build better community spaces. He used the phrase, "tapestry of heritage", which I thought was lovely.

Lakemba has been fortunate to receive funding to improve amenities to create the high streets and it has been hard work to get to that point. We talk about the tapestry of heritage but the south-west of Sydney and the inner west area have incredible heritage, history and a tapestry of people and communities that have been there for a long time. This bill will not necessarily stop redevelopment. Most of us have had experience of horrible planning and development. The Opposition is not opposed to development; it is opposed to development that does not come with the necessary social infrastructure and support mechanisms.

The Sydney Metro City & Southwest Project could be a ruse for more development which does not include new schools, additional parkland or community service facilities. Canterbury Hospital is at breaking point. When doctors say that they are working in Third World conditions we need to pay close attention. They are not the type of people who go out onto the streets with placards to protest. Redevelopment must come with the necessary social infrastructure. The master plan is a great idea but I do not believe that stopping development for five years will halt it altogether—we can still work on the master plan. In a bipartisan approach through different levels of government we will be able to make things happen. Unfortunately, the community has been bitten far too many times and it has had to endure poor development.

The Canterbury Park Racecourse (Sale and Redevelopment Moratorium) Bill 2021 is not a fight against the Australian Jockey Club or the Government; it is a plea for redevelopment in this community. I encourage those Government members who contributed to debate on this bill to drive through this area to gain a better understanding of what is required. Without a complete master plan we are getting only half the picture. We need a proper master plan that includes not only that part of Canterbury but also Canterbury Road, King Street, Milton Street, Frederick Street and Ramsay Street, which intersects with the Hume Highway and Parramatta Road. That key arterial route affects a lot of people. We cannot address only one part of the master plan. This bill is a sensible approach to achieving a moratorium with no change to the zoning, no selling off of land and an all-inclusive master plan. The Opposition is willing to work with everybody for the benefit of the community.

**Debate interrupted.**

*Motions***PREVENTION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS**

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (12:03):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges the thousands of women who rallied on the streets of Sydney, other cities and towns across New South Wales on 15 March 2021 demanding justice for victims of gendered violence.
- (2) Notes women have had enough of inequality, discrimination, harassment and violence, and will continue to speak up and demand change.
- (3) Demands the Premier and Minister for Mental Health, Regional Youth and Women take action to ensure policy and legislation change on consent education to protect women, enshrine equality, and adequately fund frontline sexual assault services and gendered violence prevention programs.

I acknowledge the success of the March for Justice rallies held across Australia in March and the legacy of those rallies in keeping the demands of women front and centre in public discourse. Those rallies were just the beginning of a new wave of anger and action. The conversation will be ongoing until the demands of women are achieved—decades on. On Saturday I also attended the Enough is Enough rally in Katoomba with more than 300 people from the Blue Mountains gathering in protest to say enough is enough to domestic violence and to sexual violence against women. The reality is the scourge of domestic violence and sexual assault is a daily reality for hundreds of women and children every day across this State, and women are still falling between the gaps.

Right now, Penrith Women's Health Centre is facing an increasing demand for case management support for women, yet funds for meeting this extra demand are to be cut by \$240,000—and this cut is occurring within a political context that espouses a renewed focus on women's policies and budget support. The centre's funding needs to be close to \$800,000 per annum—nothing really—just to meet the demand in the Penrith-Nepean area. Within two weeks funding for this service, which is currently unable to meet demand, will be slashed by half. It is critical that the Government act immediately to assist Penrith Women's Health Centre. Living with domestic abuse is harrowing for anyone and for some members of our community with language and cultural differences to negotiate, it can seem impossible to find a way out.

In my role as shadow Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and shadow Minister for Women, I recently hosted, in this Parliament, a roundtable forum to focus on the challenges faced by victims of domestic violence from multicultural communities. The roundtable forum gathered 30 women representing more than 20 frontline services as well as staff from several domestic violence peak bodies. All participants agreed that this was an urgent discussion to have, that their voices are not heard, and it is an area that needs careful attention for its unique challenges. We also agreed that current systems and structures have to change to include all women, regardless of culture and race. Four key issues were identified which I have spoken about in this Chamber recently but I believe it is necessary to put them on the table today.

First, the challenge of getting information about domestic and family violence support services out to migrant and refugee women. Secondly, we discussed the myriad difficulties surrounding the reporting of abusive relationships. Many flaws in the system were identified, one example being inappropriate police responses. It is vital that police and first responders are trained to be aware of cultural sensitivities in specific communities and to respond in a trauma-informed manner. Thirdly, we discussed the need for increased support for women on temporary visas. Too often access to services is dependent on one's visa status. As a result many victims of domestic violence are falling through the gaps. The biggest cohort of people falling through the gaps are women who have English as a second language and who come from communities that cannot access services. Finally, and crucially, the urgent need for a culturally appropriate case management service was identified as a priority. It is important to acknowledge that cultures are different and there cannot be a one-size-fits-all approach.

Last month the NSW Women's Alliance wrote to the Premier to demand urgent action to tackle unprecedented rates of sexual assault. It outlined nine reforms needed to achieve that end. The first recommendation was to introduce affirmative consent laws in New South Wales. I acknowledge all those women who worked so hard for so long—women long before my time—who pushed for reform through the media, through governments and through local representatives. Some of those reforms were announced recently by the Attorney General—hard-won reforms that were pushed by women in our communities and by organisations for decades. But this is not the end of the line. The other eight recommendations are urgent and demand the close attention of the Government.

In order to introduce changes to evidence and procedural law we need to make the court process more accessible, safer and trauma-informed for sexual assault complainants. We need to better recognise sexual assault in the context of domestic and family violence in our laws, including introducing jury directions on domestic violence. Developing a model for the implementation of court specialisation for matters involving domestic,

family and sexual violence in New South Wales and including attached support services for victim-survivors and offenders is essential. We need to fund teams of case managers for sexual assault to operate out of specialist services for domestic and family violence and to fund support for young offenders. We need to fund independent legal representation in criminal trials for complainants of sexual assault. We need to introduce mandatory reporting and systemic audits of complaints of sexual assaults in aged and disability care settings, and develop a trauma specialist survivor-led response to disclosures. We need to fund a comprehensive whole-of-community primary prevention strategy for New South Wales in line with the national framework, *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*, including a rollout of whole-of-school-community education on consent.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (12:10):** I move:

That the motion be amended by leaving out paragraph (3) with a view to inserting instead:

- (3) Commends the Government for taking action to ensure policy and legislation change on consent education to protect women, enshrine equality and adequately fund frontline sexual assault services and gendered violence prevention programs.

I thank the member for Blue Mountains for moving the motion, which serves as a reminder that we all play a part in preventing domestic violence and sexual assault in our communities. Every individual deserves to live their life free from violence and harassment. As the member for Blue Mountains has acknowledged, I too—

[*Opposition members interjected.*]

Could I ask those opposite, particularly when we are talking about—

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper):** The member for North Shore can ask—

**Ms FELICITY WILSON:** Can I ask you, Mr Temporary Speaker? I will ask you, Mr Temporary Speaker.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper):** The member for North Shore—

**Ms FELICITY WILSON:** Would you please ask members opposite not to harass me when I am speaking on a motion about women?

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper):** I ask the member for North Shore to give me a chance to intervene.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON:** I did ask—

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper):** I did notice there was a level of interjection and commentary going on outside of that which would be permitted under the standing orders.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON:** Thank you, Mr Temporary Speaker.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper):** I understand that this is an important and highly charged issue. I ask everybody to be respectful in this space. I appreciate we are now hearing about an amendment to the motion. I ask that everybody allow the member for North Shore to proceed without further interjection.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON:** Thank you very much, Mr Temporary Speaker. Like the member for Blue Mountains, I recognise the many thousands of people who joined rallies around Australia on 15 March 2021 in the March 4 Justice to protest against gendered violence. I was among those who marched in the Sydney CBD. I was joined by our Attorney General, who is the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence; by the Minister for Energy and Environment, Matt Kean; by the Deputy Premier; and by the Minister in this Government representing women; along with many other people in this House, from every side of politics. I thank the many brave women who stepped forward to break the silence about this insidious form of violence and to share their experiences.

We all know that the New South Wales Government is committed to improving the prevention and reporting of domestic violence, sexual assault and harassment, and to ensuring the safety of women in homes, in public places and in the workplace. The New South Wales Government is approaching this issue through a number of means within a comprehensive whole-of-government framework, including educating our students on respectful relationships and delivering improved health responses to victims and survivors of domestic violence. On 21 October 2020, on the motion of the Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, the New South Wales Parliament agreed to establish the Joint Select Committee on Coercive Control. I acknowledge the work of the chair of that committee and now Minister, Natalie Ward. The Government is committed to ensuring that any reform efforts in the coercive control space are balanced and that thorough research and consultation are undertaken to inform any potential reforms.



The committee held five days of public hearings, conducted a regional visit and received 152 written submissions from key government, legal and domestic violence and family violence stakeholders, and the broader community as part of its inquiry. The New South Wales Government and I look forward to receiving the committee's final report, which is due by 30 June 2021. We will carefully consider its recommendations when formulating our response to this important issue. On the topic of sexual consent law reform, I acknowledge the words of the member for Blue Mountains in recognising the work the Attorney General has undertaken recently in responding to the community's concerns and calls for a form of sexual consent law reform. I had many conversations with the Attorney General. I congratulate him on the work he has undertaken in taking forward these landmark reforms. The Law Reform Commission's Report No 148, *Consent in relation to sexual offences*, was tabled in Parliament on 18 November 2020. The Government supports, or supports in principle, all 44 recommendations.

Towards the end of last month the Attorney General, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence announced proposed reforms, which will improve the justice system's response to sexual offending, improve victim experiences of the justice system, address certain misconceptions about consent, and simplify and modernise the laws about sexual consent. The proposed reforms aim to clarify consent provisions in the Crimes Act 1900, including fundamentally that consent is a free and voluntary choice that should not be presumed and that consent involves ongoing and mutual communication; enhance legal requirements for communicative consent; ensure fairer and more effective prosecutions of sexual offences; address misconceptions about consent in trial proceedings; and improve victim experience of the justice system and juror understanding of the complexities of sexual offending, and reporting through the introduction of new jury directions.

The New South Wales Government will introduce to Parliament later in the year a bill that will go further than the commission's recommendations in one important way; that is, by providing that any belief in consent that an accused person had or may have at the time of sexual activity will not be reasonable in the circumstances if the accused did not say or do anything adequate to ascertain consent. We know that women and girls are far more likely than men and boys to experience sexual violence. These reforms will give us a chance to address the systemic issue of sexual violence and improve access to justice for all victim survivors across New South Wales.

Let me be clear: No law can ever erase the trauma of sexual assault, but we can all work together to improve the State's response to what is an incredibly serious issue and to help reduce these assaults from occurring in the first place. That is what these changes ultimately aim to achieve: fewer cases of sexual violence occurring in our communities. These reforms will send a message that consent is essential and must be communicated through words or actions. A research project will also be established by the NSW Bureau of Crimes Statistics and Research to better understand the experiences of complainants of sexual offences within the criminal justice system. Governance will be established to guide implementation and, subsequently, ongoing monitoring of the reforms.

I also acknowledge the work more broadly around consent of Chanel Contos and conversations I have been having with Minister Mitchell about looking at reforms across the education space and the announcement she has made, and particularly the work the member for Newtown has been doing in this place advocating, alongside Chanel, for the people who have experienced this significant trauma and want to see change. We know that policy responses, education and awareness are very important parts of the overall response, and that members on both sides of this House are serious about domestic violence and sexual assault. We recognise that everyone from Government to the community has a role to play in addressing this scourge.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (12:17):** First, I acknowledge and thank the member for Blue Mountains for bringing this important motion to the House. Domestic abuse and violence is a horrific scourge that impacts all aspects of our society. It impacts each and every electorate in New South Wales and, indeed, electorates across the country. In my own electorate over the past 12 months I have had one frontline domestic violence service provider report a 110 per cent increase in demand for their services. This is a shameful and sobering statistic. The demand for domestic violence services in my electorate is so high that frontline service specialists are struggling to find places where they can conduct interviews with victims and survivors. This is a direct result of the lack of resources and funding they have received.

Right now we are witnessing a powerful national movement seeking justice for women, and victims and survivors of sexual assault and sexual harassment, and finally seeking to put an end to it all. I take this moment to acknowledge and thank the thousands of victims and survivors, including Brittany Higgins and Grace Tame, who have come forward to share their stories. As part of this movement there has been a lot of conversation regarding the role of earlier consent education that can help protect women. I take this moment to acknowledge and thank Chanel Contos for her work. She has been instrumental in ensuring that this topic will be debated on the floor of the House in coming weeks. Chanel has received thousands of testimonies from women who have been sexually assaulted, many of whom are unable to identify that they had been assaulted at all.

We need to educate our youth and society about consent so we can empower them with information and control over their bodies. Unfortunately, the current proposal put forward by the Minister, as well as being late and well overdue, is problematic and falls far short of what is needed. It is incredibly disappointing that the New South Wales Government missed the opportunity of the curriculum review to ensure that consent education was deeply embedded in our education system. We need to acknowledge that our teachers have been calling out for additional specialist resources for years to help educate our youth about consent.

We know that we already have a teaching shortage and that our wonderful teachers have been worked to the bone. The current proposal puts more work onto them. In order for our teachers to be able to properly deliver consent education, they require additional specialised resources and staff. The Government must commit to it. In addition, the measure of success—how many students access materials—is arbitrary. A far better measure would be an understanding of the content and reductions in sexual assault. We need to act and seize this moment with both hands, but in order to do that we need a nonpartisan approach towards change. Sadly, we know that sexual assault, sexual harassment and discrimination towards women starts with the inequality that we see every day. It thrives in our workplaces, on our sporting fields and on our streets, and allows for the conditions in which sexual harassment and abuse can occur.

The subordination of women in our society is evident in our pay inequality, in our glass ceilings on promotions, and in professional sportswomen's games being relegated to the back fields or being dumped from prime time television to make way for community sports games. Such inequality and discrimination must come to an end. We must approach such issues without bias, without the impulse to defend any unacceptable behaviours. It is only with this mindset that we will be successful and get the change we desperately need. Sadly, because of how entrenched inequality and discrimination is towards women within our society, it is going to be difficult to unwind. What the Government can do now that can have an immediate impact on those suffering at the moment from domestic violence and abuse is to ensure that frontline service providers are adequately funded so that those seeking assistance can get the help that they need.

**Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (12:21):** I make a contribution to this important subject of the education system, which is part of the issues that have been raised. The New South Wales Government recognises the importance of students being educated about consent and respectful relationships in an age-appropriate way. Education is crucial to establishing and upholding what is acceptable in our society. On 30 May this year the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Learning announced that a new consent package was being developed for New South Wales schools, focusing on support for teachers and engagement with parents. A new range of teaching and learning resources, aligned with the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education curriculum, will be created for teachers. Resources will be available on the Learning Resources hub of the Department of Education.

The new suite of initiatives follows the signing of a statement of intent on 26 March this year by the leaders of New South Wales government, catholic and independent school sectors to strengthen the understanding of consent and harm prevention in schools in New South Wales. The Department of Education has also partnered with the Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of NSW and will hold the first webinar for all public school P&Cs this month to discuss the statement of intent, what students currently learn through the curriculum, and how parents and carers can stay engaged in the discussion. The Government has made it very clear that it wants to work with the community to address sexual violence and create safer and stronger communities. It is important that both schools and parents have all the assistance they need to have these important conversations with their young people.

The NSW Curriculum has already embedded respectful relationships education from kindergarten through to year 10 in the personal development, health and physical education [PDHPE] K-10 syllabus, and the mandatory Life Ready Course across years 11 and 12. A new syllabus was released back in 2018, after extensive consultation with academics, students and teachers, and has been implemented in schools across the State since then. The new syllabus introduced in 2018 focuses on respectful and positive relationships, sexually based harassment, discrimination and, importantly, clear and age-appropriate teaching of consent, which means very different things to students in early primary school than it does to senior secondary school students. NSW Department of Education schools are able to decide when and how to deliver the content based on the needs and interests of their students. The New South Wales curriculum is adopted and adapted from the Australian Curriculum, noting that the Australian Curriculum does not cover the years 11 and 12 component in PDHPE—New South Wales maintains its own senior secondary syllabuses.

A review of the national curriculum, led by the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority, is underway. Formal consultations began in April 2021 and the NSW Education Standards Authority is contributing feedback to the review to ensure alignment between the review and the NSW Curriculum Reform program. That presents an opportunity for States and Territories to come together to set a national approach to

relationship and consent education in schools. It is a whole-of-society challenge. It is not just about schools, it is not just about workplaces; it is about all of society, and there is no panacea or silver bullet to solve it, which is why we need to work together to drive change and why we need to build on constructive, positive steps and bring along the community with us in a way in which everybody has confidence that we are dealing with this together.

I support the amendment of my colleague the member for North Shore in trying to present the motion in such a way that it is not a criticism or a political pointscoring exercise; it is an attempt to acknowledge what has been done, what needs to be done and what will continue to be done as everybody in this Parliament works towards trying to combat domestic and sexual violence wherever it occurs and to ensure that our kids are well educated in respectful relationships.

**Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (12:25):** I support the motion as moved by the member for Blue Mountains. I briefly touch on the amendment. I urge the Government to show a bit of humility on this occasion. Far too many times, Government members come into this place and tell the House and the public who are watching that the Government needs to be thanked, applauded and praised for the work that it has done, the suggestion being that the work always has been done. Given what we are facing in our community and society right now, given the space that has been provided in the media, given the many thousands of unresolved questions around the issue, I would suspect that the work has not been done and, hence, the Government does not deserve to be commended. Is there more work to do? Yes, of course there is. So let us not commend; let us just show some humility and recognise that we still need to do more. This motion demands that we do more. If members do not demand that of themselves I am deeply disappointed in them.

I will touch on this question about consent education. I was a former teacher of personal development, health and physical education [PDHPE]. I know what it is like for a government to make a decision and decide that schools will take responsibility for teaching this important new framework for society. I want the House to think about the questions of obesity, smoking, sex education, mental health, HIV/AIDS, drug education, nutrition, self-confidence and self-esteem, child protection and child abuse issues, domestic violence and, more recently, terrorism and extremism. What has happened on each of those issues is that people in this place have decided society has a problem, that we are going to dump that topic into the PDHPE curriculum and make it the entire responsibility of schoolteachers, and then people in this place assume their work is done.

The outrageous effect of that on workload is one question I will set aside. I want to speak to the outrageous attitude of the House and some members who have already spoken in proposing that this is only an issue for people under the age of 17, an issue that only 17-year-olds might grow into. I say to the House: It is an enormous problem. There are occasions where people under the age of 16 or 17 are committing those terrible things, but the reality is that domestic and sexual violence is widespread in our community right now and is being perpetrated by adults who are not at school. I do not understand the logic of saying that it can simply be passed off as a new school education program; I do not know what can be cut out to fit this in.

I know that when a previous program, suggesting that we consider the important questions of gender identity and sexual fluidity, was put forward by experts some members opposite rallied against it because it did not fit their paradigm. But on this occasion they are saying because it fits their paradigm it is okay. We have an enormous problem that needs to be addressed, and this motion is seeking to do that. The hubris of those opposite forces them to fumble and stumble at the first step. I ask them to withdraw their amendment and simply support the motion. Let us be bipartisan on this issue.

**Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (12:29):** Our frontline services provide vital support to people across New South Wales who are experiencing domestic and family violence, and sexual assault. The workers do a tremendous job helping some of our most vulnerable members of the community, and we thank them for their dedication. The New South Wales Government is committed to supporting victim-survivors of domestic and family violence and is investing a record \$538 million over four years to realise the Premier's priority to reduce domestic violence reoffending by 25 per cent by 2023. Primary prevention is a key strategy under the *NSW Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform 2016-2021*. The key prevention activities include supporting the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022 and the development of the next iteration, and investing \$20 million in the New South Wales Domestic and Family Violence Innovation Fund, which is delivering 20 innovative projects.

The New South Wales Government is also committed to a whole-of-government approach responding to and supporting victim-survivors of sexual assault. The NSW Sexual Assault Strategy is a comprehensive whole-of-government framework to improve prevention and responses to sexual assault. The strategy sets out a coordinated approach to sexual assault in New South Wales, with 26 activities under five key priority action areas: prevention and early intervention, education, supporting victims and survivors, holding perpetrators to account, and reshaping the service system. More than half of these actions have already been completed and significant cross-agency work is currently in progress to deliver the rest of the activities.

NSW Health plays an integral role in delivering a network of sexual assault services across New South Wales. NSW Health offers 24-hour integrated psychosocial, medical and forensic responses for adults, young people and children who have experienced sexual assault. That is across every local health district. The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network also provides the same 24-hour responses to all forms of child abuse and neglect, including sexual assault, through the child protection units. NSW Health sexual assault services are staffed by trained counsellors, specialist doctors and sexual assault nurse examiners. NSW Health offers a range of sexual assault services including counselling, medical care, medical forensic examinations to collect evidence for criminal investigations, advocacy and court preparation. It acts quickly to ensure that people who have experienced sexual assault are able to continue to access integrated services during the COVID-19 pandemic, which is incredibly important.

In relation to domestic and family violence, NSW Health violence, abuse and neglect services deliver a range of specific interventions and support, including counselling, safety planning, risk assessment, local prevention work and collaboration with partner agencies. Women aged 16 and over in mental health and alcohol and other drug services and all women in maternity and child and family health services are routinely screened for domestic violence across NSW Health. They are provided with support and referral options if violence is disclosed. New South Wales has taken another step to improve women's safety and wellbeing, launching a \$1.8 million pilot program in November 2020. It is a 12-month pilot program screening for domestic violence in six emergency departments, with a view to statewide expansion. It is being funded by the Commonwealth Government under the national Health Innovation Fund.

These responses offered by the public health system provide interventions to help prevent violence and reduce potential long-term adverse impacts for individuals and families. We know that domestic violence is more prevalent among emergency department users than in most other healthcare and community settings, and it is a 24-hour service with relative anonymity. There is far more to be done and, with that in mind, the New South Wales Government is taking critical steps to protect victim-survivors from harm, and will continue to do so.

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (12:33:5):** By leave: I begin by reiterating the call by the member for Cessnock for the member for North Sydney to withdraw her amendment. It is unhelpful and unnecessary. It is disappointing that the member would bring such an amendment to the debate, speak in the debate and then leave the Chamber. As we all know, it is a human right to be safe at work, safe at home and safe at play. But it is a human right that not all of us enjoy to the fullest extent. Physical, psychological and sexual violence unfortunately pervades the greater community in all its facets and debilitates women disproportionately in Australia. This was brought into sharp focus by the demonstrations attended by tens of thousands of women across the nation, the centrepiece of which was the speech by Brittany Higgins, who highlighted her treatment by the Government that for so many women was mirrored in the gendered violence they had suffered in their own lives.

Women survivors come forward every day to report violence to a structure that, at its core, has a singular lack of understanding or no appropriate legislation to give women confidence of justice for the crime of rape and other acts of gendered violence that have profound, lifelong consequences for survivors, often including physical disabilities and mental health conditions. My work on the coercive control bill highlighted to me how much our laws lack maturity in the long-term psychological effects perpetrated on mostly women by men close to them. Yet our prevention infrastructure and support services are not resourced to adequately support survivors' safety. Systems too often fail to hold perpetrators to account.

In my interview with the ABC, I highlighted that consent must be given voluntarily before the beginning of a sexual encounter. Consent must be present prior to sex and, if necessary, during the act. A person's body autonomy should be respected. We need to start from a position that the body is unavailable until it is made available to the other person. The question becomes: Was she consenting? Did he know she was not consenting? The situation is made much more difficult when the sexual assault is alleged to have happened between partners. The subjectivity of the opposing views makes a positive determination for the complainant difficult in court. In determining whether sex is reasonably available, it is not unreasonable to assume that a man should know whether a woman is consenting to sex, regardless of his original view.

In determining consent, physical evidence may not be present. There may be no sign of physical violence on the victim and the victim may not have fought back. But that is not a reason to think the sex was consensual. It may well go to the shock and fear suffered by the victim during the attack. Submission is not consent, although some take it as such. There always needs to be an unequivocal "yes" from the other person. Consent must be given voluntarily in making that decision. A person should be in a position to make a free, cognitive, unimpaired decision in relation to sex. In the context of any decision made in a sexual assault case, that should be the prime consideration.

A place for Australia to start looking for examples of comprehensive laws to protect women is the Istanbul Convention. It is the first legally binding instrument that creates a comprehensive legal framework and approach

to combat violence against women and is focused on preventing domestic violence, protecting victims and prosecuting accused offenders.

**Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (12:38:0):** By leave: The New South Wales Government shares the concerns of the member for Blue Mountains about those impacted by sexual assault and is committed to protecting victim-survivors and ensuring that women are safe from sexual predation. In response to the current allegations within Federal Parliament, the Women's March 4 Justice held more than 40 rallies on Monday 15 March 2021. This moment, built on the stories of thousands of brave women across our communities, was unmistakably very powerful. We, as a nation, must get our response right. We must hear and really listen to the complex reasons women are so deeply aggrieved. Organisers are calling on politicians to address and put an end to sexism, misogyny, dangerous workplace cultures, and lack of equality in politics and in the community at large.

Those requests include full independent investigations into instances of gendered violence in politics with full public accountability for findings, the removal of perpetrators from positions of power and the implementation of the 55 recommendations put forward in *Respect@Work*, the Australian Human Rights Commission's 2020 report of the national inquiry into sexual harassment. As the Australian Human Rights Commission reported, almost two in five women, or 39 per cent, and just over one in four men, or 26 per cent, have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace in the past five years. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were more likely to have experienced workplace sexual harassment than people who are non-Indigenous. Instances of harassment were reported to be 53 per cent and 32 per cent respectively for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Sexual harassment occurs at all levels in every workplace across our nation, including at Parliament—that is worrying.

The New South Wales Government is committed to working with the Commonwealth Government on a nationally coordinated response to the Australian Human Rights Commission's *Respect@Work: Sexual Harassment National Inquiry Report 2020*. On 8 April 2021 the Commonwealth Government released its response to the report, entitled *A Roadmap for Respect: Preventing and Addressing Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces*. The road map responds to all of the 55 recommendations made in the *Respect@Work* report. On 9 April 2021 a National Cabinet meeting was held to discuss the *Respect@Work* report and the Commonwealth Government's response. New South Wales and the other States and Territories agreed to provide a formal response to *Respect@Work*. The New South Wales Government is already taking action on a number of recommendations, including via the *NSW Women's Strategy 2018-2022* and the *NSW Sexual Assault Strategy 2018-2021*.

Those strategies have funded a number of programs, which include The Make No Doubt community education campaign, which identifies a continuum from sexual harassment to sexual assault and the importance of consent; the NSW Domestic and Family Violence Corporate Leadership Group, which convened to provide strategic leadership from a range of industries and professions to promote safe workplaces free from harassment; support for New South Wales universities and university residential colleges to implement the recommendations of the Australian Human Rights Commission *Change the Course* report; and a sexual assault toolkit that is being developed by ACON for LGBTQ communities to recognise and respond to sexual assault. That toolkit will unpack the myths and attitudes that condone or enable sexual harassment in LGBTQ community settings. In addition, the Government joined with Our Watch on 1 July 2019 to make New South Wales part of a cohesive national primary prevention approach.

**Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (12:42):** By leave: On behalf of The Greens, I support the motion moved by the member for Blue Mountains. I thank her for bringing the motion to the Chamber. From the outset, I express my disgust at the fact that the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government has sought to amend the motion—it is astonishing. We are debating a motion that talks about the women who marched to demand change on the streets; we are talking about the need to address inequality, discrimination, harassment and violence that women are subjected to; and we are also demanding that further action be taken. Instead members of the Government have amended the motion to commend themselves for how wonderful they are. When I spoke at the March 4 Justice rally entitled "Enough is Enough", none of those demonstrators was saying, "You are doing a great job—continue." The rally was called "Enough is Enough". People were out, demonstrating in anger because the Government is not doing enough.

Government members cannot hear those cries for change outside; instead they commend themselves for doing a great job, which completely beggars belief. I acknowledge that the campaign has been driven by amazing young women, leaders and activists in the community. I acknowledge the work of Saxon Mullins, Grace Tame, Brittany Higgins, Dhanya Mani and Chanel Contos. Those women led the Women's March 4 Justice, they are engaging in the "youth against sexual violence Australia" campaign and they have organised youth survivor speak-outs on a number of occasions in Sydney. That movement has allowed tens of thousands of women who have experienced sexual and domestic violence to be heard across society, which has buoyed inspiration. For

decades feminists have called for changes to protect women's rights and to fund refuges, domestic violence prevention services, and the courts and justice system.

Other members have touched on education around consent. On 24 June that will be the subject of debate as a result of a petition that I was proud to sponsor, which was started by Chanel Contos and which received over 20,000 signatures. In addition to that we have heard from the NSW Women's Alliance, which consists of women's safety organisations including Domestic Violence NSW, Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia, ACON, the Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women's Legal Service and Women's Safety NSW. The alliance wrote to the Premier urging a nine-point action plan to push for the changes that are needed. When the sector says that those nine points must be addressed, it is clear that the Government is not doing enough. Now is not the time for Government members to commend themselves for what they are doing; it is time for them to listen to the experts and to do more.

It is crucial to recognise that our frontline services are underfunded. In 2019-20 frontline services nationally recorded that 91.9 per cent of clients in need of domestic violence services were addressed. In New South Wales that figure was just 85.3 per cent. Nearly 15 per cent of people who have approached a service for domestic violence support—for any kind of support, not only a bed—did not receive it. That is not doing enough. That is not worth commending. It is a disgrace for Government members to commend themselves on their inaction in debate on a motion that states that we must come together to do more to protect the lives of women against gendered violence.

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:46):** By leave: I thank members for their indulgence in allowing me to speak on the motion moved by the member for Blue Mountains. I am proud to represent a community on the Central Coast that fervently holds zero tolerance for domestic violence in our region. Excellent work has been done on the Central Coast by both advocacy groups and the outstanding NSW Police Force, which is on the front line dealing with domestic violence in our region. But, in addition to dealing with domestic violence in the regions, we must also look at Parliament and other government agencies. The New South Wales Government has zero tolerance for bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct in the workplace. All New South Wales Government workplaces should be places of safety and respect, including the workplaces of staff employed by political office holders.

The NSW Ministerial Code of Conduct requires Ministers to exhibit the highest standards of probity and ethics. Under the NSW Office Holders Staff Code of Conduct, all office holders must treat those with whom they have contact in the course of discharging their duties with respect and courtesy. Everybody is entitled to work in a safe environment. There is no place for bullying, harassment or unsafe workplace behaviour in Parliament House. That is why in November 2020 the leaders of both Houses referred proposals for a parliamentary compliance officer to the privileges committee, of which I am a member. We want to ensure that Parliament House is a safe workplace. If a member creates an unsafe environment or bullies or harasses someone, there must be a pathway for the victim to report that if they so choose.

I am sure that every member in this place was deeply saddened and shocked by the allegations of sexual assault from ministerial staff in the Federal Parliament and the apparent shortcomings of the system to respond appropriately. In response to that, the Premier asked the former Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Professor Pru Goward—also the first Minister responsible for women and the prevention of domestic violence—from Western Sydney University to conduct a review on the process used in relation to complaints about bullying, harassment and sexual misconduct from New South Wales ministerial staff.

The terms of reference for Professor Goward's review included that consideration be given to the process by which staff make complaints about bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct in the workplace, including who may be best placed to receive any such complaints; best practice procedures be outlined for the receipt and handling of complaints about bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct in the workplace; and an outline of the circumstances in which it may be appropriate to conduct an internal investigation into allegations of bullying, harassment or sexual misconduct, which may also constitute criminal conduct, and the appropriate person or body to conduct any such internal investigation. Professor Goward delivered her report to the Premier in April 2021. The Premier has adopted all the recommendations and there is an opportunity for consultation in the next phase of the process. The Premier said:

If we're serious about making change, we have to do it properly and this will involve engagement with NSW Parliament and any survivors.

The review found that shortcomings currently exist within the system, and 13 recommendations have been made and, of course, were all adopted. The pervasiveness of such insidious behaviour makes it urgent to ensure that we bring it to a head. On the Central Coast, we have zero tolerance for that sort of behaviour towards anybody in our community. I am very proud to be part of a community that stands up and says no to domestic violence towards

anybody in our community. We must do the same in this building to make sure that we protect those who work with us at all times.

**Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (12:50):** By leave: That was an extraordinary speech, and I hope the member will send those bullying guidelines to the member for Ryde so that he can have a look at them. I move:

That the amendment be amended by leaving out "commends the Government for taking action" and inserting instead "urges the Premier to take more action".

It is ridiculous that Government members moved an amendment to congratulate themselves. They just spoke about former member Pru Goward. Her actions when she was the Minister for Women were to close women's refuges—hardly what one would expect from a government that was taking action to fight discrimination, inequality and sexual violence. The problem is that this Government has sat on its hands for over a decade regarding the sexual discrimination and inequality that women have faced in our community. Time and again women have spoken about the problems they face in the community, and this Government does not provide the resources.

Students have told me they have gone through their whole schooling and did not get any education on menstruation. I have to ask the question: What is the Department of Education doing to ensure that the curriculum that is supposed to be delivered to our schools through the personal development, health and physical education program is being delivered, if girls are not even getting any education on menstruation? The reality is that the people who put forward their complaints under Chanel Contos' petition were aged 13 or 14 years old. If they are not getting education by the time they are in high school then they do not have the tools to be able to defend themselves.

We know that those young girls are being manipulated, pressured, subjected to violence and bullying, embarrassed, exposed on social media and are having their whole lives destroyed at the age of 13. We saw it today when we got the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research figures. I congratulate the NSW Police Force because Mick Fuller did the right thing and put online an ability for young girls to report their sexual assaults. Today we saw the figures: a 61 per cent increase. We knew that was coming. We knew that hundreds of girls would report because Mick Fuller went out there and made a big deal about it, and today we have the figures. What has been the Government's response to that? Has anyone seen those opposite put one more cent into frontline services to respond to the hundreds and hundreds of girls who will need a huge amount of support to come forward? During that whole period, from the day that march happened to today, has the Government done anything about it? The answer is no.

Those opposite get up in this Chamber with their superlatives and make their fancy speeches but if we ask them to tell us exactly one thing they have put into the system since that day, other than Mick Fuller's changes to the way people report, the answer is they have not done anything. They have not done anything in the decade since they removed women's refuges that were a vital part of the protection of women, particularly in regional New South Wales, where women have nowhere else to go. Women members opposite should be embarrassed. They stand condemned for allowing the Government to behave in this way and for moving amendments to congratulate this Government.

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (12:54):** By leave: I appreciate the indulgence. I acknowledge the motion by the shadow Minister and member for Blue Mountains. She has been a fierce advocate for the protection of women and for the need to deal with the issue of child sexual and domestic violence. It is a tragedy that affects all of society. I have been watching some of it on the telly and listening to the debate in the Chamber. We must all agree that it cannot be a political issue; it is much more than that. It is a whole-of-society issue that we have to deal with together.

Rather than getting into the issues, let us reflect on the fact that every member sitting in this Chamber would at one stage have had somebody who came into their office needing assistance—a woman who was fleeing a domestic situation or a woman who needed to start her life again. It sometimes happens as a matter of urgency. The challenge that we have—certainly the challenge that I know I have had, and that I am sure the other 92 members in this place would have had—is when somebody turns up and says they need emergency support. Trying to find the emergency support is difficult, and sometimes it can be something as simple as getting some shelter or getting some food.

We cannot have a situation where a woman flees her home with her children and is left to sleep in a car and fend for herself, unable to find somewhere to find some peace and comfort. When we talk about resources, those are the initial resources that we need. Where do we go to provide the initial emergency support that is required? All they need is to have a little bit of safety. If somebody is fleeing a domestic violence situation, they are doing so because they have nowhere else to go and because they have got to a breaking point. They cannot then come to us, to another agency or to a community support group and then have nowhere to go. That is the first thing that we need to do.

I say again that this cannot be a political issue. It is much bigger than politics. It goes to the very heart of what we are as a society, what we stand for and what we believe in. Every one of us can make a great speech; there is no doubt about that. But it is more than a speech; it is the actions that we do. There is a complete desire on both sides of the House and in the other place to ensure that we resolve those issues. I have heard people talk about our refugees and support services being funded better. That is a lived experience that we have as members. We know people are going through this. Where are the opportunities for emergency support?

There has been a lot of reference to the demonstration, the protests and, of course, the petition. At the time I spoke a number of times about what we need to do as a society, and I have not changed that. I am not just speaking as a father of daughters; I am also speaking as a person who I would like to think has a voice in society. We have to use our profile here to do the best we can. We cannot simply say we have to let it go and hope for the best. Everyone hopes for the best, but we need a guiding hand. That is where parliaments—and this one in particular—can take a leadership role. I know that there is talk about where to do it in the education system and so forth and that is probably a debate to have another time, but we have to start with education.

It is much more than simply saying we will educate and raise awareness. Where is the support? What it ultimately comes down to is that people need to have support. We can say to women, "You shouldn't put up with this situation and you can leave." Where will they go when they leave? Why will they make that call? Where will their kids go to school? All of those are considerations. It is all good and well that we say we need to make a change, but it is up to every one of us in this place to be that leading hand. I conclude by acknowledging two of my local organisations that do outstanding work: the Muslim Women's Association with their Linking Hearts—of which I am a very proud ambassador—as well as the No Excuse for Abuse march that happens in Lakemba, where we stand to say no to domestic and family violence.

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (12:58):** In reply: I thank every member who stood in this place and talked about some really tough issues. I thank everyone who urges governments of any flavour—of any tier—to do more to assist victim-survivors and to ensure that we fund programs and services that work in the prevention of domestic violence and sexual assault. I thank those who, day in and day out, work in responding to sexual assault and domestic violence. I stand by my original motion. I acknowledge the amendment of the member for Auburn. I call on the Premier to urgently meet with representatives from the NSW Women's Alliance to progress the plan that experts have urged the Government to implement to address sexual and domestic violence in New South Wales. These are life and death matters. We need more than piecemeal responses to these monumental and dangerous issues. We need to do more.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Gurmesh Singh):** The member for Blue Mountains has moved a motion, to which the member for North Shore has moved an amendment, to which the member for Auburn has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment of the member for Auburn to the amendment of the member for North Shore be agreed to.

#### The House divided.

Ayes .....44  
Noes .....44  
Majority.....0

#### AYES

Aitchison, J	Greenwich, A	Minns, C
Bali, S	Harris, D	O'Neill, M
Barr, C	Harrison, J	Park, R
Butler, R	Haylen, J	Parker, J
Car, P	Hoenig, R	Piper, G
Catley, Y	Hornery, S	Saffin, J
Chanthivong, A	Kamper, S	Scully, P
Cotsis, S	Lalich, N	Smith, T
Crakanthorp, T	Leong, J	Tesch, L
Daley, M	Lynch, P	Voltz, L
Dalton, H	McDermott, H	Warren, G
Dib, J	McGirr, J	Washington, K
Donato, P	McKay, J	Watson, A (teller)
Doyle, T	Mehan, D (teller)	Zangari, G
Finn, J	Mihailuk, T	



## 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  
Griffin, J  
Gulaptis, C  
Hancock, S  
Hazzard, B  
Henskens, A  
Kean, M  
Layzell, D  
Lee, G  
Lindsay, W  
Marshall, A  
O'Dea, J  
Pavey, M  
Perrottet, D  
Petinos, E

Preston, R  
Provest, G  
Roberts, A  
Saunders, D  
Sidgreaves, P  
Smith, N  
Speakman, M  
Stokes, R  
Taylor, M  
Toole, P  
Tuckerman, W  
Upton, G  
Williams, L  
Wilson, F

## PAIRS

Atalla, E

Williams, R

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Gurmesh Singh):** The vote being equal, I give my casting vote with the noes and declare the question to be resolved in the negative.

**Amendment of the member for Auburn to the amendment of the member for North Shore negatived.**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Gurmesh Singh):** The question now is that the amendment of the member for North Shore be agreed to.

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....44  
Noes .....44  
Majority.....0

## AYES

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  
Griffin, J  
Gulaptis, C  
Hancock, S  
Hazzard, B  
Henskens, A  
Kean, M  
Layzell, D  
Lee, G  
Lindsay, W  
Marshall, A  
O'Dea, J  
Pavey, M  
Perrottet, D  
Petinos, E

Preston, R  
Provest, G  
Roberts, A  
Saunders, D  
Sidgreaves, P  
Smith, N  
Speakman, M  
Stokes, R  
Taylor, M  
Toole, P  
Tuckerman, W  
Upton, G  
Williams, L  
Wilson, F

## NOES

Aitchison, J  
Bali, S  
Barr, C  
Butler, R  
Car, P  
Catley, Y  
Chanthivong, A

Greenwich, A  
Harris, D  
Harrison, J  
Haylen, J  
Hoenig, R  
Hornery, S  
Kamper, S

Minns, C  
O'Neill, M  
Park, R  
Parker, J  
Piper, G  
Saffin, J  
Scully, P

## NOES

Cotsis, S  
Crakanthorp, T  
Daley, M  
Dalton, H  
Dib, J  
Donato, P  
Doyle, T  
Finn, J

Lalich, N  
Leong, J  
Lynch, P  
McDermott, H  
McGirr, J  
McKay, J  
Mehan, D (teller)  
Mihailuk, T

Smith, T  
Tesch, L  
Voltz, L  
Warren, G  
Washington, K  
Watson, A (teller)  
Zangari, G

## PAIRS

Williams, R

Atalla, E

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Gurmesh Singh):** The numbers being equal, I give my casting vote with the ayes and declare the question to be resolved in the affirmative.

**Amendment agreed to.**

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

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....45  
Noes .....43  
Majority.....2

## AYES

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  
Kean, M  
Layzell, D  
Lee, G  
Lindsay, W  
Marshall, A  
O'Dea, J  
Pavey, M  
Perrottet, D

Petinos, E  
Preston, R  
Provest, G  
Roberts, A  
Saunders, D  
Sidgreaves, P  
Smith, N  
Speakman, M  
Stokes, R  
Taylor, M  
Toole, P  
Tuckerman, W  
Upton, G  
Williams, L  
Wilson, F

## NOES

Aitchison, J  
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

Harris, D  
Harrison, J  
Haylen, J  
Hoenig, R  
Hornery, S  
Kamper, S  
Lalich, N  
Leong, J  
Lynch, P  
McDermott, H  
McGirr, J  
McKay, J  
Mehan, D (teller)  
Mihailuk, T

Minns, C  
O'Neill, M  
Park, R  
Parker, J  
Piper, G  
Saffin, J  
Scully, P  
Smith, T  
Tesch, L  
Voltz, L  
Warren, G  
Washington, K  
Watson, A (teller)  
Zangari, G

NOES

Finn, J

PAIRS

Williams, R

Atalla, E

**Motion as amended agreed to.**

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

*Members***MEMBER FOR HAWKESBURY****MEMBER FOR PROSPECT**

**The SPEAKER:** Happy birthday to the member for Hawkesbury and the member for Prospect, who will celebrate their birthdays next week.

*Announcements***CHAMBER SUPERVISOR IAN DELAHUNTY**

**The SPEAKER:** I acknowledge that our youthful Chamber Supervisor Ian Delahunty is turning 60 this month.

*Visitors***VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** I warmly welcome Andsley Dennis from Alive 90.5FM, guest of the member for East Hills. I also welcome guests of the member for Oatley, who are watching question time from the Macquarie Room. I had the pleasure of addressing them earlier today. I welcome in particular sub-branch guests from South Hurstville RSL, Penshurst RSL, Oatley RSL, Mortdale RSL and Club Rivers, including CEO Paul Millar.

*Announcements***THE BARE PIT**

**The SPEAKER:** I remind members of The Bare Pit, an event occurring in the Chamber next Tuesday from 1.00 p.m. to 2.00 p.m. The Bare Pit is a unique collaboration between the New South Wales Parliament and The Ethics Centre, featuring a discussion panel with Minister Victor Dominello, Mr David Shoebridge from the other place, former Deputy Premier the Hon. Carmel Tebbutt, former Opposition leader John Brogden, Danielle Wood from the Grattan Institute and journalist Antoinette Lattouf. The panel will discuss the theme, "The Power of Changing Your Mind." Members can register their interest to attend in person or online through Eventbrite.

*Members***PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARIES**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN:** On behalf of Ms Gladys Berejiklian: I inform the House that on 9 June 2021 James Henry Griffin, MP, ceased to be Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment and Veterans, and was appointed Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Veterans; Melanie Rhonda Gibbons, MP, ceased to be Parliamentary Secretary for Families, Disability and Emergency Services, and was appointed Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney General and for Families, Disability and Emergency Services; Felicity Lesley Wilson, MP, was appointed Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment; and the Hon. Shayne Mallard, MLC, was appointed Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and the Aerotropolis.

*Question Time***ROAD TOLLS**

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (14:18):** My question is directed to the Premier. Tolls are devastating tradies. Today I met with Paul Read from Kingsgrove, who pays \$20,000 a year in tolls, which prevents him from

hiring an apprentice. Sydney is the highest tolled city in the world. Will the Premier refuse to sign any contract with a 4 per cent increase in tolls and stop any tolls on old roads?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:19):** Some members might be acquainted with a book written by Carl Scully, which was an outline of his political memoirs. It provides context for the answer that I am about to provide. Mr Scully, who was the roads and transport Minister, talked about the fact that the two Chrises, Chris Bowen and Chris Minns, were essentially his brains trust.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Essentially, Mr Scully said in his memoir that the two Chrises, Chris Bowen and Chris Minns, were his brains trust in the office.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Curiously, between 2003 and 2005 the current Leader of the Opposition worked for the roads Minister Carl Scully.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Interestingly, during that time in 2004 the Labor Government signed the Lane Cove Tunnel project, which in fact endorsed and had as a policy the 4 per cent discount rate on tolls. So for the Leader of the Opposition to pretend that he has clean hands on this issue and that he is outraged by the 4 per cent escalation rate on tolls shows he is misleading the people of New South Wales on day three of his job. In fact, whilst Mr Minns was the primary adviser for Minister Scully at the time, the Labor Party did the Lane Cove Tunnel project, the Cross City Tunnel project and also the M7 orbital project—all with escalation costs of 4 per cent.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** In fact, on the Lane Cove Tunnel project how many years do you think that concession went for? It is going for 44 years. So whilst Mr Minns was the adviser to the roads Minister at the time, the Lane Cove Tunnel project was endorsed, as was the Cross City Tunnel project, which had only a 30-year concession rate. The M7 project had a 43-year concession rate. In defence of the Leader of the Opposition, whilst he signed off on those three tolls at a 4 per cent escalation rate, they were not Labor's worst toll road projects. Labor's worst toll project was in fact the Eastern Distributor toll road, which it signed and which had a 49-year concession period, which in fact is five years longer than the WestConnex project. The utter hypocrisy of those opposite goes unanswered.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I say to the Leader of the Opposition: Please be honest about your past. Please be honest about what you endorsed as Labor policy. Please be honest about where the 4 per cent discount or escalation rate on tolls came from. It came from you and Mr Scully. In all seriousness, in relation to cost-of-living issues, yesterday we raised the example of Jim from Bradbury, who managed to save nearly \$2,500 through Service NSW every year and Gwayne, who managed to save around \$1,500 through Service NSW. We also know that the New South Wales Liberals and Nationals provide concessions for people who pay tolls in relation to car rego—or discounts on car rego. A diligent member of my staff looked up to see on how many occasions the Leader of the Opposition, who has been in this place for six years, mentioned the cost of living. It was just once.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** On that occasion he was actually quoting something said by the transport Minister. In the six years that he has been in Parliament he has never raised the issue of the cost of living and he has never raised the issue of tolls. He was the shadow transport Minister and he never raised the issue before. What was he doing for all those years? We will try to go easy on him. It is only his first week in the job. But he needs to apologise for misleading the people of New South Wales.

#### STATE ECONOMY

**Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (14:24):** I address my question to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on what the Government is doing to keep our economy strong through supporting jobs and skills?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:24):** As members of this House know, our Government is absolutely passionate about jobs and skills, and especially education, as we work our way through the pandemic and our State recovers. I thank the member for Riverstone for his question. I acknowledge the great work he does as the Parliamentary Secretary for Education in this place and also the experience he brings to this place from the education sector. As all members of this place would know, the New South Wales Government has diligently been returning home every single week 3,000 Australians.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is too much chatter in the Chamber.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** We do this through compassion. We do it because it is the right thing to do. We know with those 3,000 Aussies we bring home every single week that that is a big risk for us during the pandemic but we have the resources and we make sure that those Aussies return home safely. Today I am pleased to say that the Treasurer outlined an approach we have in relation to a pilot scheme to see to what extent, through the universities paying and providing the accommodation, we could in the future expand to look at other returning travellers, whether it be international students or skilled labour.

Because we know that if our economy is to grow and if we are to reconnect with the rest of the world once the pandemic is over, we need to make sure we have the staff that are skilled and the education to ensure that they are able to fill those jobs. Interestingly, one of the biggest challenges—and I am sure the Deputy Premier gets this feedback as well—whether we are in the regions, Sydney, the Central Coast or the Illawarra, the biggest complaint or issue that businesses have at the moment is finding the right labour to meet the jobs that they have vacant. It is really important for us to build on those skills.

But getting back to quarantining and how important it is for us to start thinking about how we engage with the rest of the world and how economies open, as I said, we proudly welcome home 3,000 Aussies every single week. We have done that consistently. Unfortunately Victoria has not been able to do so for a long time. The other States certainly have not been able to return people based on their populations. Around 45 per cent of people we welcome back through Sydney airport are people from other States. I think it is only appropriate that if the Premier of Queensland can afford \$8 million on game 1 of the State of Origin she pays the New South Wales Government the \$40 million she owes us for the quarantine.

Everybody knows how diligent our Treasurer is. He is delivering the budget in just a couple of days—on 22 June 2021. Not only is he diligent in managing the State's budget and finances; he is also very diligent in sending invoices. Some States have paid up in relation to the service we provide in quarantining their citizens but Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory have not. I am sure that the Northern Territory will—it is in the mail; and we will be calling on Western Australia. But out of the \$50 million that our taxpayers are owed in New South Wales, \$40 million of that is owed by Queensland. We renew our claims today. We renew our calls to encourage the Premier of Queensland to pay up. Actually, let us encourage her to pay up before game two: Pay up before game two! In all seriousness, we perform this service on behalf of all Australians and the least they can do is to make sure they pay up.

The Treasurer spoke about the Intergenerational Report that was released this week. Looking to the future we know that education and skills are key to our success. If we have the right skills and the right education we are able to prepare—reskilling, retooling and affording opportunities to those who are going into their careers for the first time. Whether it is the Minister for education in the other place or Minister Lee in this place, especially in relation to TAFE and universities, our plan for the future is to make sure that people of any age and of any background are able to reskill and retool.

In fact, during COVID we were pleased to offer tens of thousands of free TAFE positions to people who wanted to reskill—over 100,000. One of the key areas of upskilling which provided jobs for people during COVID was in medical administration. A lot of people acquired that new skill for the first time and were allowed into the workforce into roles that were required at the time to support us in the pandemic. I also pay tribute to Professor Shergold and Mr Gonski, who supported the Government in allowing it to release a report into skills and the future of tertiary education, whether it is through university, TAFE or industry-led courses. [*Extension of time*]

**The SPEAKER:** Before the clock is started, I will ask the Opposition Whip to separate the member for Bankstown and the member for Wollongong if they continue to talk through question time, as they do on a regular basis.

[*An Opposition member interjected.*]

**The SPEAKER:** Order! It is actually quite audible. I ask that members be quiet.

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** Some exciting initiatives the New South Wales Government has announced that will be coming to life in the next few months include Careers NSW. Often people in the workforce

tell us that they could do with a career adviser or with career advice. So from September, or later in the year, we are piloting a program through Service NSW which allows people to get career advice but which will also be extended to parents of year 11 and 12 students who might want some advice for their children as well to make sure those opportunities are available.

Recently I was again pleased to be with Minister Lee to announce fee-free training for our veterans. I know that Minister Elliott also did a lot of work to make sure that our veterans are offered positions in the New South Wales public service. They are outstanding employees. They come with focus, discipline and work ethic. Recently Minister Lee and I were able to announce a new program which allows them to have fee-free training as they transition from their military life to civilian life. I thank the brave young woman and man who were with us that day and spoke about their personal experience in transitioning back into the workforce.

These are the types of initiatives that we need to think about the future: retraining, re-skilling and education, not in the traditional sense, accepting that disruption may be part of everybody's life in the future—we do not want to have to accept that—but also accepting that people of any age and any profession might have to look to another career path. I do not think anyone working for a major airline would have thought that this disruption would have impacted them in the way that it did. Many of them had to go to other jobs and have since fortunately returned. This is a good Government, planning for the future, making sure that we are nimble and flexible because we are the party for the workers. We care about jobs. If the Queensland Premier cares about her citizens coming back from overseas she should pay up her bill before game two!

### ROAD TOLLS

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (14:32):** I direct my question to the Premier. Today Labor also met with Rob, an owner-driver from Sydney's north who now pays \$50,000 a year in tolls. What does the Premier say to the tradies and the small business people of Sydney who have been hit hard with toll mania?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:32):** I say to the tradies and small business people of New South Wales: Thank you for doing the right thing in COVID. Proudly, New South Wales small and medium-sized businesses were able to continue because we kept construction sites open. We kept the infrastructure pipeline going. We made sure unemployment did not go to those lows experienced in other States. We also say to people who have any issues around the cost of living, "Please make sure you go to Service NSW. You can save thousands and thousands of dollars every single year if you go to a cost of living specialist." I say to those members opposite: Politics aside, if they genuinely care about the welfare of their citizens, make sure they get the information about cost-of-living measures. There are 70 rebates to be had.

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

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN:** I say to all the tradies and small business people in western Sydney in particular that I am proud of every one of them. Because without the backbone of those small businesses New South Wales would not be where it is today. Yes, they are difficult times, but those businesses stepped up when we needed them to step up. They kept on their staff when we needed them to keep on their staff. They kept people employed. They helped build economic activity in New South Wales. We say thank you to them because we are the party for the workers.

### STATE ECONOMY AND JOBS

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (14:34):** My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on how the Government is supporting jobs and the economy in disaster-affected communities?

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

**Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:34):** I thank the member for his question. He is a good member who, along with his community, has endured much over the past years, with the disasters we have faced as a State. They say Australia is a sunburnt country, a land of sweeping plains, of rugged mountain ranges, of drought, bushfires and flooding rains. Over the past two years all that has come true. We know that in the regions it has been tough. What we have been able to do in one way is to turn disaster into opportunity. Wherever we have been able to invest in disaster recovery, we have been able to support local businesses and farmers, our supply chain and our tradies to get in and help the State and Federal governments in what was one of the largest logistical programs in cleaning up the State after disasters.

Some 3,600 homes were lost in the bushfires a couple of years ago. In the recent rains again a number of homes were impacted, and we saw the impact on businesses that closed during peak tourism periods. But the New

South Wales Government along with the Federal Government invested \$250 million. We put grants back into businesses so they could keep their doors open and keep people employed at a time when those regions were doing it tough on the back of having tourism shut down, especially on the South Coast. They missed out at the peak of summer—the peak of their tourism period—but this Government and the Federal Government supported those businesses through the tough times so that they are there today. The fabric and the foundations of those small businesses remain, so they can take the opportunity we see today.

Through COVID the New South Wales Government, in supporting small business along with the Federal Government, was making sure that businesses stayed open. When the floods hit, we saw again up on the mid North Coast a lot of our dairy farmers nearly put out of business. These are the same dairy farmers who were affected by first drought and now floods. The real impact of these disasters will be spoken about and written about for decades to come. Those impacts will be felt by those communities for decades to come. Having come through the disaster and now coming through the recovery does not mean the pain will not be felt. That is why the New South Wales Government in its support packages—and there is more to announce—in relation to communities and local government areas off the back of fires and flooding sees it as an opportunity to rebuild communities and those strong regional economies.

Off the back of COVID, which is a disastrous pandemic, we saw the response from regional and rural New South Wales. As the rains came, commodity prices improved, the drought broke and tourism improved because of our closed international borders. There has been a revival in regional and rural New South Wales. That is why through a number of significant grant programs we are now investing with businesses to attract events to the regions and attract tourism. We are backing businesses to employ more, to take the opportunity in front of us, because we know already there is a net migration away from Sydney to the regions. As I said before, a couple of years ago in Dubbo and Cooma, at the Telegraph bush summits, we were talking about doom and gloom. Today we are talking about prosperity and opportunity, the revival we see in the bush. But we must keep our foot on the pedal to make sure that we do not lose the momentum or opportunity. That is why the New South Wales Government is at the heart of investing.

A number of programs by the New South Wales Government, especially with the focus on regional and rural New South Wales, by chance have set up the regions to take and embrace the opportunity in front of us. Our investment in small community projects through our Stronger Country Communities, Regional Growth, sports and cultural funds has been a benefit as a social amenity but also a benefit for local businesses, supply chains and tradies. We are boosting the economy. In last year's budget alone in regional and rural New South Wales \$950 million was for upgraded or new hospitals and \$650 million was for the schools we are upgrading or building.

Under the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads we are seeing over \$7 billion invested in rail and road—local roads, country roads and bridges, our highways. Just before Christmas we were lucky enough to be able to open the last stretch of the Pacific Highway—which is a showcase of the investment—worth close to \$16 billion. In over 10 years of being in government, in partnership with the Federal Government, we have delivered record investment in infrastructure and, more importantly, record investment in jobs and the economy. At the heart of everything we have done as a government is our recycling of assets. We have been bolshie in the bush, where we were able to take 30 per cent of the recycling of the poles and wires. [*Extension of time*]

That investment was seen in regional and rural New South Wales and allowed us to build the roads, highways and water infrastructure, the schools, hospitals and health infrastructure of the future, because we had the guts to go to an election about recycling assets. We heard the Premier earlier this week say that the net value of this State has increased significantly. This is not about selling assets just to pay public servants' wages, as has occurred under Labor. The way they are promising all sorts of pay rises for the public service shows that they think that it is a never-ending bank account. The reality is our recycling of assets will go down in history as the moment in time when a policy of this Liberal-Nationals Government unlocked the economic power of the State. I know many of those opposite support the recycling of assets. I think they have a few things mixed up. I read this morning that the former chief of staff to Mr Bowen is now the chief of staff to the Leader of the Opposition. I saw their first post with the new deputy: "We're ready."

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

**Mr JOHN BARILARO:** I thought that sounded familiar. I have heard it before. Then it clicked for me. There was a post on the eve of the Federal election. A number of people were standing in the parliamentary office, and the title was "We're ready". Mr Bowen was standing there with the same slogan. We know his chief of staff is the Leader of the Opposition's chief of staff. They mixed up recycling of assets with the recycling of liabilities. If they had a look at the result of that election— [*Time expired.*]

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

## WAGES AND ROAD TOLLS

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (14:42):** My question is directed to the Premier. Why is the pay rate for paramedics going up by 1 per cent while tolls are going up by 4 per cent?

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (14:42):** The member for Londonderry should just ask the gentleman next to her. In 2004 he put up tolls by 4 per cent. On three occasions during the time he worked for Minister Scully the Labor Party signed up to three new tolls, all of which had an escalation rate of 4 per cent. Why does she not just ask him?

## STATE ECONOMY

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (14:42):** My question is addressed to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Government is growing the economy and supporting the vulnerable?

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Treasurer) (14:43):** I appreciate the well-written question from the member for Tweed to the Treasurer's office. It is right on point as always. Today is a great day for the people of New South Wales, and particularly for the 100,000 or so people who rely on international students for work. New South Wales has led the nation when it comes to working with NSW Health and the New South Wales police to put forward a plan to bring international students back. It is our second largest export after coal; our largest service export valued at \$14 billion. Back in 2019 I spoke about the hundreds of thousands of people who rely on this industry. The cost to the New South Wales economy to date by not having international students back in our State is around \$5 billion and it will grow to around \$11 billion by the end of 2022.

Today we put the plan out that will run alongside our hotel quarantine plan for returning Australians. Importantly, not one Australian who is overseas and seeking to come back into the country will be jeopardised and not get a seat on a plane, because this will be above the cap of 3,000 returning Australians to New South Wales every week. We take the lion's share. I think close to 40 per cent of returning Australians who come into the country are from other States.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** The Premier is right to say that about the other States, but more particularly Queensland—former Queensland Treasurer Jackie Trad signed up to an agreement where all States—

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** —would pay their own way for those returning Australians, and the Queenslanders have reneged on that deal.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** But nothing changes: It is beautiful one day there, subsidised by New South Wales the next.

**The SPEAKER:** I am tired of members conversing in this Chamber when they should be listening to question time. I will start calling members to order if I even see them talking.

**Ms Janelle Saffin:** Mr Speaker, we are tired of them not answering questions. That is why we talk.

**The SPEAKER:** I place the member for Lismore on two calls to order. I call the member for Canterbury to order for the second time.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** If we have to send the sheriff up there we will. If we have to wind Queensland up we will. I am happy to enter into a payment plan.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** Afterpay is available. I know they are struggling, but they should pay up and they should do the right thing. We have done the heavy lifting when it comes to quarantine, and today's announcement is a great one for the New South Wales economy. It will help tens of thousands of people right across our State who rely on this industry for a job. In addition, the health Minister and I were out this morning announcing—

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** —an \$82.8 million increase in palliative care services right across the State. Chris O'Brien Lifehouse, near Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, as a result of a \$2.9 million investment—



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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** —for the first time, in addition to the cancer services it provides for its patients—

**Mr Ryan Park:** Point of order: It is both sides here. There is talk on both sides of this Chamber.

**The SPEAKER:** And I have just put the member for Oatley on a call to order. The member will resume his seat.

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** —will have six new palliative care beds. We met Jack and his wife, Jane. Jack will be one of the beneficiaries; he is being treated currently at Chris O'Brien Lifehouse and he will get support from that palliative service program. [*Extension of time*]

I thank the health Minister for his strong advocacy in this area. I remember in the 2017 budget we invested \$100 million in palliative care services, and almost every year since then we have invested more in that space.

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** The recurrent investment we make in palliative care is \$220 million every year. We are nation-leading in this place. Particularly with an ageing population, a sign of any good society is how it looks after its most vulnerable people, and the investment that we made today in palliative care goes right to the heart of that. I congratulate the health Minister. The announcement was warmly received out there at Chris O'Brien Lifehouse this morning and it probably will be leading the news tonight. Once again, as we lead into the budget process, what is different from the other States—

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

**Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET:** —is that the upcoming budget is not a budget in structural deficit; it is a budget that is financially sound and is not just focused on the issues of the present with COVID, but also on transforming our State moving forward to make sure our State is better for generations to come.

#### MONARO FARMING SYSTEMS

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (14:49):** My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. A senior public servant noted in relation to the Deputy Premier's demand that \$50,000 be given to Monaro Farming Systems that they were "concerned about the nature of this agreement, concerned about the ethics", and then went on to further say, "Is it favouritism? Is it bribery?" Deadset, Deputy Premier, is this a grant or a bribe?

**Mr JOHN BARILARO (Monaro—Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade, and Deputy Premier) (14:50):** A great question. Deadset, it is a great question. I thank the member for the question and I say to her: Do not always believe what you read. A personal file note written by an unidentified bureaucrat does not reflect government process. I do not have any jurisdiction, unfortunately, over the Department of Primary Industries. As a local member, I will always continue to fight for funding for projects and for my community. Just like those opposite like to parade ambos or nurses up here, I am more than happy to bring in all my farmers from Monaro and sit them up in the gallery and those opposite can tell them why they do not deserve any funding. I will keep doing my job, which is to advocate for the people of Monaro and Monaro Farming Systems, who are the modern farmers. These are the guys who know how to farm, and produce food and fibre. If those opposite have any further questions why do they not direct them to the Department of Primary Industries?

#### SOCIAL AND DISABILITY SERVICES

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (14:51):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is showing leadership in supporting the social and disability services sector to remain a strong and vibrant part of the State's economy?

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai—Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) (14:51):** I thank the member, who is not only a great member for Albury but also has a great concern for his community and the community services sector within his electorate. I also extend my congratulations to the Leader of the Opposition. I was not surprised to read on the weekend that he considers himself a true believer. Over the past two years I think all of us who have witnessed the way in which he has undermined his own team and the former leader can see that he is a true believer in himself. In over 30 years as a legal practitioner I have never heard of a case where the assassin, with the knife in his hand and the corpse still warm, says, "I think we need to be a bit more positive."

**Mr Jihad Dib:** Point of order: Like everybody else in this Chamber, I was waiting to hear an answer about what the Minister is doing to help the most vulnerable people.

**The SPEAKER:** I have given the Minister a little discretion. I ask him now to come to the question.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** I was simply making the point that Brutus showed more care about Caesar than Mr Positivity over there showed about the member for Strathfield. He keeps telling everyone he went to Princeton. The only prince he cares about is Prince Hamlet of Denmark.

**Mr Ryan Park:** Point of order: If this clown is not up to being a Minister of the Crown he should get another job. This is his first go in question time and this is the drivel he gives.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! I call the Deputy Premier to order for the first time. The Minister will return to the question.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** Mr Speaker, the—

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

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** The New South Wales Government supports and protects the community's most vulnerable people.

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

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** It is a great honour to be in this portfolio, which is a very important portfolio for our community. While the Government side of the House is concentrating on breaking the cycle of disadvantage, the Opposition is focused on breaking the cycle of incompetence. On Monday, with the Minister for Water, Property and Housing, we went to a new social and affordable housing development in Redfern. It had 160 brand-new units, housing 400 people in beautiful housing in downtown Redfern. It is part of our \$1 billion investment in the Social and Affordable Housing Fund.

Those homes will provide safe and secure social housing for some of the community's most vulnerable people. At a different location, in southern Sydney, the Minister for Water, Property and Housing and I met Warren, who is a social housing tenant living in Sydney's south, in one of the New South Wales Government's brand new housing developments. Those are great examples of the way in which we are investing in social and affordable housing in this State.

**Mrs Melinda Pavey:** And in lives.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** And in lives. The social and community services sector is a big employer of our State's economy. Last Wednesday I had the great pleasure to visit Jannawi, a Targeted Early Intervention provider in south-western Sydney. I met Aisha and Catherine, two great social workers. I want to give a big shout out to the wonderful social workers who work with some of our most vulnerable children.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** That was an example of a social community provider who was receiving funds from the \$50 million investment in the Social Sector Transformation Fund. I look forward to announcing more support for social sector organisations through that fund very soon. In homelessness, the New South Wales Government is investing \$65 million in new funding to create Together Home, which is providing housing and wraparound support for hundreds of people sleeping rough. We expanded assertive outreach from just one location in the City of Sydney to almost 60 local government areas across the State, and we are already seeing very positive results. There has been a 13 per cent reduction statewide in people sleeping on the street.

**Mr Justin Clancy:** I seek additional information.

**The SPEAKER:** Two minutes is granted.

**Mr Clayton Barr:** Point of order: Under Standing Order 131, it is at your discretion whether or not the person get extra time.

**The SPEAKER:** I have exercised that discretion and I am giving two minutes.

**Mr Clayton Barr:** This speaker spent the first two minutes of his answer—

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Cessnock will resume his seat. The Minister has the call.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** We are investing in the youth justice system to demonstrate that commitment. In the area of disabilities, we have provided \$10 million in 2020-21—\$17 million over two years—to support increased employment opportunities for workers in the disability sector in need of an increased skilled

workforce. The one big infrastructure announcement during the by-election campaign by the member for Kogarah when he was elected to Hurstville council was a fully accessible toilet. A fully accessible toilet is a worthwhile investment and I congratulate the Opposition leader on that.

**Mr Ryan Park:** Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. It is drivell. What is this guy?

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Keira will resume his seat. I will hear further from the Minister but I will be mindful.

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS:** I am talking about accessible toilets; I am the disability services Minister. The problem was that he went to the election about a disability toilet and then he voted against disabled access to the building that contained the disabled toilet. Anyone who is considering voting for this gentleman needs to be conscious of his record. All I can say is that they cannot get a toilet right and I think their prospects at the next election are going right down the toilet.

**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Rockdale to order for the third time. I remind the members representing the electorates of Rockdale, Cessnock, Port Stephens, Wollongong and Prospect that they are all on three calls to order and I will not hesitate to throw out any of them if I hear them during the next two questions.

### POLICE SUICIDE

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (14:59):** My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. Minister, what proactive steps is the Government going to implement to urgently address the issue of suicide amongst current and former serving police officers?

**Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Police and Emergency Services) (14:59):** I genuinely thank the member for Orange for his question and his interest in the welfare of police officers. I note that he, as a former police officer, has only recently lost loved ones with whom he served in the NSW Police Force. I speak for us all in this place when I say every suicide is a tragedy which sends ripples across our community. It affects families, friends, colleagues and loved ones. I place on record my heartfelt condolences to those who have been impacted by recent tragedies in our police family. As recently as this morning, I met with a woman who has been touched by the issues that we are addressing this afternoon.

It is a blessing that the police family is a tight-knit family. I note that the member for Orange, along with the members representing the electorates of Myall Lakes, Seven Hills and Goulburn, are aware of how tight-knit that family is. That family supports members from the day they march into the parade ground at the Goulburn Academy to the day they hang up their boots. Far beyond when their career in policing is finished, they still enjoy the camaraderie of those with whom they served. Our police officers are on the front line 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. They protect our community and discharge their duties in what is a much more difficult profession than any of us here will really understand.

As the member for Orange would know, country policing is a particularly challenging brand of policing, especially in these past few years, with drought, bushfire, flood, pandemic and, of course, the prevalence of drugs. Despite those challenges, our police officers have truly demonstrated their fortitude in continuing to shoulder the effort of keeping our communities safe across those wideranging disruptions. One does not need to go beyond the work undertaken by officers this week, disrupting the largest cocaine haul in our history and working alongside our international intelligence agencies to foil the international syndicate. On Tuesday police investigators executed 33 search warrants, arrested 35 people and seized 27 firearms, \$800,000 worth of cash, luxury vehicles worth \$1.5 million, and a significant amount of prohibited drugs. Operation Ironside was established by the Federal Police, who worked alongside the FBI and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, investigating serious organised crime and outlaw motorcycle gangs, exposing those police officers executing their duties to a great deal of stress and anxiety, not to mention the worry that their families must have faced.

Such critical disruptions mean that our community can sleep a little bit easier each night because there are fewer drugs, fewer violent crimes and fewer organised crimes in our industries. Large-scale drug busts and routine policing work our police to the bone. But we must remember that heroic work comes at a cost. I assure the House and indeed the community that the physical health and mental wellbeing of our community officers is paramount to this Government. We understand that police officers are often first on scene to what can be the worst days of the lives of many of us—car accidents, assaults, domestic violence, drug overdoses, unlawful protests and worse. Our Government is committed to providing the necessary services to ensure that our police are physically and psychologically fit. Our Government continues to work with the NSW Police Force to prevent psychological and physical injury, and to ensure that injured officers, former officers and their families are given exactly the same access that anybody would expect in rehabilitation and support.

The police remain committed to supporting officers who decide to leave the organisation due to medical retirement, with a range of programs and online tools being made available to them. Those services on offer continue to be strengthened, with mental and psychological support services for officers including access to 17 in-house psychologists to provide fitness-for-duty assessments, advice on education on specific topics and provide welfare checks. Peer support officers provide a constant, critical and, most importantly, informal, peer-based presence, with each officer trained in mental health first aid. The Employee Assistance Program provides incident support for traumatic events as well as accessible psychological services beyond the term of an officer's career.

The family support coordinators who are made available to officers provide short-term information, advice and referral services to support family members of employees of the NSW Police Force. Those coordinators work in collaboration with other internal and external supports to build resilience, social connections and provide families with coping skills. The Your Health Check, which is a suicide prevention, stress management and resilience training program, has been delivered right across the State. WellCheck is a proactive monitoring service for officers performing higher risk duties. In November 2020 the NSW Police Force released its mental wellbeing strategy for 2025, in which success is defined as getting our people, our officers and all those who work in the NSW Police Force home safely each and every night. [*Extension of time*]

In addition, the RECON program provides in-house intensive physiotherapy and reconditioning services at three clinics. The program has already delivered excellent results with around 80 per cent of officers treated under the RECON program returning to pre-injury duties. The Government recognises that and works continuously to achieve greater outcomes for our men and women in blue. The NSW Police Force enjoys a record \$4.2 billion budget, which continues to support its day-to-day operations. A \$585 million commitment adds more boots on the ground and provides the single largest increase to frontline policing in more than 30 years by delivering 1,500 new officers. The Government has committed \$549 million to capital works, which will see police stations built statewide. Importantly, those stations will be a refuge for police officers and will provide amenities that they desperately deserve. The Government has already delivered 30 new police stations.

Further, mandatory disease testing will support our frontline workers when they are assaulted, because no-one deserves to be left in limbo when they are spat on or thumped during their work day. We have introduced the optional disengagement program. I thank the Treasurer for his support and for ensuring that the program will provide officers with more certainty and financial security when they leave the force. The program acknowledges that policing is a career like no other. Under the scheme, officers with 10 or more years of dedicated service will be able to transition out of the force in a manner of their choosing. The men and women of our force have had our backs and we have theirs. We will continue to deliver for them and support them. Most importantly, we will never forget those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty and those who are taken too early in tragic circumstances. Once again, I thank the member for his question.

### ENERGY SECURITY AND JOBS

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (15:06):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Energy and Environment. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government's plan to deliver energy security and clean jobs across the State is progressing?

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (15:06):** We know there was nothing clean about how the Leader of the Opposition got his job, is that not right, member for Strathfield? I thank the member for Manly for his question and for his commitment to clean jobs in New South Wales. The member for Manly is a great champion for building a stronger, more prosperous State for everyone across New South Wales. That is why the Government is rolling out the biggest renewable energy plan in the State's history. More importantly, it is a jobs plan for everyone in New South Wales. There are jobs in the cities, jobs in the bush—jobs for everyone. In fact, the plan is worth \$58 billion. Those are not government jobs; they are private sector jobs that will build the infrastructure that we need to modernise the grid, keep electricity prices down, keep the lights on and create jobs. We know it is a good plan because the Leader of the Opposition re-announced it in the *Illawarra Mercury*, that august paper of journalistic integrity. On day three of the Leader of the Opposition's much-vaunted 100-day plan, he stole our energy and our jobs policy.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Plagiarism. Is that how he got through Princeton?

**Mr MATT KEAN:** That is right. Who needs Princeton when you can pinch, Mr Speaker? That was the centrepiece sort of beast of his much-vaunted 100-day plan—day three. I came across a copy of the Minns manifesto, the 100-day plan. Day one got off to a flyer. It was a good start. It said, "Have cannoli with Guy Zangari." What a flyer! Why did the member for Strathfield not think of that? Day two of that much-vaunted plan got off to another great start. Day two said, "Praise the Premier." He said, "I think the Premier and her Government are doing a good job." That came on day two of that much-vaunted plan. I can see what all the hype

that Jamie Clements has been building up was all about. Day three said, "Pinch the New South Wales Government's energy plan," from Mr Positivity—the shadow Minister for "I love Gladys". Who needs an Opposition? That was day three. I note the question from the member for Manly included energy security. That is why the New South Wales Government is building—

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Keira will come to order.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** —the New South Wales to Queensland interconnector, for example, which will help to ensure that we keep the lights on while we modernise our electricity system. That is an important project. The Government is not only rolling out the interconnector; it is also rolling out the Emerging Energy Program to ensure that we keep energy security across the grid as we modernise our system. We have the Emerging Energy Program, we have the interconnector being built and recently, together with Energy Australia, we supported the Tallawarra B gas project in the Illawarra. That project will create jobs and ensure that we keep the system secure and stable. And do the members responsible for the electorates of Granville, Blue Mountains and Port Stephens not wish they had the same security at the moment? In their defence, I cannot find "appoint a shadow Cabinet" anywhere in the 100-day plan. And the plan goes on. Day four of the 100-day plan stated, "Plagiarise Bob Carr's tolls policy from 1995."

**Mr Ryan Park:** Point of order: If it was funny we would give him an extra two minutes but it is boring and pathetic so I take a point of order under Standing Order 129. It is boring and it is not funny. We would allow it if Robbo was doing it, but this is terrible. Peter Phelps has not written that.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister may continue but he must be mindful of the question.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** I understand why the member for Keira is upset: He has passed up the opportunity to lead the Opposition for this 100-day plan. That is the problem for the member for Keira.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** He's got a six-month plan.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** The member for Kogarah was working on his 100-day plan for six years. The member for Keira needed only six minutes to come up with something better than that. Day five was an interesting day. Day five was, "Apologise to the member for Strathfield." Followed by day six—

**Ms Jodi McKay:** Can we go back to day five?

**Mr James Griffin:** Mr Speaker, I seek additional information.

**The SPEAKER:** I will grant the Minister a two-minute extension of time. I am mindful that it is the last question on Thursday and I often allow a little more leeway on the last question of a Thursday, but I ask the Minister to be mindful of the question.

**Mr MATT KEAN:** We are talking about creating jobs, and the Government is creating jobs. Our energy plan will deliver at least 9,000 direct jobs in building and modernising our electricity system, and that is before I talk about those indirect jobs that will deliver the cheapest and most reliable energy anywhere on the planet. It is not just about jobs, clean energy or investment; it is about driving jobs into the bush. That is what the Government is all about under the Berejiklian-Barilaro leadership. Those good, well-paying jobs support the private sector. We are not charging taxpayers for those jobs. We have a clear plan. Speaking of plans, the member for Strathfield wanted me to return to day five of the 100-day plan, which was, "Apologise to the member for Strathfield." That was followed by day six, which was, "Apologise to the member for Maroubra."

The member for Kogarah has issued more apologies than Mel Gibson. That is what Labor is dealing with. The point is, it does not matter what plans Labor comes up with, it does not matter who the jockey is, the horse is a dud and that is the reality. They can put anyone in charge of that operation but it is a dud product and it is going nowhere. We are not focused on our jobs; we are focused on creating jobs in New South Wales, supporting people's jobs in New South Wales and growing a more prosperous and strong economy for everyone to benefit from. That is the difference between Government members and the party led by the Leader of the Opposition. All of the hype that was generated by Jamie Clements has come to nothing but a plan to plagiarise, to praise the Premier and to ensure that the Government stays in place and delivers for the people of New South Wales for many years to come.

## ROAD TOLLS

**Ms GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN (Willoughby—Premier) (15:14):** In the interests of accuracy I confirm that two toll roads were baked in at 4 per cent under the Labor Party and the Leader of the Opposition, not three as I suggested. They were the Eastern Distributor and the Lane Cove Tunnel for some vehicles.

*Business of the House***SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN:** I move:

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

- (1) Permit the resumption of consideration of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Bill 2021 prior to the commencement of community recognition statements.
- (2) Should consideration of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Bill 2021 not be concluded by 4.00 p.m., its consideration shall be interrupted for the petition debate.

**Motion agreed to.**

**SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: APPROPRIATION BILL AND COGNATE BILLS**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN:** I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended:

- (1) On Tuesday 22 June 2021 to:
  - (a) provide for the following routine of business prior to 2.15 p.m.:
    - (i) at 12.00 noon, Speaker takes the chair;
    - (ii) introduction and second reading speech on the Appropriation Bill and cognate bills; and
    - (iii) the Speaker to leave the chair until 2.15 p.m.
  - (b) permit the giving of general business notices of motions (general notices) at the conclusion of placing and disposal of business.
- (2) On Thursday 24 June 2021:
  - (a) to interrupt the business before the House at 9.45 a.m. to permit the Leader of the Opposition to speak on the Appropriation Bill and cognate bills;
  - (b) following the speech of the Leader of the Opposition on the Appropriation Bill and cognate bills, the passage through all remaining stages, with the question "That these bills be now read a second time" being put forthwith, without consideration in detail on the bills;
  - (c) a member, immediately following the passage of the Appropriation Bill and cognate bills, to move the motion "That this House take note of the Budget Estimates and Related Papers for 2021-2022"; and
  - (d) after the member has moved "That this House take note of the Budget Estimates and Related Papers for 2021-2022":
    - (i) the debate is to be adjourned without motion moved;
    - (ii) the resumption of the debate is to be set down as an order of the day for a later time; and
    - (iii) the mover may speak to the motion at a later time prior to their right of reply.
  - (e) the House to resume the regular routine of business, namely:
    - (i) Government business for up to 30 minutes;
    - (ii) general business notices of motions for bills for up to 20 minutes;
    - (iii) general business orders of the day for bills for up to 90 minutes; and
    - (iv) general business notices of motions or orders of the day (not being bills).
  - (f) to permit the consideration of the routine of business to continue until 2.00 p.m.

**Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (15:18):** By leave: I appreciate that this has been the approach for many years, where we see the Government in the Legislative Assembly suspend standing orders to not allow anyone other than the Treasurer and the Leader of the Opposition to speak on the budget. But at some point we need to recognise that a level of arrogance and lack of accountability and scrutiny exists. Ninety-three members are elected to this Chamber and a number of different parties are represented, including crossbench members and Independents. As it currently stands this suspension of standing orders overrides the standing orders that allow for debate on appropriation bills under Standing Order 85 (ii), which allow any member to make a contribution to the budget debate.

What we are doing here and what has become a standard operating procedure for this Chamber is allowing the Government to wave through its budget, with the support of the Opposition, and to have absolutely no scrutiny of the budget in the Legislative Assembly. When the numbers are so tight—today we saw 44-44, with the casting

vote used by the Chair—the people of New South Wales probably expect that we would deliver a little more scrutiny and a little more assessment of the budget. There are ways that we could do that which would not delay the passage of the budget. I say to the Attorney General there are ways that we could allow, at the very least, representatives of the parties that are represented here as well as the Independents to make a contribution to the debate.

To have it waved through yet again with a rubber stamp from this Chamber—it needs to at least be put on the record that The Greens have serious concerns about that approach. It is also worthwhile putting Opposition members on notice that were they to find themselves on the other side of the Chamber in 2023, we hope they would listen to those concerns and recognise that there is a need to provide scrutiny of the budget—both in this Chamber and in the other place. As I said before, there are 93 members of this Chamber and as it stands the State budget debate will have contributions from two people. It is important for us to recognise the fact that this should not be a rubber stamp.

The other question that needs to be asked is: If Government members are so proud of the budget they will be handing down on 22 June this year, why would they not welcome the opportunity for further debate and discussion? Are they concerned that many vulnerable people in this community will want their voices heard because they have been forgotten in the budget? But we are not given the opportunity to raise those concerns, to debate the budget or to provide any scrutiny. That, to me and to The Greens, is a real shame. It is something that needs to change in the operations of this Chamber.

**Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (15:21):** By leave: I make a short contribution. I understand in principle what the member for Newtown is saying. All of us believe, certainly on this side of the Chamber, in the need for transparency. It is an issue that we could collectively start to look at across the Parliament going forward. But we also are not in the business of delaying budgets and delaying money going into vital public services. That is not what Labor is about and we do not want to be involved in something that causes that delay. In saying that, I think there is an opportunity for this place to examine in a spirit of bipartisanship how budgets can be more appropriately examined going forward.

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence) (15:22):** In reply: I thank the member for Newtown and the member for Keira for their contributions. This suspension of standing orders reflects conventional practice in this place. It has been the conventional practice since at least 2006 and was a common practice before 2006, under both Liberal-Nationals and Labor governments. Ever since 2006, apart from last year's COVID interruption, the budget has been delivered close to the end of the financial year. It is imperative that the budget bills get through both Houses so that our finances are in order for the commencement of the next financial year.

As far as transparency and accountability are concerned, there are ample opportunities both in this House and elsewhere to examine the budget in detail. There will be a take-note debate in which every one of the 93 members will be able to talk about his or her electorate or matters more broadly. The Public Accounts Committee can look at the budget. The Auditor-General will examine the budget. There will be a debate in the Legislative Council. As a Minister at the receiving end of the voluminous questions on notice, I can say that every member has the right to ask Ministers questions on notice about the budget and there are of course questions without notice.

We now have a practice in the Legislative Council of every Minister appearing before budget estimates twice a year. For every Minister and their public servants and colleagues, and sometimes Parliamentary Secretaries, there is a day of budget estimates every six months. Of course, we now have extensive use of Standing Order 52 calls for papers in the Legislative Council. There is enormous opportunity for examination and transparency about this budget. It is imperative that the budget gets through Finance. For those reasons, I moved the suspension of standing orders.

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

**Motion agreed to.**

#### *Petitions*

#### **PETITIONS RECEIVED**

**The CLERK:** I announce that the following paper petition signed by 500 or more persons has been lodged for presentation:

#### **Wallacia Cemetery Development**

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly stop the proposed commercial cemetery development at 1290 Greendale Road, Wallacia, on a flood plain, received from **Mr Peter Sidgreaves**.

### RESPONSES TO PETITIONS

**The CLERK:** I announce that the following Minister has lodged a response to an electronic petition signed by more than 500 persons:

The Hon. Rob Stokes—Gay Family Koala Advocacy—lodged 4 May 2021 (Mr Greg Warren)

#### *Bills*

### PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS AMENDMENT BILL 2021

#### Consideration in Detail

**Consideration resumed from an earlier hour.**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (15:25):** To resume where I left off this morning, the Government does not support amendment No. 3 as passed in the other place. The Government is instead proposing an amendment that will reinstate the provision that existed in the Protection of Cruelty to Animals Act [POCTAA], as was amended by the previous State Government in 2007, to remove the ability for private citizens to initiate prosecutions under the Protection of Cruelty to Animals Act to ensure that only the three enforcement agencies—the NSW Police Force, the RSPCA NSW and the Animal Welfare League NSW—can undertake those prosecutions in the courts under the Act.

In relation to amendment No. 4 which was agreed to in the other place, it is understood that its intention was to revise and replace the current New South Wales *Animal Welfare Code of Practice—Breeding dogs and cats*, also known as the breeding code. However, the drafting of the amendment means that a revised breeding code would not actually replace the current version. Additionally, the requirement to publish a new version of the breeding code by 31 May is no longer possible as such. The Government is proposing to oppose the amendment and introduce an amendment to replace it that is absolutely reflective of the intent of the other place. This amendment will resolve the drafting issue contained in the amendment from the other place and update the date by which a new version of the breeding code must be published.

Amendment No. 4 inserted the requirement to review the code as a new provision within section 34A of POCTAA. This section allows for guidelines to be prescribed or adopted by the regulations for the purpose of being admissible in evidence in proceedings of compliance or failure to comply with POCTAA or the regulations. However, the current version of the breeding code is prescribed as a mandatory code of practice relating to an animal breeding establishment in schedule 1 to the regulation, not under section 34A of POCTAA. The effect of the amendment is that there will be two versions of the breeding code, both existing under POCTAA at the same time. To avoid confusion, the Government is bringing forward its amendment to clarify that; to reflect the intent of the other place to ensure that there is just one breeding code under POCTAA, not two; and to change the date to ensure that the new breeding code is to be published by 31 August 2021, not at a date which has now subsequently passed.

Lastly, to go back to where I started, I again clarify the issue of the interim disqualification order. POCTAA already provides that inspectors under POCTAA have the ability to remove animals from the care and control of those who pose a risk to the welfare of those animals. It should be noted that the order proposed in amendment No. 1 from the other place is available to the courts only while proceedings against a person charged with an animal welfare offence are actually underway and, again, the court must be satisfied that the person is likely to commit another animal cruelty offence. If this threshold is not met then the order cannot be applied.

Also, there are existing provisions within POCTAA that provide for the seizure of animals outside of a court process. As I said this morning, section 24J gives inspectors the power to immediately seize animals if the inspector suspects that an offence has been or is about to be committed in respect of those animals. Section 24Q of POCTAA provides that inspectors can seize and dispose of or detain animals following a Stock Welfare Panel process. As I explained earlier, the panel process is a well-regarded and thorough process supported by all stakeholders focused on working with stock owners to address welfare issues.

If the owner of stock animals has not taken steps to address welfare concerns as required by the official warning then an inspector can and will be authorised to seize and dispose of the animals. Stock Welfare Panels are intended to operate as an alternative pathway to prosecution. That is why they are in part 2B of the Act, where it will result in better welfare outcomes. I think it was clearly demonstrated during the recent drought that those



Stock Welfare Panels achieved better animal welfare outcomes and certainly better outcomes for the owners of the livestock that were involved in those processes.

If someone has gone through a Stock Welfare Panel process which provides for multiple opportunities to work with the experts from the enforcement agencies—the Department of Primary Industries, Local Land Services and NSW Farmers—to fix those animal welfare issues but animal welfare issues still remain at the end of that process, then prosecution may be appropriate. It is during these proceedings only that an interim disqualification order can be used. The interim disqualification order is another mechanism to protect the welfare of animals. It simply gives this power to the courts, not just the enforcement agency inspectors, who are often best placed to weigh up the facts of the case and determine whether an order is appropriate. I commend the Government amendments to the House.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (15:31):** I speak on the amendments that have come from the other place. I say at the outset that the Opposition will not be dividing on these; the Opposition will support them but I have some important comments to make about what has happened. The first amendment to section 30B is fine. It is important that the Government understands there is a lot of concern in the community about the operation of this section. I thank the Minister for the clarification he made but we still have a fundamental lack of understanding. For the court to have powers to make a court order is different from the executive powers under section 24J of the Act.

Under section 24J, the costs of the seize and sell order, if that progresses, are deducted from the sale. In that situation the experts—veterinarians, farmers, enforcement agencies and Local Land Services—will all be working together with the farmer. During the recent drought there were 35 Stock Welfare Panels. Five proceeded to court and those are the cases to which this would apply. Those cases happen often in situations where farmers have reached decision paralysis and are unable to sell off their stock in advance or do something to address the situation that they are in.

This amendment will ensure that, if they are still unable to get themselves out of a situation where they have care and control of those animals, they will be in contempt of court. I think it is important to do that. I listened carefully to the Minister when he referred to this matter and I acknowledge the work of his adviser Amy Minahan in making sure it is addressed. However, the direction that NSW Farmers and its members are looking for is to have some kind of reference to ensure that the courts consider what has gone on at those Stock Welfare Panels. I acknowledge that this is not giving courts the executive power that is contained in section 24J. A court will make an order that a person must divest themselves of the ownership, care or protection of those animals but a court will not act to do that; it will have to go back to the farmer to enact in some way.

This section was designed to deal with hoarders and people who have 50 cats or dogs on their premises. There is a possible unintended consequence that we need to remove. We are here because of the Government's failure to undertake the review of the Act before now. It is long overdue. The Government has said it will complete the review of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act [POCTAA] by the end of the year, but this is urgent. The bill was designed to enable animal welfare enforcement agencies to look at amendments where there was overall agreement, consider the penalties and say, "Okay, we need them to be harsher. We need them to meet the expectations of the community." But now we have moved beyond that and into other areas. That is illustrated by amendment No. 2 from the other place, which addresses drafting errors.

The other issue is private prosecutions. The Opposition will not call a division on the issue, but the message the Minister should take from the upper House is that there is concern about the lack of capacity for law enforcement agencies to undertake the work that they need to do. Applying the principles of law enforcement to the animal welfare space, police are never constrained by the fact that they must consider how they care for the victims of crime because that is not their job or their role, whereas the role of an animal welfare enforcement agency is not just to inspect and enforce the laws but also to care for animals that are victims of cruelty. In some cases those agencies do not have the capacity to do that to the best of their ability, despite their best efforts, attempts and intentions. In light of the history of private prosecutions, the point is that they need to do it.

In regard to amendment No. 4, which relates to the welfare code, I am surprised that the Minister is dealing with this today. It is a little embarrassing to have to come into the Chamber to consider this issue. There was no impediment to the Minister making those changes to the animal welfare code of practice for breeding dogs and having the revised version ready today. It is well and truly past 31 May. He could have come into the Chamber today and said, "We don't need this amendment. Guess what? Here's the revised code. I have spoken to everybody." I understand that the Minister spoke to DOGS NSW only after the Opposition gave notices of motions and asked him to do so. I understand also that he has not yet met with some of the other stakeholder organisations, such as Animal Care Australia. We will not accept an amendment that says, "It will not be done by 31 May because that date has passed. But trust us, we will get it done by 31 August."

The history of this legislation in the Parliament and the review processes are long and tortuous. I wonder whether the Minister can keep the commitment he has made. There is nothing to stop the Minister from achieving it. The amendments were passed by the upper House on 18 March and there are still no guarantees that the Government will meet the new deadline. My concern is that it undermines the independence of the enforcement agencies. In the earlier part of this year the RSPCA undertook a huge amount of enforcement around companion animal breeding—I understand in the Minister's own electorate—in response to the puppy factories issue. There was a huge public outcry and suddenly the enforcement action slowed down. As soon as the bill comes into force breeders who in good faith have been trying to provide the best available care to their animals—in line with the most up-to-date scientific research and despite an out-of-date code that is three years behind the revisions and is not fit for purpose—will have to carry the additional cost of the penalties or the enforcement agencies should not enforce them.

That is a conundrum that does not make sense. Either the Minister wants there to be harsher penalties for animal cruelty and wants them enforced immediately—in which case he should have had the code ready to go today—or he does not want that to happen, in response to some other forces. I have spoken to NSW Farmers, which, like me, was advised by the Minister's office yesterday that the bill was going to be debated today. It seems odd that the agriculture Minister is consulting and dealing with the Animal Justice Party and The Greens before dealing with his key stakeholder, NSW Farmers. There are some real concerns about why we are debating this bill today and how we move forward. We need consultation in good faith between all parties, and consultation should start at the same time for everyone. At the moment impounding is with the Office of Local Government; it is just starting to consult on the impounding of stock animals. There will be a meeting on 17 June. How does that tie into any of the POCTAA regulations and the work that is being done now?

We have been promised that everything will be alright, that the Government is going to bring all the provisions into one big omnibus bill, and that it is all going to work and be fantastic. But the Government is not living up to that promise. The Minister needs to think about the consultation processes he is going to undertake. We have seen some really poor examples of liaison with stakeholders in the past few months. The core concern of everyone in the community is that animals are treated well, looked after and cared for in a way that meets community expectations. The Minister might need to rethink his consultation strategy so that we get to a space where there is adequate provision for enforcement when that does not happen and it is followed through with appropriate penalties. Under the Government and the Minister, we cannot seem to get to a situation where all parties and stakeholders who are engaged in this process can come together and talk. I am hopeful because there seems to have been a little consultation—more than I have experienced with other pieces of legislation, I must say—but it is still lacking. I urge the Minister to address those issues as he conducts the rest of the reforms.

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (15:42):** I speak briefly in relation to the amendments that are before the House. When the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Amendment Bill 2021 was introduced on 17 February, I spoke on behalf of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party in leading its opposition to the bill. From recollection, it was the only party to oppose the bill. It is not that Shooters members do not support restricting animal cruelty—far from it. No normal, ordinary, reasonable person wants to see cruelty to animals. Our opposition was about the unintended consequences that would flow on to breeders, to farmers especially, and to other groups in the community that by and large do the right thing. Amendment No. 1 relates to interim disqualification orders. As I understand it—the Minister will correct me if I am wrong—the Government is agreeing to that amendment from the upper House. That raises concerns. Those concerns have also been raised by members of NSW Farmers, who have been in contact with my colleagues in relation to issues about unintended consequences, which the member for Maitland mentioned.

The proposed interim disqualification orders are of significant concern because they are not necessary in a farming context due to the establishment and effectiveness of the Stock Welfare Panels. The development of the Stock Welfare Panels process has been highly effective in managing welfare issues. The panels comprise a broad collection of skilled individuals and members from the RSPCA, Local Land Services, the Department of Primary Industries—one of them is usually a vet—and the NSW Farmers Association. Those individuals are capable of working through the complexity of animal welfare issues in an agricultural context. The panels can recommend that livestock be seized and sold by enforcement agencies. Although the panels try to stop those issues proceeding to court, this does not always occur. The experts on the panel make the assessment about whether a seize and sell order is required and the order can be for all or some of the animals a farmer may own.

Allowing interim disqualification orders for farmers who have been to a panel undermines the process. Owing to the existence of the panels, interim disqualification orders are not appropriate in the farming context. Those are the primary concerns raised in relation to the interim orders. In relation to the amendment to increase the statute of limitation periods—which I understand was moved by the Animal Justice Party or The Greens in the other place—we do not support it. Nor do we support private prosecutions in relation to those offences. I understand the Government is also not supporting the amendment. Although at common law a person is entitled

to bring a private prosecution for any type of offence, they can be nefariously dangerous, vindictive and particularly unreliable. I do not support private prosecutions being part of any Act of this nature. As the member for Maitland pointed out in her contribution, these are valid concerns raised by relevant stakeholders in the agricultural sector such as NSW Farmers, which certainly does not support the amendments before the House.

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands—Minister for Agriculture and Western New South Wales) (15:46):** I thank both the member for Maitland and the member for Orange for their contributions to debate on the amendments. I acknowledge the genuine concern that has been expressed. I address two brief points. The member for Maitland expressed concern about the difference between interim disqualification orders as per Legislative Council amendment No. 1 and section 24Q of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act [POCTAA], which is the provision that gives effect to the Stock Welfare Panels and any seizure or disposal of animals after the deliberations of the panels. The member for Maitland is correct. Under section 24Q, if animals are seized because welfare issues cannot be resolved and then disposed of—typically through saleyards—whatever moneys are left after transport and feed costs are deducted gets returned to the owner of the animals. Under an interim disqualification order, the court can choose whether to do that—it is at the discretion of the court.

However, we cannot read any piece of legislation in isolation because, if we look at section 24J of POCTAA, we see the power already exists for enforcement agency inspectors to seize animals without any moneys going back to the owner of those animals. Again, I say that I agree. I agree also with the sentiments expressed by the member for Orange: I would not like to see a court use interim dislocation orders in a slaphappy manner in relation to primary producers and livestock because producers are a different class of animal owner. We have Stock Welfare Panels to deal primarily with animal welfare matters and livestock owners as per part 2B, section 24Q of POCTAA. All other animal owners would go straight to a section 24J process or to court, where interim disqualification orders can be used. Again, I say that the making of legislation through a parliamentary process when neither the Government nor the Opposition control the other place is not a perfect art.

My feeling is that the Government can live with Legislative Council amendment No. 1 without any adverse impact on primary producers because the powers the court would have with interim dislocation orders already exist in section 24J—that is, that power is given to inspectors of enforcement bodies anyway. There is no way any farmer would get any moneys from the sale or seizure of those animals anyway. We also have the other protection of the Stock Welfare Panels, which is a tried and tested method that is well supported and well used. Historically, the courts have always taken notice of the deliberations of those panels. I make those observations.

Notwithstanding acknowledging the issues that have been raised, I have confidence that it will be fine. I give this extra assurance to the House, members and anyone watching: The Government has committed to coming back to the Parliament before the end of the year with the brand-new animal welfare bill and arrangements. If this provision causes any issues at all or it can be demonstrated that there are any unintended consequences, we will address them in those further future reforms. That is an opportunity to do that. On that note, I conclude my remarks.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The question is that Legislative Council amendment No. 1 be agreed to, that Legislative Council amendments Nos 2 to 4 be disagreed with, and that Government amendments Nos 1 to 3 on sheet c2021-057F be agreed to.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL:** I move:

That a message be sent to the Legislative Council advising it of the Legislative Assembly's agreement with Legislative Council amendment No. 1 and disagreement with Legislative Council amendments Nos 2 to 4, and seeking concurrence with Government amendments Nos 1 to 3 on sheet c2021-057F.

**Motion agreed to.**

#### *Community Recognition Statements*

#### **SAVE KILLALEA ALLIANCE**

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (15:51):** I congratulate the Save Killalea Alliance, which is a group of amazing community people from all walks of life who have come together to protest against the proposed development of our State park. They are incredibly passionate about this piece of land—and so they should be. It is a pristine piece of land that has environmental and cultural significance. I recognise each and every one of them, particularly Chris Homer, Peter Moran and Emma Grima. This community has come together to oppose this development. They have met with the Minister and put their views forward. We are progressing the issue and are hoping for an outcome that everybody can live with. I wish to ensure that these people are recognised for their ongoing hard work and commitment to this vital piece of land in the Shellharbour electorate that we do not want to see developed.

**MR ROGER CROWFOOT**

**Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (15:52):** I acknowledge Mr Roger Crowfoot, who has been a member of Moorebank Baseball Softball Club for 35 years. Recently Mr Crowfoot was presented with a New South Wales Government Community Service Award for his ongoing commitment volunteering his time to the club. This year is his thirty-second year in a row as a volunteer umpire to junior and senior teams. He has been a consistent mentor to club players and offers advice throughout games. He oversees the club's annual general meeting and was its first life member, and the diamond at the field is named after him. Mr Crowfoot is a deserving recipient of this Community Service Award because the time he has given to the club has been nothing short of inspiring. I know the club is grateful for his service. I also know that even though his children have stopped playing, it is lovely to see him continue volunteering his time. I congratulate Mr Roger Crowfoot on receiving the Community Service Award and commend him for his continued dedication to Moorebank Royals.

**YOUNG PARENTS' HUB WYONG**

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (15:53):** It was my pleasure to join in and celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the Young Parents' Hub at Wyong together with Adam Crouch, the member for Terrigal, Liesl Tesch, the member for Gosford and Zoe Robinson, the NSW Advocate for Children and Young People. The Young Parents' Hub connects young parents and families with a community of services in a safe and inviting space, engaging them with a collective of co-located organisations and supporting local families and young parents to participate in pathways from early childhood education to training and employment within the one facility located in Wyong and Newcastle.

The organisation is looking at a bright future with two Young Parents' Hubs successfully operating and a third in the development phase. The hub is committed to seeing its model scaled to support over 8,000 teenage parents and young families per year. Outcomes in the hub include success in education, pathways to meaningful employment for young parents and improved outcomes in child development. I acknowledge the support and passion the hub provides to our community. I congratulate the team on 20 years. We look forward to many more to come.

**KU-RING-GAI MALE CHOIR**

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (15:54):** Ku-ring-gai Male Choir is one of the oldest performing male choirs in Australia. It was originally founded by ex-servicemen who developed camaraderie by singing during World War II. The choir, which currently has over 45 performing members, is a non-audition choir and new members are welcome. There is no need to sing like a professional, but one needs to love music and attend most of the rehearsals. The choir performs at retirement villages across the North Shore and at special concerts that attract hundreds of spectators in large venues. The major highlights for the choir this year will be the Male Choirs Association of Australia Festival hosted at the Sydney Town Hall and the annual concert at Hornsby RSL, both in October. I wish the choir well for its performances this year. I hope it will be able to visit nursing homes again soon when the COVID threat has reduced.

**MYKINDCO**

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (15:55):** Today I bring to the attention of the House the work of MyKindCo, which recently transformed the Balmain Town Hall with its exhibition event *Queen Bees of Balmain* as part of the Inner West Fest Baludarri. From patriarchy to matriarchy, this wonderfully creative and symbolic activation removed the stale, pale males from the walls of the Balmain Town Hall and replaced them with a host of vibrant female portraits by leading female artists. We need more monuments to women and public art celebrating our female heroes. The exhibition was a fantastic start and My Kind Co is working to continue creating further opportunities to help make this ambition a reality. I especially acknowledge creative director Lisa Tatman and her My Kind Co creative collective team, including the featured artists, volunteers and organisers, for their commitment to creating this stunning transformation. Well done to them. I look forward to working with them in the future to see even more happen in our local community.

**AMANDA WILDING**

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (15:56):** It is with great pleasure that I acknowledge Bathurst resident Amanda Wilding, whose selfless commitment to volunteering in the community has been recognised. Mandy, whose name was recently added to the list of Bathurst Living Legends, first started volunteering for Meals on Wheels with her two children about 25 years ago. However, it is her enduring association with the local cancer care service at Daffodil Cottage and its links with the Daffodil Wig Library that is very special. Having been a member of the Daffodil Cottage Advisory Council, Mandy found a need for a wig library for cancer patients who had lost their hair.

She was instrumental in successfully establishing the Daffodil Wig Library, which opened in 2014 and is also associated with the Look Good Feel Better program, teaching clients how to manage appearance-related side effects caused by cancer treatment. Mandy is currently working towards the implementation of a cancer survivorship and wellness centre program for Bathurst and the Central West. She also selflessly volunteers her time taking her elderly neighbour to doctor and medical appointments. I thank Mandy Wilding for all that she does for the community. It is very much appreciated.

#### TRIBUTE TO KEVIN BOOTLE

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (15:57):** It is with great sadness and a heavy heart that I advise this House of the passing of a constituent of mine, Kevin Bootle. Kevin was a fantastic member of our community. In particular I acknowledge his commitment to Surf Life Saving on the Central Coast. He was a life member of the Avoca Beach Surf Life Saving Club, where he was a staunch boat competitor and an official for the club. Amongst the entire membership at Avoca, he was affectionately known as Big Kevin. Unfortunately on the evening of Thursday 3 June, Kevin lost his long and hard-fought battle with cancer over many years, passing away at the age of 78. Cancer touches the lives of so many in our community, including my own family. I convey my deepest condolences to his wife, Maree, his entire family, as well as his clubmates at Avoca Beach Surf Life Saving Club. Vale, Kevin Bootle.

#### 1ST STOP ESPRESSO CAFE

**Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (15:58):** Jenny and Alan are the delightful owners of the 1st Stop Espresso Cafe opposite Doonside railway station. Their wonderful personality and friendship towards all their customers is the true source of their success. People catch buses and trains from surrounding suburbs simply to have their coffee and a bite to eat. They have a superb menu that caters for people who love a hearty breakfast meal or various meals for lunch. Most importantly, the coffee on the go as one is rushing to the train or returning from work is the reason it is called the 1st Stop Espresso Cafe. Jenny loves taking photos with customers and was excited to hear that Chris Minns, MP, who has previously stopped by and enjoyed her coffee and a photo, has become the new NSW Labor leader. Chris and I wish Jenny and Alan the very best and look forward to our next cuppa.

**Business interrupted.**

#### *Petitions*

#### SYDNEY CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL PAEDIATRIC CARDIAC SURGERY

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** It being 4.00 p.m., community recognition statements are now interrupted for the consideration of the paper petition signed by 10,000 or more persons listed on the business paper regarding Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, lodged by the member for Coogee. Before we commence the debate and for the benefit of those in the public gallery I take the opportunity to explain the process and rationale behind this unique debate. It is unique because it enables the public to directly bring their concerns to the attention of the House. The intent of the procedure is that the petition debate will start with a speech from a member, which in most cases will be the member who lodged the petition, followed by up to four other members and a Minister in response. To conclude the debate the first speaker will speak in reply. After all members have spoken the House will vote on the question that the House take note of the petition. The question in most cases will be determined on the voices and be passed; however, if it is challenged by a member it may proceed to a division, where the bells are rung and members vote on the motion to take note of the petition by sitting on the appropriate sides of the House.

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

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (16:00):** We are here today because more than 10,000 people have signed our petition to save Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick. As the Government itself has recognised that it has created a problem by removing cardiac services from Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, the petition calls on the New South Wales Government and the Minister for Health and Medical Research to follow through on their commitment to restore cardiac surgery at our hospital. I also thank the hardworking staff at Sydney Children's Hospital who have been fighting for years to protect its services. I acknowledge the doctors and perfusionists who have joined us in the gallery today, including Dr John Awad, who I first met about this issue before I was elected. I also acknowledge the tireless advocacy of Dr Michael Solomon and Dr Susan Russell, who were unable to join us today.

These are the frontline medical professionals who spend their day treating some of our State's most seriously ill children. They should not have to spend their spare time fighting to protect the future of their hospital. We are not asking the Government to change policy; we are simply asking the health Minister to do his job and

follow through on a commitment that he has already made. On 24 January 2020 he announced that cardiac services would be returned to Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick. It has been 18 months since the health Minister made the public commitment and not a single cardiac surgery has been performed at Randwick, nor has a plan or a time line for reinstating this service been shared with the public. We have all been seen and left in the dark. The Minister seems paralysed by his own department, which is completely powerless to follow through on his commitment. In March this year a budget estimates hearing revealed that, despite two independent reviews concluding that paediatric cardiac surgery should be returned to Randwick hospital, the issue is far from being resolved. These reviews were commissioned by the Minister and paid for by taxpayers. Their findings are being completely and utterly ignored.

This is not the only petition on this issue. Almost two years ago I stood in this place and told the story of Peter and Jess Low and their beautiful son, Cooper. Cooper was 10 days old when Peter and his wife took him to the hospital with a viral illness. Transferred to Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, soon after arrival, Cooper went into cardiac arrest, needing CPR for 26 minutes. Without the presence of the cardiac surgical team at Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, Cooper would not have survived. In order to protect the vital services that saved his son, Peter created a Change.org petition to save the hospital. As of this morning the petition has over 63,000 signatories. Today we are joined by Peter, Jess and their beautiful children, Jersey and of course Cooper, in the gallery. I thank the Low family for their wonderful advocacy fighting for our hospital. The issues affect people not only in the Eastern Suburbs but all across Sydney and New South Wales. The removal of paediatric cardiac services at Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, has a direct impact on the Royal Hospital for Women—the only female-specific hospital in all of New South Wales and where our most high-risk expectant mothers go to have their babies delivered.

The lack of clarity and direction on this issue is of great concern to me and my community, as well as families across Sydney and New South Wales. The issues surrounding paediatric cardiac surgery are only part of a greater problem. There is a real fear that the underfunding and downgrading of our local hospital is happening in more than one area. Earlier this year I was made aware of the shockingly long wait times for patients to access MRI machines. The vital piece of diagnostic equipment should be readily available to patients and their doctors. Shockingly, the Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick does not have its own MRI machine. In fact, the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District has just two MRI machines, expected to service five hospitals.

While Sydney Children's Hospital is being starved of funding, Westmead seems to be receiving most of the support. By no means or stretch of the imagination do I want to make this a battle of east versus west but in New South Wales, the largest State in Australia, in 2021 we should be able to have two fully funded comprehensive children's hospitals. This Government and the health Minister must come clean and be transparent about the future of paediatric cardiac surgery and the underfunding of our local hospitals. It is well beyond time that the Minister for Health and Medical Research stood up and started to do his job. Two independent inquiries have concluded that the best option, moving forward, is to run paediatric cardiac surgery in parallel between Westmead and Randwick hospitals. It is time the Minister showed some leadership to the community and sorted out this issue once and for all.

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (16:05):** First, I acknowledge the petitioners and those who are with us today in the public gallery. At the outset let me make it perfectly clear that the New South Wales Government is committed to ensuring that children and young people, regardless of where they live, will receive the very best cardiac care. This Government is investing more than \$1.3 billion to ensure both the Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick and The Children's Hospital at Westmead have world-class health facilities and services. The redevelopment at Randwick alone is costing more than \$600 million and includes the establishment of Australia's first Children's Comprehensive Cancer Centre.

The petition lodged by the member for Coogee does cause some unnecessary stress for everyone. And as a mother of a kid who underwent two open heart surgeries, I can assure her that it is extremely stressful—stressful enough for everyone involved. What we should all be focusing on is making sure we get the very best outcomes for children who require cardiac care, and their families—that is, the staff who work in our health facilities, the patients and families who access our health services and the general public who support our public health system.

Cardiac services continue to be provided at the Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick as part of the network—one service, one team, one approach. To be clear, services at Randwick are growing. Cardiac outpatient clinic attendances at Randwick have increased by over 400 per cent compared to five years ago. Clinicians treated 3,128 children last year compared to 754 in 2015. Increased support is also provided for the Royal Hospital for Women with co-leads appointed for the foetal cardiology service and enhanced foetal echocardiography support.

In January 2020 a NSW Paediatric Cardiac Services Model of Care Panel was formed with clinical representatives from rural and regional areas as well as the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network. The panel provided a framework for delivering optimal care for children with cardiac disease. It determined the best way to

deliver high-quality, effective and safe cardiac services for children and young people in New South Wales was through our two specialist hospitals, in conjunction with John Hunter Children's Hospital and rural local health districts.

The model of care represents best practice and will ensure children and young people receive the right care, at the right time, by the right team, in the right place. The model of care includes cardiac service enhancement at Randwick with the establishment of a dedicated heart centre for children due to open this month. The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network is implementing the comprehensive model of care. The NSW Cardiac Care for Kids project team and working group include health professionals and parent representatives. Together they are focused on what is best for children and young people right across New South Wales, with patient safety remaining the number one priority.

Key activities to implement the model of care include: developing the roadmap for implementation; defining low- and high-complexity cardiac surgical cases and working through requirements for medium-complexity cases; implementing the New South Wales kids' statewide extracorporeal membrane oxygenation referral service; confirming a 24/7 network emergency roster for the four network cardiac surgeons to ensure trauma and emergency services are supported across the network sites, including at Randwick; finalising the interim cardiology lead for Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick; and confirming the infrastructure and equipment enhancements for paediatric cardiac services with the additional \$10 million committed by the New South Wales Government.

Let me be perfectly clear: The focus remains on safe high-quality care. The current cardiac surgical volumes are just over 1 per cent of the cardiac services provided to children and young people in New South Wales, with around 350 cases per year. There needs to be sufficient workload for surgeons to maintain their skills, as well as high-functioning teams and relevant infrastructure in place. This is being considered as part of the implementation process. While the model of care is being progressively implemented, comprehensive cardiac services continue to be delivered across both hospitals in addition to outreach services in regional and rural New South Wales.

In closing I take this opportunity to acknowledge the support group HeartKids, which is in many States right across Australia, including in the Northern Territory, where my daughter was born. It provides support for parents and carers in many different ways, at a time which I can only describe as overwhelming. In my previous role as Parliamentary Secretary for Regional and Rural Health I had the opportunity to meet with some of the wonderful people who provide that support network through HeartKids and I commend them highly for the services they provide.

**Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (16:10):** The member for Port Macquarie is absolutely right: Having a sick child is incredibly stressful. The best way to reduce stress for parents and the child is to have competent clinicians, well resourced, in a modern, world-class health centre providing services for the parents and the children close to home. When there is no tyranny of distance—and there is no tyranny of distance in the heart of Sydney—there is no excuse for some people having services and others not. On the face of it, this petition is about paediatric cardiac services, but it is about much more than that. I congratulate the member for Coogee and also thank the 80,000 people who signed a petition about this subject matter. It is unheard of to have 80,000 people unprompted, not led by politicians, sign something to come to the floor of the Parliament. I thank the clinicians in the public gallery for coming here as well. And this is not about Randwick versus Westmead—let us make that very clear.

In 2010 when Labor was in government and I was a Minister the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network was set up under Professor Les White, a great fellow and a friend of mine. There was great hope and promise about it working. Let us be very clear about this: It is not working insofar as services to Sydney Children's Hospital at Randwick. Since coming to office, the Government has been slowly reducing services at Sydney Children's Hospital. A request made under the Government Information (Public Access) Act has revealed that patient outcomes for cardiac procedures at both Randwick and Westmead are very similar. Do not listen to people who tell us that is not true. Do not listen to people who say they do not have competencies at Randwick and people have to go to Westmead. It is not true. It is a deliberate lie promulgated by people to say that people at Randwick do not deserve it. They do. We all deserve it and the services should be provided at both places.

I thank the Minister for Health and Medical Research for being in the Chamber. He is a Minister who does listen. A lot of Ministers will not come into the Chamber to listen to these debates. The Government has made repeated commitments and promises through the CEO of the Sydney Children's Hospitals Network, the Ministry of Health, the network board and the health Minister that cardiac surgery would either remain or be restored at Randwick. In 2019 the Government commissioned the Henry review of paediatric services, the findings of which were very clear: that cardiac surgery should be run at both sites.

In January 2020 the Minister announced—and I thank him for doing so—that cardiac surgery would be run at both Randwick and Westmead. The Government then commissioned a second independent review, led by Professor Villis Marshall, which recommended again that cardiac surgery be delivered across both the Westmead and Randwick sites. The Minister's intentions are good but his department is thwarting him. It is the nightmare of every Minister that they just cannot move the elephant. The elephant needs to move so that the people of Randwick can get the services they deserve.

Despite the Minister's public commitment, and two independent reviews, paid for by the taxpayer, both concluding that cardiac surgery should be returned to Randwick, no cardiac surgery has been performed at Sydney Children's Hospital at Randwick for two years. "So what?", some people might say. The ramifications are vast. If they are not performed, we will continue to lose other services. We have lost some, such as the ability to do ENT surgery, major tracheal reconstruction, heart lung bypass and major cancer surgery. These have already been moved to western Sydney. Two weeks ago a baby needed an emergency bypass. The clinicians believed the baby could not be transferred to Westmead. When they asked someone to come to do it, there was deafening silence. The clinicians at Westmead had to be directed to go to Randwick and do it. That is not acceptable. We should have residents at Randwick who can do it.

**Mr Brad Hazzard:** There is one, but he was up in Queensland.

**Mr MICHAEL DALEY:** He might have been in Queensland, but it should have been followed. Two weeks later the same thing happened with a premature baby. That is not acceptable. We are calling for fairness, for the network to operate as it was set up to operate and as it promised. That is that there be services like this at both sites. If we cannot get this right for something as simple as this, with the Minister having made commitments, with the clear, objective, balanced and unambiguous evidence, then I am not sure that the network should continue. There are people who say that we were better off in the old days, when there were two well-served standalone hospitals. I think that I may be one of them. I await the Minister's reply to convince me that I am wrong on that.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (16:16):** I make this contribution as the Parliamentary Secretary for Health. Sydney Children's Hospitals Network is the largest paediatric healthcare entity in Australia, providing a range of leading clinical services, including cardiac services, for children. The New South Wales Government has consistently maintained that Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, will continue to deliver world-class tertiary and quaternary hospital services. That will not change. The New South Wales Government is enhancing the network's cardiac service to support the "one service, one team" approach. A second heart centre for children is being set up at Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick. This will provide seamless and wraparound care to all patients, regardless of the hospital door they walk through. The centre will reduce wait times for patients and provide more support to our team of clinicians.

The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network executive has begun the process of implementing the model of care announced in January this year. Key appointments have been progressed. This includes co-leads for foetal cardiology services, two new cardiologists, a nurse manager, a nurse leader and project leader responsible for NSW Cardiac Care for Kids in the Home Program. The network is also appointing a cardiac concierge and a patient experience officer. All new positions are network positions, and staff will work at Randwick and Westmead. Work to identify the equipment and infrastructure required to support one service and one team working across the two sites is also progressing well.

The model of care is a significant achievement, providing the safety framework for the "one service, one team" cardiac service. It identifies 28 areas of change needed to be addressed to support its implementation. These include, among other things, the need to develop a more robust data system, as well as a coordinated system of electronic health records; greater collaboration with rural, regional and maternity units; and the importance of involving patients and families in design. The implementation process needs to be undertaken carefully, and it will take time, with safety remaining the top priority.

We are implementing a cohesive and collaborative statewide paediatric cardiac service across the spectrum of surgical, medical, nursing and allied health care, for babies through to adolescents. Building a strong and positive culture is critical to delivering high-quality and safe paediatric cardiac services. Continuing to dwell on the past and refusing to accept how cardiac care is changing, both here and internationally, cannot continue. It is important to understand the facts about cardiac care at the network. In 2019 and 2020, the network's cardiac team delivered more than 24,000 service to babies, children and young adults in need of cardiac care. Of all the children whom the network provides with cardiac care, just over 1 per cent require surgery. In 2019 and 2020, this was around 350 children. The need for cardiac care is growing, but the need for cardiac surgery is not.

Major capital redevelopments will occur on both sites in the coming years. The New South Wales Government is displaying its commitment to Randwick and Westmead, with nearly \$1.3 billion in capital funding being invested in children's facilities. It is an exciting time for everyone at the network to work together as one



team across multiple sites, including the two specialist children's hospitals, Kids Research, Newborn Emergency and paediatric Transport Service, Bear Cottage in Manly and the Children's Court Clinic. The network continues encouraging and supporting all its teams to embrace a culture of collaboration and excellence, strong leadership and mutual professional respect.

**Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (16:20):** At the moment I think this Chamber is missing a member—the member for Vacluse. It seems interesting that the member for Port Macquarie makes comments about the eastern suburbs, but the neighbouring member is not here.

**Mr Brad Hazzard:** Point of order: The member is completely outside discussing what is in this petition. I ask you to bring him back to the petition. If he wants to make a—

**Mr Michael Daley:** That one landed.

**Mr Brad Hazzard:** I will tell you what has landed: the fact that each of you is being highly political and not focused on what the issues are in the interests of children. I ask again that the member be brought back to the content of the petition.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I uphold the point of order. The member's contribution must be relevant to the content of the petition.

**Mr RYAN PARK:** Before I get into the content, I will say a few things about the member for Coogee and the member for Maroubra. The member for Coogee has been working on this from day one. This is an issue that has been going on for close to a decade, but from day one she has raised and fought for this. I have worked with and watched her up close. She is a fierce advocate for the people who are here today, for her community, and for sick kids and their families across New South Wales that the world-class hospital seeks to support. The same can be said for the member for Maroubra, who has raised issues around health care in the eastern suburbs continuously in this place for a very long time. The eastern suburbs are very well served by two fine members.

Doctors, nurses and staff across Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, have been fighting for 10 years, initially to maintain and now to restore cardiac surgery to Randwick. But the path has been difficult. I acknowledge, like the member for Maroubra, the Minister's presence here, which is something his colleagues do not always do. In 2019 the Government commissioned the Henry review of paediatric services, the findings of which were that cardiac surgery should be run at both sites. In January 2020 the Minister announced that cardiac surgery would be run at both Randwick and Westmead. We have a review. That review finds that it should happen. The Minister announces that. That is a fairly simple procedure for how things work around this place.

The Government commissioned a second independent review, led by Professor Villis Marshall, which also recommended that cardiac surgery be delivered at both Westmead and Randwick. So we now have two reviews, both committing to it, a Minister's public commitment, but no cardiac surgery being performed at Randwick for two years. That is the problem with this Government: It is very good at announcing things, but its implementation and delivery through its agencies is somewhat wanting. In addition, concerns have been raised directly with me and, through me, with the member for Coogee, about access to MRI machines at this hospital. This is an ongoing issue. A heartbreaking story brought to my attention was that of Chloe Saxby, who was a child of my electorate and who spent an enormous amount of time in the community of the member for Coogee, in that world-class hospital. But her parents have strongly said to me that the lack of a direct and exclusive MRI machine at that hospital is a real problem that is causing much stress for sick kids and their families.

Today is an opportunity for the Government to honour its commitment and return cardiac surgery to Randwick. The time for talk, roundtables and reviews is over. It is now time to have these services delivered back to this world-class hospital so that very sick kids from all across Sydney and New South Wales can have access to care in the Eastern Suburbs, in the same way that we would expect for every one of our children. What we are asking today is not something out of the book or outlandish. We are asking the Government to honour the commitments it has made and to honour the two independent reviews saying this should happen. This is not Labor versus Liberal; this is the independent expert saying this should be happening at this world-class hospital. Today is the day for the Minister and the Government to say when it will happen.

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health and Medical Research) (16:25):** I acknowledge the signatories to the petition. I also acknowledge the comments of members who have spoken before me. The New South Wales Government is in every way possible doing what it can to keep children safe, and that requires the best possible health care in this State. It is concerning that whilst the member for Keira said this was not political, the member who brought this petition is certainly being political and I am disappointed with that because the petition on the website made accusations about me having blood on my hands, and other things. That is unnecessary encouragement for people to not look at this issue dispassionately.

Paediatric cardiac care is one of the most specialised areas in treating little children; the doctors are dealing with hearts smaller than the size of the top of my thumb. In the past 20 years it was not a government decision to move to the current challenges; it was a movement by the doctors themselves at Westmead and Randwick. In the past few years, while I have been on the watch, as has already been said, there have been a number of reviews. It was Dr Angus Gray who made that comment I mentioned, which was then adopted by the member for Coogee on her newsletter and on her petition, and then Dr Michael Solomon. Both of those gentlemen are orthopaedic surgeons; they both know the value of doing enough surgeries each year to keep their patients safe. In fact, Dr Solomon notes on his website that he performs 900 orthopaedic procedures a year.

The big issue here is that health authorities have determined very clearly that the number of patients operated on in the very specialised area of paediatric cardiac surgery needs to be at a level where they maintain their skillsets. We now have a range of specialists. As this area has evolved we now have interventional paediatric cardiologists; heart failure and transplant cardiologists; electrophysiologists; fetal paediatric cardiologists; transitional paediatric cardiologists; imaging cardiologists; and intensive care cardiologists. Each of those people are needed to make sure that our babies—our littlest—are kept safe. The Government did have the reviews. The Government has indicated that we will support in every way getting the opportunity back for paediatric cardiac surgery at both campuses. We put the money into doing it and it is now up to the medical staff themselves to be prepared to do it.

We cannot force paediatric cardiac surgeons to leave Westmead and come to Randwick—that is impossible because there are entire teams involved. But we will do all we can to make sure that there is surgery at both of these hospitals. We do not want to see paediatric cardiac surgery not at both of those hospitals. However, we note that the issue is that more complex surgery has been discussed and agreed to by the review panels and that at this stage, in the interests of those little babies—those little people with the tiniest of hearts—surgeries across those ranges of specialties should be done at Westmead. Until that develops, until we can get the less complex surgery underway at Randwick, there are some challenges. It does not help though to politicise or to stir this up. It needs to be done in a very balanced and careful way and I am committed to that.

I have had conversations with each of the members who have discussed this issue and I will continue to work with them. I invite them to come and have a discussion with surgeons from both campuses. But, at the end of the day, listening to orthopaedic specialists speak about an area that they know nothing about is not particularly productive if we want to keep babies alive. So I would ask those members to come and talk in my office with the paediatric subspecialty cardiologists who can properly discuss this issue with us and we can collectively try to work out—

**Mr Michael Daley:** On both sides?

**Mr BRAD HAZZARD:** Yes, happily with both sides. There is only one currently at Randwick and he has an adult practice as well. I will happily have him in the discussion and I invite all three members opposite, and any others who are interested, to come and have that discussion, because at the end of the day this really should not be political. This should be about saving little kids' lives. [*Time expired.*]

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (16:30):** In reply: I thank the Minister for being here, because a number of Ministers do not show up. Following the analogy of the member for Maroubra around the big grey elephant, has the Treasurer not built you a big enough door to be able to push that elephant through?

**Mr Brad Hazzard:** I just point out that we have a billion dollars going into paediatric hospitals. So it is not that. It has nothing to do with that.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** I would also like to clarify, Minister, that I was not—

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

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** I would also like to clarify something that the Minister said. I was not the person who said that he would have blood on his hands; someone else was quoted as saying that and it is in a *Sydney Morning Herald* article.

**Mr Brad Hazzard:** But you put it on your website. I just pulled it off your website, and I was honestly disappointed that you would do that.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The Minister will come to order.

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL:** I acknowledge and thank the member for Maroubra, the member for Keira, the member for Manly and the member for Port Macquarie for being a part of this discussion. One of the things I want to clarify is around surgical outcomes. My office and I have made applications under the Government Information (Public Access) Act for the risk adjustment in congenital heart surgery [RACHS] data for the last

decade on both of these hospitals. In no way have we ever claimed that the high-level surgery should be operated at both hospitals, but the outcomes of the lower-level surgery have been very similar. We have the RACHS data for the last decade so there is absolutely no reason that lower-level bypass surgery should not be able to be operated at both.

We are so incredibly lucky that this surgery was available at the hospital and that little Cooper is here today. I cannot begin to imagine what families would feel like if they were in a position where they turn up to a hospital with a seriously ill kid and they cannot access this surgery. But by the good grace of God, that surgery was available so that Cooper can be with us here today. I hope that no family is ever put in a situation where they are unable to access this surgery.

**Petition noted.**

#### *Bills*

### **BUILDING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2021**

#### **Returned**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill with amendments. I order that consideration of the Legislative Council amendments be set down as an order of the day for a future day.

#### *Community Recognition Statements*

### **THE LION'S SHARE FUND**

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (16:33):** I acknowledge the work of Mr Rob Galluzzo and Mr Chris Nelius, founders of The Lion's Share Fund. I had the privilege of attending their Sydney launch recently. The Lion's Share Fund is a fantastic Australian conservation initiative, making a positive global impact. In short, if a brand uses an image of an animal in its advertising campaign, whether it is real, a cartoon or computer-generated, the advertiser donates 0.5 per cent of paid media to The Lion's Share Fund. The Lion's Share Fund then in turn, with the United Nations Development Programme, funds wildlife conservation and animal welfare campaigns for local communities, researchers, conservationists and other wildlife partners across Australia and the world. Lion's Share is an initiative of Christopher and Rob, founders of the FINCH production company based in Australia. It is fully supported by the United Nations Development Programme and will make a positive impact on conservation across the world.

### **NURSES**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:34):** Thank you ever so much to each and every nurse across New South Wales who has worked so incredibly hard over the past 18 months to keep members of our community safe and well. I am so saddened to say in the Parliament tonight that nurses' jobs are so precious and appreciated and yet are not sufficiently respected by the Berejiklian Government. We need to treat our precious nurses with the utmost dignity and respect instead of cutting their wages during a pandemic. Nurse jobs and nurse numbers are clearly in crisis in New South Wales. They cannot be replaced when they are on leave. There is constant concern about their accreditation as they work short-staffed. Experienced nurses are unsupported in their leadership. Young nurses have no time to be trained to fulfil their roles properly. They regularly go over and above, often working through their breaks and past their deadlines, regularly working overtime and understaffed. They are worried about the future of their profession. The people of New South Wales absolutely appreciate every single element of care nurses provide in our public hospitals. I thank all nurses so much.

### **GWAWLEY BAY FOOTBALL CLUB**

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (16:35):** I acknowledge the Gwawley Bay Football Club, who are the successful recipients of \$9,000 from the New South Wales Government's 2021 Local Sport Grant Program. The Gladiators have a humble history that spans more than 60 years. Based at Canberra Road Oval, the Gladiators may be the smallest club in the Sutherland Shire Football Association, but have a far larger footprint than its size and plenty of heart. The funding will deliver the installation of two seating stands at Canberra Road Oval, creating a wonderful space for families and spectators to engage in the sport and support the players. Of course, none of this could be possible without the hardworking team behind the Gwawley Bay Football Club. I acknowledge the outstanding committee members including David Brownhill, Chris Lockwood, Janine McCrohon, Cheryl Bellamy, Blake Michels, Lauren Bellamy, Jai Isabella, Casey Eylward, Rebecca Nunn and John Appleyard. I commend the wonderful Gwawley Bay Football Club for bringing the importance of this project to my attention and look forward to seeing our community benefit from the new seating.

### MAITLAND RSL SUB-BRANCH

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (16:36):** On 31 May I had the honour of attending the commemoration of the Boer War and Sandakan which was conducted by the Maitland RSL Sub-Branch. I acknowledge the efforts of Mr Fred Goode, OAM, the President of Maitland RSL Sub-Branch, in his retelling of the Anglo-Boer War in which he paid tribute to the 606 Australian men and women who sadly passed away during battle, with special acknowledgement to the 13 soldiers who resided in our local area and who fought during the battle. I extend further acknowledgement to Mr Peter Huber, who is a member of the Malaya Borneo Association, for his retelling of the endurance displayed by our soldiers during one of our darkest war periods, Sandakan. Both Mayor Loretta Baker and Lieutenant Lloyd Stanimirovic also offered words of welcome and prayer during the order of service, which further addressed the importance of these fallen soldiers and their gallantry. Today I recognise the efforts of Mr Goode and the Maitland RSL Sub-Branch in organising the ceremony for our region.

### MYALL LAKES SENIORS CONCERTS

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:37):** I inform the House that the recent Myall Lakes seniors concerts went ahead. Although COVID-restricted, about 2,000 people still attended and raised money for the two women's refuges in Taree and Forster-Tuncurry. It is great that the community and seniors are able to get out during the latter parts of COVID, hopefully, to socialise and see some first-class entertainment that one would only expect to see either in Sydney, internationally or on an international cruise ship. To be able to bring that type of entertainment to the regions is certainly something that we are proud of as a government. I congratulate the entertainers and the people who organised it, including Gary from my office.

### TRIBUTE TO NEIL EL-KADOMI, OAM

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:38):** Today we mourn the death of Mr Neil El-Kadomi, OAM. Neil was a Palestinian refugee who made his way to Australia in 1969. He was a man who dedicated his life to serving the local and wider community. In 1996 he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in recognition of his contribution to the community. Neil El-Kadomi established one of the first community language schools in my electorate and was responsible for teaching Arabic and Islamic studies to countless children, generation after generation. It is difficult to meet anyone in the community and not be informed that Neil has taught them. He was one of the key founding members of Parramatta Mosque and president of the mosque for many years. It is heartwarming to learn that he first started the Parramatta Friday prayers using the local Uniting Church in Parramatta. Until his death, he served in many community organisations including interfaith, Islamic, counterterrorism, Jordanian and Palestinian committees. I have known Neil for 25 years and he has given so much to our community. He is the father of seven, grandfather of 19, husband of Ameera and loved by all.

### THINK OUTSIDE THE SQUARE BLANKET CHALLENGE

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (16:39):** For five years running the team at The Creative Fringe have been collecting knitted squares for their Think Outside the Square Blanket Challenge. To date, over 14,000 20 centimetre by 20 centimetre squares have been knitted or crocheted, stitched together and turned into beautiful blankets. The colourful and warm blankets are then distributed to some of Penrith's most disadvantaged locals, bringing warmth and comfort during the winter months. To date, over 404 blankets have been donated to people in desperate need, including those experiencing homelessness, women and children escaping domestic violence, rough sleepers, the elderly and our youth in crisis. The squares have been generously sent from all over Australia, including from as far away as Darwin, Central Queensland and Victoria. Many have also been supplied from our local community. This month the first handover of 180 blankets was provided to Platform Youth Services, WestCare, Penrith Community Kitchen and WeCollect. But the challenge is not over. They hope to deliver a total of 250 blankets this year. I thank Debbie O'Connor and the team at The Creative Fringe for their creativity and community spirit in this blanket challenge.

### OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:40):** It was a great opportunity to speak to years 5 and 6 at Our Lady of the Rosary [OLR] at Kensington and give them my tips on public speaking before the Botany-Randwick network of Sydney Catholic Schools public speaking competition grand final in July. OLR was one of three of my local schools that chose to participate in the public speaking competition to provide an opportunity for their students to develop and showcase their oral language skills and engage with others across the network of schools and our community. Four OLR students—Maya, Billy, Marcus and William—have progressed to the semifinals. The grand final will be held on 15 July and I will be on the judging panel with the member for Coogee and the member for Maroubra. I hope I was able to give these four bright students some helpful, memorable tips. I wish them all the best for the rest of the competition.

### LUGARNO FOOTBALL CLUB

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (16:41):** I recognise the Lugarno Football Club for its ongoing commitment to our community and the local sporting culture. The Lugarno Football Club accommodates all ages and skill levels, representing junior teams right through to elite premier league players. Throughout winter one can catch some amazing football being played at Gannons Park in Peakhurst, which was upgraded by this Government. I would also like to make a special mention of outgoing president, Hagop, who served on the club's committee for over nine years. During his time with the club my office has been able to provide him much-needed funding and upgrades to the kitchen, canteen and dressing room facilities. He was a pleasure to deal with and I support his passion for local football. Players have access to the best facilities possible. I have no doubt that all of the teams at the Lugarno Football Club will have an outstanding season in 2021 and their strong committee and volunteer presence plays a crucial role in that. I wish everyone at the Lugarno Football Club all the very best for the season.

### FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (16:42):** I congratulate Fairfield High School on the celebration of its positive behaviour for learning, or PBL, day 2021. The hardworking students took part in sessions and activities directly linked to the school's community, achievement, respect and environment—or CARE—code. In relation to community there were food stalls, photo stalls and a barbershop, which included haircuts and braids. In relation to achievement there were student performances in the auditorium. In relation to respect there were sports and activities. In relation to environment there were farm animal experiences and Assyrian drumming sessions. Fairfield High School provides a safe and welcoming environment for all students, staff and visitors. I congratulate everyone involved on their outstanding performances and the promotion of cultural diversity through the presentations.

### NEXT EXIT MUSIC FESTIVAL

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (16:42):** We know COVID has been a trying time for everyone, especially those in the live music and entertainment industries. Recently a crowd of more than 2,500 attended the final leg of the Next Exit music festival at Mudgee Showground, which provided a fine array of Aussie music talent including Ocean Alley, Spacey Jane, Dear Seattle and Clews. The tour also incorporated events at Tamworth, Gosford, Batemans Bay and Port Macquarie. It is believed the tour generated about \$1.5 million back into the regions and into the industry, importantly. A big congratulations to the organisers of the overall event, which has certainly provided a stimulus for regional areas like ours, and a big thumbs up for choosing such a wonderful location to wrap up the tour. Mudgee of course was recently named as the top tourist town of more than 5,000 people in New South Wales.

### PROTECT WOLLI CREEK VALLEY

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (16:43):** I acknowledge Protect Wolli Creek Valley, an organisation made up of a number of environmental groups in my electorate and in neighbouring electorates. Recently volunteers came to Parliament House to hand their petition to the member for Kogarah, the member for Rockdale, the member for Summer Hill and me. The petition objects to the proposed location of Sydney Water's odour control unit at Wolli Creek. The petition has gathered over 4,000 signatures and sends a strong message to Sydney Water, the Government and the water Minister, Melinda Pavey, that our community wants to protect and conserve the rare and precious bushland in Wolli Creek Regional Park. Today I handed that petition to the Minister's office. I acknowledge all of those volunteers and I hope that Sydney Water will listen to what they have said.

### PENRITH CITY SERVICEMEN MEMORIAL

**Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Jobs, Investment, Tourism and Western Sydney) (16:44):** Recently I was pleased to attend the Penrith City National Servicemen's Association of Australia annual memorial service. Close to 120 people attended the wreath-laying service, which was accompanied by fabulous music thanks to Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School and the local corps from the Australian Air Force Cadets. The service was a moving memorial of remembrance and reflection. It was great to see the newly formed Ropes Crossing Girl Guides also in attendance. I acknowledge Penrith National Servicemen's Association president Harry May, secretary Graham Larkham, vice presidents Roy Young and Ken McPherson, and treasurer Angelina Young for the ongoing support they provide to their members and for ensuring the service was a success. Nashos made a significant contribution to Australia when the nation called upon them. Services like this will ensure that they are never forgotten.

**LIAM O'FARRELL**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:45):** I congratulate Southern Spirit Cricket Club player Liam O'Farrell on winning the 2021 Central Coast Cricket Association's first grade highest score of the year award, with 111 runs over the season. It has been a tough year for the Southern Spirit Cricket Club's first grade team and Liam has been a shining light. He has demonstrated that success can be achieved with consistent hard work. Liam has been a strong performer on and off the field. He demonstrates the true sportsmanship qualities of respect, camaraderie and fairness. Being involved in local sport is so much more than just a weekend event; sporting teams can often become family to many players. I am passionate about sport and the benefits that it can provide physically, mentally and socially. I will always support sport in my community. I thank and congratulate everyone involved with the club. I wish Liam, the team and all grades at Southern Cricket Club the very best for the next cricket season.

**SUTHERLAND ROTARY CLUB**

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (16:46):** I acknowledge Sutherland Rotary Club during the centenary year of celebrations for Rotary in Australia. Sutherland Rotary Club is an outstanding group of individuals who meet regularly to put service above self. During the recent floods across New South Wales, the club sprang into action by collecting donations at Taren Point IGA to help those in need. The club also regularly operates a book and DVD stall at the local Uniting Church, as well as the Shire Vintage and Collectables Fair, in order to raise funds for its ongoing charitable causes. To celebrate Rotary's 100-year anniversary in Australia, the Sutherland Rotary Club will plant 100 native Australian plants at Rotary Park in Kirrawee, which is maintained year round by the Rotarians. None of this would be possible without the executive committee of Sutherland Rotary Club. I acknowledge president Karen Stevens, secretary David Melville, treasurer Stephen Hooper and directors Graham Thom, Alan Heighway and Warwick Parnell. I commend the incredible Rotarians from Sutherland Rotary Club and wish them well during this milestone year for Rotary in Australia.

**TENAMBIT BUTCHERY**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (16:47):** It is easy to see why Tenambit Butchery has enjoyed 19 successful years in business in our local community. On 7 April the fifth-generation butchers celebrated their nineteenth anniversary. They received an outpouring of birthday wishes, love and messages of support on Facebook. Customers expressed their appreciation for the commitment to bringing fine-quality produce to our local community. Owners Tanya and Rod Unicombe say they are lucky to have received so much support from both staff and customers over the years and they are excited to see what lies ahead for their family business. It is an achievement to be in small business for an extended period. I congratulate Tanya and Rod on that. I hope they enjoyed their amazing celebratory cake and that they have many more years in business together.

**REMOUNT**

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (16:48):** I acknowledge Remount, a not-for-profit organisation that delivers equine therapy out of Bowning, which is in my electorate of Goulburn. Recently I was privileged to visit Remount, where I met owners Ben and Marina Maguire; the team of dedicated volunteers, Adrian, Karen, Richard and Melissa; and their magnificent horses. The program is delivered at no cost to members of the military. Remount offer two- to four-day programs that include accommodation, catering and instruction. Remount assists people managing the impacts of mental health conditions including the impacts of physical injury, stress, PTSD, loss of family or friends and other debilitating conditions through equine therapy. It was an honour to meet with some of the veterans, first responders and volunteers and speak about how the program has been a positive experience and how it has helped them individually. On behalf of the entire community, I congratulate and thank everyone involved in Remount.

**BONNIE WINGHAM SCOTTISH FESTIVAL**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (16:49):** The Bonnie Wingham Scottish Festival was held last Saturday. It was reduced in size due to COVID and, rather than running for a week, the event was held over a day. It was great to see many tents and gazebos set up at Central Park and to see many pipe bands from all over the State in attendance, including from Coffs Harbour, Newcastle, Port Macquarie and elsewhere. There were also Jacobite actors, who recreated some of the Jacobite wars. There was a pipe band competition as well as Scottish dancing, food and mementos, which were available to the public. It was great to see many people support the event. The festival was not held last year because of COVID but it was up and running again this year. I look forward to another great day next year.

### ERINA HEIGHTS GARDEN CLUB

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:50):** Today I acknowledge and thank Helen and Barb from the Erina Heights Garden Club. Over the past few months Helen and Barb have been planting pots to create a beautiful and natural space inside the brand-new palliative care unit at Gosford Hospital. That is the same facility the Premier and I were honoured to officially open in April alongside the orange army of volunteers from Elsie's Retreat. I also thank Peter Steele and his fantastic team at Mitre 10 Kincumber for donating the pots that Helen and Barb used to make the palliative care unit a beautiful space. Palliative care is an incredibly important issue for many families in our community, as the Deputy Speaker would be aware. Delivering the new unit has been a truly whole-of-community effort. The efforts of Helen and Barb demonstrate that spirit on the Central Coast. I also acknowledge the work of the Deputy Speaker in her role as Parliamentary Secretary for arranging the palliative care round table on the Central Coast, which helped to facilitate the outcome of that fantastic palliative care unit at Gosford Hospital.

### ST DECLAN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (16:51):** I acknowledge the wonderful students at St Declan's Catholic Primary School in Penshurst who graduated last year as the class of 2020. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic disrupting classroom learning, students still achieved outstanding results, which teachers, parents and staff were extremely proud of. In particular, I mention Michael Williams and Eden Babakian, who received the school's New South Wales parliamentary awards for 2020. The students received the awards for embodying St Declan's values and for their growth mindset for the future. That is an outstanding achievement. It was an honour to present the awards at the graduation and end-of-year mass. I have no doubt that Michael, Eden and all the students from the class of 2020 will go on to achieve outstanding things in the future. I wish them all the best for high school and beyond.

### JOEYS NETBALL CLUB

**Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (16:52):** I congratulate Joeys Netball Club for securing \$7,000 from the New South Wales Government's Local Sport Grant Program. Established in 1963, Joeys are a wonderful community group who are dedicated to fostering lifelong engagement in netball. Through this grant, Joeys will purchase new equipment, such as bibs and balls, as well as provide accreditation for coaches. We all know that the cost involved in completing those courses can be a heavy financial burden on volunteers and volunteer organisations, so I am pleased that the funding will invest in the people who make community sport possible. Of course, none of this could be possible without the outstanding team of volunteers behind Joeys Netball Club. I acknowledge Anne Heptinstall, Katrina Lonergan, Aaron French, Melissa James, Annabelle Middleton, Anthony and Helena Lombardo, Jess Truscott, Danielle Sundram, Leonie Fanning, Kristen Tennant, Michaela Brown, Nicole Macfarlane, Kristen Balafas, Peter Sertori, Kelly Keoghan and Adrian Borchock. I commend Joeys Netball Club for bringing the importance of those projects to my attention, and I look forward to seeing the players benefit from the Local Sport Grant Program funding.

### MALIGA

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:53):** First Nations children and young people from across our Central Coast community are celebrating their creative expression through Maliga, the annual visual storytelling program that marks National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week. Maliga involves sharing culture and identity through visual, performance and literary expression. This year artworks were featured on street flags in the Umina town centre and along the Tuggerah Straight. I congratulate local artist Kyle Waters, who worked with students from The Entrance campus of Tuggerah Lakes Secondary College to create the fantastic pieces of art. I saw the Maliga flags when I drove through our community. I acknowledge the students who contributed to the artworks for exhibiting their creative skills in such a prominent and symbolically important way across the Central Coast, which has one of the fastest-growing Aboriginal communities in the nation. I am very proud that those artworks are on display for everyone to admire and appreciate.

### MS BIRGITTE MAIBOM

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (16:54):** I congratulate Ms Birgitte Maibom on being awarded the Oatley electorate's 2020 Woman of the Year. Despite there being many great candidates in our local area, Birgitte is more than deserving of this honour. Knowing her both professionally and personally, I have seen her intense commitment to social justice and education. Birgitte started her career as a secondary language teacher before joining the not-for-profit sector in 1998. She has since enjoyed a successful career in management and senior leadership across children's services, disability, health and youth programs. In 2015 Birgitte commenced her current role as CEO of Learning Links, a local organisation in Peakhurst. Learning Links is dedicated to improving educational outcomes for all children, especially those who face the additional challenges of learning difficulties.

and disabilities. Birgitte is everything that someone achieving an award of this distinction should be. She is humble, self-sacrificing, hardworking and, most importantly, passionate. On behalf of the many members of the local community who have seen a positive impact, I congratulate the Oatley's Woman of the Year.

#### **ST MEL'S PARISH, CAMPSIE**

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (16:55):** I acknowledge Father Anthony Mifsud, parish priest at St Mel's parish, Campsie. I thank all the parishioners at St Mel's parish for sending a petition to my office, the Save Our Graves petition. I thank all of our community for what they have done, particularly in the past few days. I acknowledge that many religious groups in our community are very concerned about the Government's announcement relating to the management of cemeteries. I thank our parish, its members and all the volunteers for the fantastic work that they do. On behalf of my community I will work very hard to ensure that the Government changes this decision.

#### **LIBERTY FOUNDATION**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:56):** I acknowledge the Liberty Foundation, a service based on the Central Coast dedicated to rehoming research animals. World Laboratory Animal Week ran from 19 to 24 April this year and the Liberty Foundation held its official digital launch. The event harnessed the power of social media to raise awareness and generate donations from not only the Central Coast community but also right across Australia. Since 2017 the Liberty Foundation has found forever homes for more than 350 animals from research facilities, including cats, dogs, fish, rats, mice, guinea pigs and rabbits. The Liberty Foundation has prevented many animals from being euthanised. I of course strongly support that work. I commend Paula Wallace, the founder and director of the Liberty Foundation, for her diligent work. I also encourage Central Coast residents to stay connected with the Liberty Foundation through their email newsletter or memberships. There is always an opportunity to provide a forever home for one of those animals when their time as a research animal is completed.

#### *Community Recognition Notices*

#### **CEC MORGAN**

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—**I acknowledge Cec Morgan, someone who has contributed significantly to the area in and around my electorate of Davidson and who recently retired as president of The 416 Group. Over 20 years ago, Cec created the action group for residents of Lindfield and Killara to ensure the environment and quality of life was maintained alongside current and future developments. Since then the organisation has set up Community Fire Units for bushfire hazard reduction, and facilitated community input into local projects such as the currently relevant Ku-ring-gai Housing Strategy and Lindfield Village Hub. As president, Cec has engaged with residents and represented the group in meetings with mayors and councillors of Ku-ring-gai Council. Over the years he has also corresponded with my electorate office regarding various local issues. I commend Cec for his sustained contribution for more than 50 years to the local community in around the North Shore and wish him well for the future.

#### **TRIXIE WHITMORE**

**Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—**I acknowledge Trixie Whitmore, late of St Ives in my electorate of Davidson. Trixie was born in 1935, and developed a love for the bush as a child. She would often go on long bushwalks with her neighbour and they would identify local flora and fauna. These experiences inspired her to publish a children's book called *Kokey Koala and the Bush Olympics* for the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. The book was a major success and became a recommended resource of the New South Wales and Western Australian education departments. Trixie sadly passed away in 2020, but her daughter, Elizabeth, and granddaughters, Lauren and Grace, have recently republished her book for a new generation of children. I offer my condolences to Trixie's family and particularly acknowledge her contribution to children's education regarding local flora and fauna.

#### **TERESA TRAN**

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—**I recognise a member of the Bankstown electorate, Teresa Tran, and congratulate her on recently being awarded The Order of St John. The Order of St John is awarded to individuals who go above and beyond to devote their time and expertise towards helping others. This award was presented to Ms Tran by New South Wales Governor Margaret Beazley. Ms Tran was presented the Order of St John for her tireless efforts in assisting her local branch of St John Ambulance NSW. She has been a volunteer of St John Ambulance for over 12 years and has been a Divisional Superintendent, Officer in Charge since 2016. In this role, Ms Tran leads a division to train other volunteers to learn and apply first aid skills. She has previously received the 2018 Roads Australia Young Professionals PPP award for "Promise, Passion, and Pursuit", which also recognised her exceptional community service. I offer my many thanks to Ms Tran for her dedicated service and offer my congratulations for receiving this most prestigious award.



**TORCH PUBLISHING 100TH ANNIVERSARY**

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)**—Congratulations to the local Canterbury-Bankstown *Torch*, which is celebrating its official 100th anniversary this coming Saturday, 12 June. First founded in 1920 by Leslie Engisch, this remarkable paper has remained a family business with a clear focus on helping the local community. Leslie's son, Phil, managed the paper for 51 years before then "passing the *Torch*" on to his son, John, who remains the managing director and whose children, Trent and Christian, are today the General Manager and the Projects Director. The *Torch* is relied upon by local residents to provide reliable, trustworthy news on the issues that truly matter to them. The *Torch* also provides an important platform for local residents to raise issues that otherwise may go unreported on. Commendably, the *Torch* has always been firmly committed to charitable works throughout its operation. They have held an annual Charity Golf Tournament to raise funds for cancer research and organised Relay for Life events, raising over \$140,000 a year, as well as supporting countless not-for-profit organisations throughout the Bankstown area. I extend my congratulations to John, Trent, and Christian Engisch, long-time editor Mark Kirkland and the entire staff at Torch Publishing.

**FIRST ELECTRIC BUS FOR SOUTH WEST SYDNEY**

**Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)**—In February local bus operator Interline rolled out the first of 10 electric busses that they have ordered and will progressively introduce to their service throughout the year. These buses will deliver quieter and cleaner journeys for commuters and also save taxpayers money on maintenance and operational costs. The New South Wales Government is committed to transitioning its 8,000 diesel buses to Zero Emission Technology, and I have previously set Transport for NSW the goal of electrifying the fleet by 2030. It will be very exciting to see the New South Wales Government's electric bus vision become a reality.

**JEMMA WATSON**

**Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)**—I congratulate Jemma Watson of Mawarra Public School who was selected as a recipient of a NAIDOC Medal of Excellence. Jemma was awarded one of 25 awards across the State for her outstanding contribution to the 2020 NAIDOC [National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee Week] colouring competition. During 2020, the NSW Department of Education worked with the Koori Kids Organisation on initiatives to provide students with greater understanding of importance of friendship and cultural diversity. The partnership was highly successful in raising public awareness and community partnerships. I am proud to congratulate Jemma and all the students who entered and wish you all the best in your future endeavours.

**WAYNE NEAL**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)**—I congratulate Mr Wayne Neal on being awarded the National Medal 1st and 2nd Clasps at the Rural Fire Service presentation. Mr Neal joined the Lake Munmorah Rural Fire Brigade in 1996. He had previously served in the Round Corner Brigade and Erskine Park Brigade. Since joining the Lake Munmorah rural Fire Brigade, Mr Neal has served as Deputy Captain from 1999 to 2003 before resuming the position in 2019. He has also served as Senior Deputy Captain and Captain for one year. Along with holding the position of Brigade President, Vice President, Executive Member, Membership Officer, Maintenance Officer and Operational Readiness Officer. During the past 38 years, Mr Neal has attended in excess of 1500 incidents, been deployed to Western Australia, assisted in the 1994, 1997, 2001, 2003, 2006, 2009 and 2013 local bushfire events as well as participated in a number of out of area deployments over the years. Wayne most recently participated in the 2019-2020 bushfire emergency. I would like to thank Mr Neal for his service to our community and congratulate him as a worthy recipient of the National Medal.

**ZACHARY TAYLOR**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)**—I congratulate Mr Zachary Taylor on being awarded the National Medal at the Rural Fire Service presentation. Mr Taylor joined the Lake Munmorah Rural Fire Brigade in 2003. He has held the rank of Deputy Captain for three years, Senior Deputy Captain for one year, and Captain for six years, a position he still currently holds. Further, Mr Taylor has also served as Secretary, Treasurer, President and brigade Training Officer. During his service he has not only achieved Crew leader qualifications but has also acquired qualifications in safe working on roofs, first aid, advanced oxygen resuscitation, breathing apparatus support, and training. During the past 17 years, Mr Taylor has been involved in numerous local and out of area strike teams including an interstate deployment to South Australia. He assisted during the significant bushfire events of 2006, 2009, 2013 and 2019 as well as significant storm events of 2007, 2015 and 2020. I would like to thank Mr Taylor for his service to our community and congratulate him as a worthy recipient of the National Medal.

### ASYIK INDONESIAN ART FESTIVAL

**Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley—Minister for Water, Property and Housing)**—The sun shone brightly for the Scotts Head Asyik Indonesian Art Festival held at Scotts Head Reserve recently—a local event that included Indonesian food stalls, art workshops, songs, dance, and puppetry. The festival started with a colourful parade of children of all ages dressed in traditional costumes. Some walked, others played instruments, and two rode in a Becak, a traditional Indonesian vehicle. Spearheading the festival was the Scotts Head Primary School who is one of a select few schools associated with the Bilingual Program in NSW, alongside Macksville High School and Eungai Preschool. Scotts Head primary school teacher, Deb Swan, said the school has become a culturally engaged community with many school students speaking Bahasa Indonesian. Moreover, the school's cultural influence has moved far beyond the schoolyard and into the greater community. In addition to the many locals, the Education Attaché for Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, Imran Hanafi attended making it the third visit to our community. While the Asyik Art Festival showcased the wonderful Indonesian community of Scotts Head, it's also clear that local events such as these are an important cultural exchange that strengthens Indonesian relationships with Australia.

### ARMENIAN APOSTOLIC CHURCH OF HOLY TRINITY

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)**—It was wonderful to join the Armenian Apostolic Church of Holy Trinity community to celebrate their church's name day on 23 May in Wentworthville. In 2007 when the Wentworthville Holy Trinity Church building was purchased by the Armenian Apostolic Diocese, Mr Garabed Aladjadjian was appointed as representative of NSW Western Region Armenian Community by Archbishop Aghan Baliozian—Late Primate of Armenian Apostolic Church of Australia and New Zealand. Mr Aladjadjian carried the duty of starting the work on the Church building and bringing the community together to help and participate in forming the Western Region Armenian Church Parish. Also collecting much-needed funds and contributions from the Armenian Community to enable the renovation of the church building. He served for many years as Parish Council in many roles and provided free services to the Church Council to prevent unnecessary expenses. Mr Aladjadjian recently decided to retire from his appointments and expressed his willingness to help the Church at any time if need arises. He was rewarded for his hard work with Service Plaque at the event thanking him and his wife Mrs Aznive Aladjadjian for their lifelong dedication to serving the Armenian Community.

### SYED ATIQ UL HASSAN

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)**—I had the pleasure of attending a special get together during Eid Al Fitr to celebrate the recovery of Syed Atiq Ul Hassan after a long period of illness. The event was attended by prominent community members, family, friends and my parliamentary colleagues, member for Lakemba, Jihad Dib, MP, and member for Auburn, Lynda Voltz, MP. Syed is the Editor-in-Chief of the newspaper Tribune International, the Director of Chand Raat Eid Festival and the director of Halal Expo Australia. During his illness, Syed has shown amazing mental toughness and immense passion for serving the community, as he continued to take part in community affairs and as a journalist continued to report the news while he was undergoing treatment. It was a happy occasion for family and friends, with the gathering opened with a recitation from the holy Quran. I was honoured to join colleagues, community elders and family who all spoke about Syed's improved as well as their appreciation of his continuous community work. I was honoured to take part in this celebration and wish Syed a healthy and prosperous future.

### NAME THE CRANE

**Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy)**—Today I would like to speak about "Celsus", the crane that has started the next phase on the construction on the New South Wales Government's multistorey car park at Liverpool Hospital. I was very excited to join four clever primary school students, their families, members from the Liverpool Health and Academic Precinct and the construction team from ADCO to announce the winner of the Name The Crane competition. Students from across the Liverpool Local Government Area were invited to enter the competition, and the panel narrowed it down just to four entries! Well done to the finalists, and a special congratulations to Charlotte, who named the crane "Celsus" which is Latin for "tall". It is extremely exciting to see the construction of this 500 space car park well underway, with it on track to be operational early next year. This car park will cater for the projected population growth of the region and make a huge difference to the hospital and our local community. Once again congratulations to all those who entered the competition and I look forward to seeing the flag "Celsus" being flown from the crane each day. Thank you

### ATO PLODZICKI-FAOAGALI AND MARION FAUSTINO

**Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields)**—The countdown is on to the Tokyo Olympics. The excitement is building for two young men from my electorate who will represent Samoa in the boxing ring. I met 22-year-old Ato Plodzicki-Faoagali of Macquarie Fields and 21-year-old Marion Faustino of

Ingleburn at the South West Multicultural and Community Centre in Minto. Both men display determination and passion for the sport. Through hard work, a gruelling training regime and a supportive community, Ato and Marion have achieved the ultimate sporting dream. Ato Plodzicki-Faoagali's accomplishments include winning gold at the 2019 Pacific Games; silver at the 2018 Commonwealth Games and bronze at the Youth Commonwealth Games. Marion Faustino was the 2020 New Zealand Welterweight National Champion and the Samoan Welterweight National Champion. In 2019, Marion won gold at the Pacific Games. When Marion enters the boxing ring in Tokyo, he will do so in honour of his father who sadly passed away last year. Sharing this special tribute will be his mother and 11 siblings. I wish Ato and Marion all the best for the Tokyo Olympics. I'm sure they will do Samoa and our local community proud.

#### **BAYSIDE CITIZENSHIP AWARDS**

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale)**—I recently had the honour of attending a citizenship ceremony hosted by Bayside Council, alongside Mayor Joe Awada and local Federal MPs Linda Burney and Matt Thistlethwaite. We have such an incredible multicultural community in the St George area, with people settling in and around Rockdale from all over the world. One of the best parts of being the Member for Rockdale is getting out into our community, meeting people from all walks of life, and learning the many ways they serve and contribute to our community. Citizenship ceremonies were held a little differently last year due to COVID-19, so it has been fantastic to have them back and be able to welcome and celebrate our newest Australians in person. Congratulations to everyone who received their citizenship, and welcome to the wonderful Rockdale community.

#### **ST GEORGE HOSPITAL VACCINATION HUB**

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale)**—I toured the St George Hospital Vaccination Hub, which opened in early March, with some colleagues last week and receive my first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. The opening of this hub is an important step in protecting our wonderful country, and protecting our community from this pandemic. I encourage everyone in the Rockdale community to register and get vaccinated at the St George Hospital Vaccination hub as soon as you are eligible. My vaccination experience was painless and professional as always from the world's best health care team. I would like to thank the many nurses, doctors, health professionals, and hospital staff who continue to work tirelessly in the face of the pandemic to keep all of us safe. Our community is undoubtedly safe in your capable hands.

#### **HUNTER SCHOOLS BOYS' SOCCER TEAM**

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)**—This year the Hunter Schools Boys Soccer Team had a desire to break a 44 year drought, and they did that with a win at the NSW Combined High Schools boys' soccer title. This year's team did not let pressure or doubt get in the way of their dream to win, in fact, the squads coach, Robert Jovanovski, believes it was the team's desire that led to their success. During the tournament, Hunter beat Sydney South West Schools 1-0, Riverina Schools 6-0, North Coast Schools 4-2 and Sydney West Schools 4-0, to progress to the finals where they beat Sydney North Schools in a penalty shoot-out 4-2. Congratulations on your win, Robert, Captain Jack Kenny, Will Ingram and Otto Schwarz of Hunter Sports High, Jaegger Wholert of Singleton High School, Patrick Bond and Charlie Kelly of Newcastle High School, James Cresnar and Ethan Gilmore of Whitebridge High School, Lachlan West and Nicholas Kacev of Merewether High School, Isaac Collins of Maitland Grossman High School, Mason King of Callaghan College Wallsend Campus, Milo Bisogni of Warners Bay High School, Angus McLeod of Kotara High School, Riley Parker of Lambton High School.

#### **HUNTER SCHOOLS GIRLS' SOCCER TEAM**

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)**—Congratulations to the Hunter Schools Girls' Soccer Team who won the NSW Combined High Schools Girls' soccer titles for the first time since 2015. The team was runner up at the last tournament in 2019, won in 2015, won three in a row in 1989, 1990, and 1991, and two in a row in 1982 and 1983. During the tournament, Hunter beat Sydney East Schools 1-0, Riverina Schools 2-1, Western Schools 2-1, Sydney South West White Schools 3-0, to progress to the finals where they beat South Coast Schools 1-0. Well done to Leia Puxty who was given the team MVP award for Hunter, Ella Murray who was named 2021 player of the final, and Chloe Smith who was named 2021 player of the tournament. Congratulations, coach Blair Newham, and students Amy Parkinson of Cardiff High School, Teagan Douglas and Josie Morley of Maitland Grossmann High School, Kirsty Fenton, Chloe Walandouw, Brianna Williams, Milan Hammond, Mia McLachlan, Ella Murray and Leia Puxty of Hunter Sports High School, Chloe Smith and Brinley Gentle of Lambton High School and Montana Quick of Callaghan College Jesmond Senior Campus.

#### **JOYCE FITZGERALD**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes)**—I pay tribute to Joyce Fitzgerald of Taree who passed away recently. Joyce joined the National Party in 1985, she was a staunch supporter and left an incredible legacy behind her. She had an energy and love for life that was infectious to everyone around her and her contribution to

the Manning Valley was outstanding. As a past president of the Chamber of Commerce, Taree Aquatic Festival and Taree Show Society, her passion, poise and hard work knew no bounds. I would like to offer my condolences to anyone who was fortunate enough to know Joyce, and again pay tribute to her and her magnificent contribution to our community.

#### **TONY BURNS**

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes)**—I recognise Tony Burns, Chief Radiographer at Manning Base Hospital for his 41 years of service. Tony has served countless members of our community after joining the hospital in 1980, and becoming the Chief Radiographer in May 1991. Tony will be retiring next month after having worked at the hospital for more than four decades. In that time, Tony became a member of the working party which created the Medical Radiation Science degree course at Newcastle University, helping to train the next generation of Radiographers, he was awarded a Master of Health Services Management in 1966. I would like to congratulate Tony for his outstanding career and thank him for his work in serving our community.

#### **LARA ROSER**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)**—I acknowledge Lara Roser, of Caroline Chisholm College, who was one of the six students recognised at the Annual Youth Awards Night hosted by The Rotary Club of Nepean at the Penrith RSL Club. Lara was chosen by Principal, Dr Greg Elliot, and Year Leaders of Caroline Chisholm College to be commended for demonstrating community participation both within and outside of the school community. She gives up her free time to help with fundraisers and school activities that benefit the charities involved as well as their fellow students. Well done and keep up the good work Lara!

#### **MARIA KIRSTEN**

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)**—With the passing of Maria Kirsten on 20 April our community lost a profoundly loved daughter, mother, wife, sister, friend, healer, practitioner and international leader. Born in The Bahamas and raised in New York City, Maria immigrated to Australia when she married her husband Michael and they raised their 2 daughters, Sasha and India in Lennox Head. I offer Maria's family and all who loved her my deepest condolences. Maria seemed to understand the human body in a way I have rarely seen. She was extremely knowledgeable and intuitive and devoted her professional life to helping people become physically well and in tune with their bodies. Maria's giftedness as a yoga teacher trainer was internationally recognised and her local classes at the Lennox Head surf club were legendary. There was no ego in her work and she leaned into life and people in a way that was deeply present and supportive. Her work included developing online yoga learning materials for secondary students and in recent years specialising in women's health as an Occupational therapist. I had the privilege of working with Maria, studying yoga with Maria and swimming across the vast marine park of Byron Bay with Maria.

#### **RAINBOW DRAGONS**

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)**—Today I applaud the success of the Lennox Head Rainbow Dragons club, who won gold and silver medals in 10 out of 12 categories at the national Coast to Coast Dragon Boat Festival on the Sunshine Coast. Special credit goes to head coach Mary Davis, whose work ensured the 44 Dragons showed depth of skill, consistency, teamwork and strength in 2000m, 1000m, 500m and 200m distances. The two wins for the 2000m 40-plus races were particularly impressive, as the club has not previously won medals over these distances. Also notable were the final win by the 55-plus years Women's 20s team over 500m and the second placing over 1000m, 500m and 200m by the 55-plus years Opens/Men's 10s crew – six of whom are aged 70 or more. Club members were cheered by a second place for the Rainbow Dragons Abreast team in the Breast Cancer Survivors 200m race. As well as its strong athletic focus, the Lennox Head club is inclusive, encouraging paddlers of all abilities to take part, and with an emphasis on physical, mental and social wellbeing. The club are incredible champions for local charities and I congratulate and commend their efforts.

#### **JAN DHU BIGGEST MORNING TEA**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)**—Jan Dhu recently hosted a Biggest Morning Tea event to raise vital funds for the Cancer Council of NSW. Jan is a keen community advocate who consistently fundraises every year for this very important cause. During the COVID-19 pandemic, when gatherings were not permitted Jan rose to the challenge, creating innovative ways to secure funds for the Biggest Morning Tea as she does every year. This year Jan held the Biggest Morning Tea in her own home and so popular was the fundraiser that she was obliged to hold two sessions to accommodate for the number of people wanting to attend. I take this opportunity to thank Jan and her family for their ongoing support to this worthwhile cause and for their commitment to supporting people with cancer.

**BIGGEST MORNING TEA SINILIA RADIVOJEVIC**

**Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)**—I was delighted to recently attend a Biggest Morning Tea fundraiser held at Cabra-Vale Diggers. The event was organised by Cancer Council Ambassador and volunteer Mrs Sinilia Radivojevic and was attended by members of the local community. Guests were treated to a dancing performance as well as delicious food and of course, the obligatory cup of tea. We also had the privilege of hearing from Ms Costeen Sekhas, Cancer Council Greater Sydney Communities Manager, about the various projects and research conducted by Cancer Council of late. I would like to thank Sinilia and her organising team for putting together a very successful event which raised vital funds needed by the Cancer Council of NSW to promote cancer awareness, treatment and research.

**EDWINA BONE**

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)**—I recognise Edwina Bone of Orange. Australian National and Olympic women's hockey player, Edwina Bone has recently been selected to captain the Hockeyroos throughout the Trans-Tasman Series in New Zealand, in the lead-up to the Games of the XXXII Olympiad in Tokyo. The Hockeyroos have emerged from a testing 2020, which saw them isolated in Western Australia following the outbreak COVID-19, playing the bulk of their hockey against the Western Australia under 18s boys side, to maintain relative match fitness in the lead-up to the Olympic Games, which commence on 23rd July 2021. The recent Australia – New Zealand travel bubble has allowed the Hockeyroos to apply their skills at an international level against the New Zealanders just in time to prepare themselves for the biggest sports stage in the world. Being selected at the highest representative level of women's hockey is an enormous achievement, and this will be Edwina's second time representing Australia at the Olympics, having played for Australia at the Rome Games in 2016. The opportunity to showcase her capabilities to captain the Hockeyroos is a testament to both her skills as a player, and as a leader. Congratulations and good luck, Edwina.

**FORBES RUGBY CLUB**

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)**—I recognise the Forbes Rugby Club for their May Day fundraiser. Forbes Rugby Club's May Day for Tracey raised an amazing \$10,000 for CanAssist. The Forbes rugby community gathered together and dug deep in a show of support for one of their own, long-serving volunteer and committee member, and former president, Tracey Prior. Tracey joined in the event and drew the winning tickets in the day's fundraiser raffle. Tracey nominated Forbes CanAssist as the beneficiary of the funds raised on the day, through a successful raffle. The raffle quickly attracted a mass of donations from local businesses and individuals, and tickets sold quickly. Individuals and the Forbes Rugby Old Boys made cash donations. This event is a demonstration of the solidarity of the greater Forbes community, and I applaud all businesses and individuals who committed their time, money and effort to this cause. Congratulations to the Forbes rugby community on your generosity and support, and well wishes to Tracey Prior.

**WESTS GROUP**

**Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)**—There are a number of worthy causes and projects in the Campbelltown and wider Macarthur region. Unfortunately, there is not an unlimited amount of government funding or money in the pockets of local residents to ensure that every cause and project receives the dollars it is after. However, we truly are fortunate to have a number of organisations willing to dig deep when it is needed. Wests Group Macarthur is one of those groups. The organisation's footprint spreads throughout the entire Macarthur region – from Campbelltown to Camden to Wollondilly. Recently Wests Group Macarthur committed to providing \$20,000 a year for three years to fund a new shelter for women and children fleeing domestic violence. While the shelter is located in the neighbouring LGA of Camden, it will no doubt have a big impact for women and children in Campbelltown. Domestic violence is the number one offence Campbelltown police encounter so there is no shortage of demand for shelters like the one Wests Group Macarthur will help fund. The grant will go towards: food; accommodation; caseworker management; as well as medical, legal and educational programs. The shelter will form part of Blue Wren House – Camden Women's Shelter's Porchlight Program.

**ITALIAN NATIONAL DAY 75TH ANNIVERSARY**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)**—The day 2 June 2021 marked the 75th anniversary of Italian National Day. The Inner West is an enduring testament to the strength and vibrancy of multicultural Australia. I thank the generations of Italian migrants who came to Australia and called the Inner West home. For many, the journey to Australia was not easy. If leaving their homeland was not hard enough, when they arrived at our shores, they often faced hardship and discrimination. Still, they worked hard and built proud suburbs like Leichhardt and Haberfield, building infrastructure, nurturing local family businesses, and shaping the Inner West we know and love today. I note that central Leichhardt is set to be renamed Little Italy by Inner West Council to celebrate the extraordinary contribution made by generations of Italian migrants and I congratulate the local residents, businesses and

organisations including Co.As.it who worked so hard to make it happen. Communities work best when people of many different backgrounds and experiences come together and I am proud and honoured to celebrate the legacy of the Italian community in building our wonderful, diverse Inner West.

#### **INNER WEST MOVEMENT FOR LIFE**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)**—I recently met with representatives from the Inner West Movement for Life and Inner West Chapter of the Wilderness Society, organisations committed to protecting our natural world, both across the length and breadth of the State, but also in our own backyard in the inner west. Specifically, they raised the looming threat to some of New South Wales' most vulnerable wilderness posed by the New South Wales Government's potential release of surrounding areas for coal exploration. They raised concern that many of the eight areas flagged for possible coal exploration in the Government's Strategic Release Framework are immediately adjacent to national parks, including the Wollemi National Park, the largest wilderness area in New South Wales, and the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains National Park. They note the international significance of these extraordinary wild places, and that some of the areas flagged for exploration are struggling to recover from bushfires and recent storm activity, and specifically raised the concern that mining exploration in these areas could further undermine efforts to protect the iconic Wollemi Pine. I thank the Inner West Movement for Life and Inner West Chapter of the Wilderness Society for their persistent and principled advocacy for our natural world.

#### **MR AND MRS PENDER'S 60TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY**

**Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)**—I acknowledge Mr Kenneth and Mrs Betty Pender residing at Donald Robinson Village, as today they celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary. Sixty years of marriage is momentous milestone and I hope they enjoy their special day together. I take this opportunity to congratulate them on their diamond anniversary and wish them many more years of love and good health together.

#### **KOOKABURRA KIDS**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence)**—Last month, Australian Kookaburra Kids Foundation held its eighth annual corporate lunch fundraiser at Doltone House in Pyrmont. The event was hosted by Kookaburra Kids Ambassador Peter Overton and featured a line-up of speakers that included Osher Günsberg and Rose Louise Cox. This year's corporate lunch raised over \$90,000, with more than 50 per cent of attendees participating in the event for the first time. Since 2002, Kookaburra Kids has been committed to supporting young people to thrive beyond the impacts of family mental illness. With programs designed to help them develop coping strategies, resilience and social and communication skills in a fun, social environment, Kookaburra Kids empowers young people to reach their potential and to flourish. I acknowledge the outstanding efforts of Chris Giles, CEO, and the Board of Directors: Patricia Reid, chair, Peter Kerr AM, Jarad Stirling, Joanne McCafferty, Andrew Barrs and Lee Knight. Donations can be made at [donate.kookaburrakids.org.au](https://donate.kookaburrakids.org.au).

#### **BALMAIN NSWNMA**

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)**—Today I bring to the attention of the House the Balmain Nurses and Midwives' Association for their ongoing advocacy for frontline healthcare workers. I was proud to rally alongside local nursing staff at Balmain Hospital on Thursday 20 May 2021 to join their call for fairer pay and safer nurse to patient ratios. Our community strongly supports our local healthcare workers for their tireless efforts keeping locals safe and healthy through this pandemic. I would particularly like to acknowledge: Branch President Sheetal Sharma, Branch delegate Paul Addy, Union organiser Mark Murphy, and all the nursing staff of Balmain Hospital who attended the rally. I know I speak on behalf of everyone in the Balmain Electorate when I thank the Balmain NSWNMA for their ongoing advocacy and care for our community.

#### **WAVERLEY SENIOR WEEK**

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)**—It was a pleasure to drop in to Waverley Seniors Week and join them for their Seniors Week Festival Luncheon. The NSW Senior's Festival is the largest festival for seniors in the Southern Hemisphere, reaching up to 500,000 seniors each year. Waverley Community and Seniors Association do a wonderful job of bringing the NSW Seniors Festival to local people and giving it a local flair. The Waverley Seniors Festival 2021 ran from 13 to 24 April, with activities, workshops, music, lunch and much more. Local seniors joined in on walking basketball, livestreaming of classic music hits from the golden era of song and had plenty of meet ups, just like the luncheon. The theme of the luncheon was 'Being Healthy and Together', placing more of the focus on health in later life on exercise and conversation with friends and neighbours. Thank you to the Waverley Community and Seniors Association for inviting me to your wonderful luncheon and to the Mill Hill Hotel for providing a wonderful friendly environment for this event.

**NSW SES AWARDS WAVERLEY-WOOLLAHRA UNIT**

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)**—Today I congratulate the award winners of the Waverley-Woollahra unit of the NSW SES. It was an honour to attend their annual awards ceremony on the 27th of May and I thank the NSW SES for their invitation. The Excellence in Leadership Award and Long Service Award for 15 Years went to Unit Commander Kim Edwards. Congratulations to Robbie Reiner on his 20 years Long Service Award and to Rabbi Levi for his 10 Years Long Service Award. Long Service Awards for five years were achieved by Suzy Domingues, Unit Training Coordinator and Michael Horne, an RFA Team Leader. The Waverley-Woollahra Spirit Award went to Jack Kilavuz, a new member of the operations team at the unit. Congratulations also to Simon Efron, the recipient of the training achievement award. These local volunteers have worked tirelessly through bushfires, floods and severe weather to help keep communities across NSW safe. A huge thank you to each and every SES volunteer, your dedication to our community and many others is truly remarkable and deserves recognition.

**SES**

**Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)**—Members of the State Emergency Service are used to stepping up to help others, but members of the Wagga Wagga unit were recently called on to lend a hand in a different way. The members are the stars of a new series of recruitment videos, showcasing the roles and skills of individuals in the service. With the theme of "locals helping locals", the Wagga Wagga unit oversaw the production of five videos, each highlighting a different skills area: storm and water operators; in and on-water operators; road crash rescue operators, which was filmed with the assistance of Gundagai members; unit volunteers and spontaneous volunteers. The video was produced locally with local members. Filming was completed over two nights in five locations: Gundagai, the Murrumbidgee River at Wagga Wagga, unit headquarters at Wagga Wagga, NSW SES zone office and a local staff member's house. I was lucky enough to attend with SES volunteers the "world premiere" of the new videos on the big screen, along with SES Deputy Commissioner Damien Johnston, Southern Zone Commander Nichole Priest, and Deputy Commander Barry Griffiths and Wagga unit commander Jason McDonnell and Gundagai unit commander Ross Tout. Well done to the talented SES volunteers.

**REVEREND STEPHEN MATTHEWS AND REVEREND BEVERLY MATTHEWS**

**Ms JODI McKAY (Strathfield)**—I bring to the attention of the House Reverends Stephen and Beverly Matthews of the Burwood and Croydon Uniting Church. Both Beverly and Stephen have served the church and the wider Burwood community for over a decade, overseeing congregations across two churches. Under their guidance, the Uniting Church is a welcoming and multicultural worshipping community. The church runs English conversation classes, bible study groups, and the Playgroup, Preschool and Parenting programs. They also developed the Emergency Relief Program, which provides counselling and pastoral care, helping hundreds of people with emotional and material support each year. Reverends Stephen and Beverly Matthews' commitment to the church and to the community is commendable. I wish Reverend Stephen Matthews and Reverend Beverly Matthews all the best in this new chapter of their life and thank them on behalf of the Strathfield Electorate for their legacy of care and kindness that they leave.

**GRACE BRENNAN 2021 NSW REGIONAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)**—I congratulate Waverton resident Grace Brennan for being named the 2021 NSW Regional Woman of the Year. Grace received the award for her 2019 #BuyfromtheBush campaign that helped unite city and country to support rural businesses during the drought. Grace's ingenuity sparked a national online movement that has attracted over a quarter of a million followers on Instagram and Facebook. Her campaign has helped connect small businesses from rural towns and communities with people from the city. Since 2019, Buy from the Bush has injected around \$5 million in revenue for participating regional businesses and has supported farmers and their families recover from the drought. Some businesses have even sold out within hours of being posted on the page with overwhelming support from the public. Grace's initiative was a lifeline for hundreds of regional businesses and communities, making her a perfect fit for the NSW Regional Woman of the Year. I thank her for her determination and generosity, and congratulate her on this outstanding achievement.

**MOSMAN RUGBY CLUB REMEMBERS MICHAEL "DOCTOR" KENNEDY**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)**—Today I honour the life of Mosman Rugby Club legend Michael Kennedy who passed away peacefully in his sleep last month. Michael, who was known as "Doctor", was a huge part of the Mosman Rugby family since his debut in 1974. He played 226 games, coached for 17 years and won five premierships in that time. Doc was on the Club's committee for 24 years and was President for eight of those. In 1990, he was awarded Mosman Rugby Life Membership. Not only was Doc a prominent figure in the Mosman sporting community, but he was also awarded life membership of NSW Suburban Rugby in 2015. Doc

was said to "epitomise all of the admirable values of grassroots rugby". He will be sorely missed by friends, family, Mosman Rugby Club and the wider rugby community. I offer my deepest condolences to Michael's sister, Margaret, and the whole family. He will be remembered for his tireless devotion to the sport.

#### **DR JOHN PATERSON**

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment)**—This year I celebrated 10 years as the member for Hornsby and today I would like to acknowledge Dr John Paterson, Principal of Mount Colah Public School who is also celebrating his 10th Anniversary. Dr Paterson is an inspirational leader who supports his teaching staff and the students at Mount Colah to ensure they are the best they can be. Every time I visit the school I am confronted with happy students who are striving to do their best and enjoying every minute they are at school. I take this opportunity to thank Dr Paterson for his leadership and commitment to education. I know our local students are in good hands with Dr Paterson as Principal. Congratulations on 10 years as Principal at Mount Colah Public School and I look forward to working with you for many more years.

#### **ZAIDYN MCALISTER**

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)**—Today it is my pleasure to recognise and congratulate Zaidyn McAlister of Balranald. At just nine years old, Zaidyn devotes many hours after school keeping the town's cemeteries looking clean. He goes up to the cemetery after school to pick up any rubbish that has blown around, and to rake up the leaves and weeds around the graves. Zaidyn has filled in holes around the graves and has put flowers on those graves of those that have no family left to do so. In addition, Zaidyn coordinated an Australia Day Clean-up this year, bringing in assistance to clean up the cemeteries by removing withered flowers, broken glass, and by tidying up around the trees and gardens. To become so engaged in his community at such a young age is a credit to Zaidyn's family and supportive community. In recognition of his service, Zaidyn was earlier this year presented with the "Environmental Citizen of the Year" award by Balranald Shire Council. I thank Zaidyn for his contribution to the Balranald community through his thoughtfulness, and look forward to seeing what more he achieves in the future.

#### **LYNDA LANE**

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)**—Today I recognise and thank Lynda Lane for the dedication and service she has given to community services and agencies in our community. Community services and agencies are required to provide and manage their services legally and constitutionally with positions such as President, Secretary and Treasurer. All these positions are voluntarily filled by community members such as Lynda. It is through the generous contribution by people like Lynda who give their time and effort to multiple agencies that services are advanced in their local town. Griffith has many, many services and agencies and relies heavily on volunteers to assist, attract and recruit by way of committees and boards. Thank you Lynda for your great service to the community of Griffith and the boards and clubs you have been involved with.

#### **SAGUN GROCERY STORE**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)**—I acknowledge Diwash Sapkota and the team at Sagun Grocery Store in Mortdale who are an outstanding local business in our community. Last year I had the privilege of acknowledging the store with a Business Achievement Award as part of the 10th Anniversary of the St George Community Awards. These awards honour some of the many businesses, individuals and community groups who go above and beyond each and every day to make our community even better. Diwash is a kind, caring and compassionate member of the local area who loves to share his advice on local dishes and cuisines. They are one of the largest providers of Southern Asian cuisine in the St George region and their food and spices are simply incredible. I encourage anyone who has not been to check out the Sagun Grocery Store in Mortdale for some outstanding authentic cuisine that you and your family will love. Thank you again to Diwash and his fantastic team for all of their hard work in 2020. I wish you all the best for another strong year.

#### **JACK BULIC**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)**—I acknowledge Jack Bulic from the St George Football Association for all of his hard work in 2020. Jack approached the organisation at the beginning of last year to showcase all 22 members of their special needs and referee programs. It was from here that "Around the grounds with Jack" was born and he used this platform on social media to showcase the value of these programs to the community. Following the reopening of Club football after the statewide shut down due to COVID-19, he was also able to get around to every Club President to make a video about the importance of local football through the crisis. Jack embodies all of the qualities that any Club would want in their volunteers. He displays passion, commitment, a love for the game and the many great people that allow local football to happen. He is quickly becoming an icon of our community and I cannot wait to see what he has in store for this season.



### ROYCE GEORGE

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)**—Royce George has helped shape the Bathurst community's sporting landscape through hours of selfless volunteering over many years. He started playing rugby league as a junior and made his way right to the top when he played for the Cronulla Sharks in Sydney before captain-coaching the Gundagai Tigers to a premiership. Having filled the role of selector, coach and manager over many years with the Bathurst Penguins, Bathurst Panthers and representing Bathurst with Group 10 and Western Division in similar roles, Royce was fittingly rewarded by being honoured with Life Membership to these organisations. In 2018, Royce was awarded with recognition for 10 years' service from the Men of League Foundation for his role in raising funds to assist the men, women and children of the rugby league community who may have fallen on tough times. His unwavering commitment to the community was highlighted when he was instrumental in the city's fundraising efforts to build the cancer care facility known as Daffodil Cottage. In 2008, Royce also played a major role in petitioning against the repurposing of Daffodil Cottage treatment rooms for non-cancer related services. If ever there was a quiet achiever, it's Royce George.

### SOULA ASPROS

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)**—When it comes to familiar faces in the Bathurst community, there are not many better known people than Mrs Soula Aspros. For decades Mrs Aspros has been the friendly face behind the counter at the Carillon Fish Shop in the heart of the CBD. She was rewarded for her service to the community recently with her name added to the official list of Bathurst's Living Legends. In 1957, Mrs Aspros came to Australia from Greece when she was just 22-years-old. She spent a short time living in Coonamble before making the move to Bathurst, taking over the running of the Carillon Fish Shop in 1973 with her late husband Peter. In fact her family's association with the business dates back over 57 years. Mrs Aspros has run the Carillon Fish Shop with the help of her daughter Marta for the past 30 years, following the death of her husband who died of a heart attack. The 13 to 14 hour days do not bother Mrs Aspros because she says she is "not afraid of work". There is no doubt Mrs Aspros is an institution in Bathurst and that she has contributed to making the city the place it is today.

### HOTEL ETICO

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains)**—On Saturday I was honoured to attend a very special celebration in my electorate – the official opening of Hotel Etico at Mount Victoria Manor - Australia's first social enterprise hotel providing employment, training and independent living opportunities to people with intellectual disability. It was a joy to be there and meet all involved in this inspiring project, particularly the six 'Hospitality Trainees' who are embarking on a career in hospitality. Georgia Davidson, Jacob McAndrew, Katrina Sneath, Quinn Jones, Harry Wastie-Pero and Joshua Gray work in all operational functions of the hotel, gaining experiences and developing skills that are already increasing their confidence and building their independence. Hotel Etico represents a movement that is breaking down the barriers preventing people with disabilities from achieving their full potential. General Manager Stella Sgambellone and the team have created a warm, inclusive workplace that leads by example to shift community perspective about people with disability. The first Hotel Etico opened in the north Italian town of Asti in 2015 and the social enterprise has grown to include 5 hotels worldwide. I am extremely proud that Australia's first Hotel Etico is located in beautiful Mount Victoria in my Blue Mountains electorate.

### THE SURGERY SHIP

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—Today I commend a fantastic documentary series that I highly recommend to all members called *The Surgery Ship* which details a wonderful, humanitarian initiative aboard the world's largest non-government hospital ship called the MV *Africa Mercy*. *The Surgery Ship* is an eight-week documentary series filmed in Benin, West Africa which showcases the life of the volunteer doctors and nurses who offer a brilliant medical service to some of the poorest nations on earth. Featuring in the documentary series are two of Port Macquarie's prominent medical professionals, Dr Lindsay and Dr Dianne Sherriff who selflessly volunteered their services for three years aboard the MV *Africa Mercy*, sailing to third-world countries Madagascar, Benin and East Timor, treating some of the most vulnerable and underprivileged. The husband and wife duo attributed their time on the *Mercy* as an 'extraordinary experience,' serving on a hospital ship that consisted of five operating theatres and 450 volunteer staff, supporting people that wouldn't normally have access to healthcare. Before joining the *Mercy*, the Sherriff's had dedicated over 25 years in private practice before embarking on an opportunity to perform life changing surgeries overseas. A wonderful documentary series that is well worth watching.

**NEWCASTLE PERMANENT SLSMNC BRANCH AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE 2020-21**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—I congratulate the award recipients from my electorate of Port Macquarie who were honoured at the 2020-21 Newcastle Permanent Surf Life Saving Mid North Coast (SLSMNC) Branch Awards of Excellence. Hosted at Crescent Head Surf Club on the 5 June 2021, the annual gala night recognised those volunteers who have gone above and beyond in the past year to selflessly support Surf Life Saving and their local community at large. I applaud the major winners;

- Youth Lifesaver of the Year - Brienna Rumsby - Camden Haven
- Youth Athlete of the Year - Nick Caldwell - Tacking Point
- Coach of the Year - Mick Lang - Tacking Point
- Rookie of the Year - Nick Player - Wauchope-Bonny Hills
- Masters Athlete of the Year - Raelene Myers - Tacking Point
- Youth Volunteer of the Year - Alyssa Slattery - Tacking Point
- Volunteer of the Year - Elaine Walker - Wauchope-Bonny Hills
- Official of the Year - Tina Woodward - Tacking Point
- Administrator of the Year - Ian Latham - Wauchope-Bonny Hills
- Surf Sports Team of the Year - The Kockatoos - Wauchope-Bonny Hills
- Branch Club of the Year - Wauchope-Bonny Hills

Congratulations.

**DRAKE VILLAGE WOMEN'S SHED**

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)**—I congratulate and register my support on the parliamentary record for The Drake Village Women's Shed. In April they had their inaugural meeting and it is pleasing to see an enthusiastic group of Drake women came together to establish a creative, supportive and welcoming space for each other. I especially wish to thank committee members Helen Nauschutz, Suki Shea, Lisa Battishill and Belinda Fields. The committee are currently in the process of securing a permanent space for the Drake Women's Shed to meet. The Activities in the Women's Shed will include woodwork, basketry, metal work, jewellery making, sewing, cooking, and creating a flower and vegetable garden to sell produce at markets. It is a wonderful range of skills and activities from the women. Social isolation is a real issue impacting our country communities. The Drake Village Women's Shed are taking active steps to reduce the isolation country people, particularly country women face. I commend them on their initiative and commitment to one another. Drake Women have been through bushfires, drought and COVID 19 in recent years. They are a resourceful and resilient community. I can't wait to see what they do in the shed.

**WOODENBONG BIGGEST MORNING TEA - A GREAT SUCCESS**

**Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)**—I place on the parliamentary record my thanks and congratulations to all those involved in making the Woodenbong Biggest Morning Tea a great success. The Biggest Morning Tea is a major fundraiser for Cancer Council Australia. I would like to thank organisers Rosslyn Johnson, Chris Mulcahy and all the Woodenbong Aussie Cuppa Group volunteers who put on such a successful event. This year they raised over \$1800. The Morning Tea started at 9am at the Woodenbong Public Hall Supper Room and proceeded into a lovely soup lunch at 12pm. The Woodenbong Aussie Cuppa Group organised who organised this successful event had their first morning tea in 1998. The only year they have missed was last year due to COVID 19. Since 1998 they have raised a staggering \$33,000 which is an incredible effort especially in a small rural community. A raffle was held and the major prize was a handmade quilt generously donated by Joan Reid. A special mention goes to Urbenville day-care which donated \$5000 after the morning tea. I congratulate all involved and look forward to the Woodenbong Biggest Morning Tea going from strength to strength in the future.

**POLICE AMBULANCE AND CLINICAL EARLY RESPONSE PROGRAM**

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)**—On behalf of the Sydney electorate, I commend the Police Ambulance and Clinical Early Response (PACER) program, which puts mental health clinicians in first response police teams. PACER reduces police time dealing with these critical situations, provides skilled and timely mental health help for people in a crisis and reduces emergency department presentations. In the Sydney electorate, this means a mental health expert working with Kings Cross, Surry Hills and Sydney City Police, de-escalating conflict, making an onsite assessment with access to health information Using person-centred trauma informed

care, they give immediate help and better link people with community supports to prevent future problems. Police are often called to address crisis situations in the community where someone is not well and experiencing depression, anxiety, delusions or similar conditions. While officers receive some training in dealing with mental illness, expert clinical help results in better outcomes for the individual and the community. PACER is a much more suitable and effective service for those who need a health response rather than arrest and fines or court. I congratulate NSW Police and NSW Health for this innovative approach.

#### PEARL

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—On Thursday 27th May 2021, I met with Avanithah Selvarajah, one of the Senior Legal Officers at PEARL, or People for Equality & Relief in Lanka. PEARL is a not-for-profit organisation, led by human rights activists around the world. These human rights activists, composed of lawyers, political scientists, public health professionals and many more diverse professions, are concerned about the situation in Sri Lanka. PEARL's mission is to advocate for justice and self-determination for the Tamil population in Sri Lanka. PEARL have been advocating for human rights overseas, by engaging with policy makers, the United Nations and other governmental and non-governmental organisations. However, PEARL have begun great work in Australia and in particular New South Wales. By highlighting the human rights violations experienced by the Tamil population, our community will become more informed. I would like to thank PEARL for their ground breaking work to achieve an inclusive, oppression free environment for Tamil people. We are fortunate to have a significant Tamil community in the Electorate of Prospect. I am grateful for PEARL's vision to provide advocacy and reconciliation for our Tamil community in Western Sydney.

#### FRIENDS OF BRAESIDE HOSPITAL

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—Friends of Braeside Hospital is a group of dedicated volunteers working for the Independent Christian Charity, HammondCare. HammondCare's Braeside Hospital in Wetherill Park is a 72-bed hospital. Braeside Hospital serves residents of South West Sydney by providing inpatient, outpatient and specialised health and community services. It is the specialised health services that truly make Braeside Hospital remarkable. Braeside Hospital provides rehabilitation, palliative care and mental health services for elderly persons. In the Electorate of Prospect, palliative care is an issue of great importance to many families. Braeside Hospital offers comprehensive services, including pain management, skilled symptom control and physical, spiritual and emotional comfort to patients at the end of their life. We need more organisations like HammondCare to provide dedicated palliative care throughout New South Wales. I would like to thank the wonderful volunteers from the Friends of Braeside Hospital who dedicate their valuable time in supporting this fantastic hospital. I would particularly like to thank volunteer, Sinilia Radivojevic, for her continued efforts in advocating and promoting events that support Braeside Hospital. I also congratulate Braeside Hospital on their upcoming twenty-five year anniversary. Thank you for providing impeccable healthcare services for our loved ones.

#### SUTHERLAND SHIRE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION - SHAVE FOR A CURE

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence)**—I congratulate the club presidents in the Sutherland Shire Football Association who participated in the Cancer Council's Great Shave event. Collectively, the group set out to reach a combined target of \$35,000. Association President, Matt Brady, has so far contributed more than \$2,200 to the effort. Cronulla RSL Football Club President Matt Ackerman also lost his locks for the Great Shave. The Cancer Council's Balls for Balls challenge will run during Men's Health Week from 14 to 20 June. With more than 76,000 men expected to be diagnosed with cancer this year, this is an important initiative to raise money for research as well as to improve awareness of men's cancers.

#### GRAHAM WILSON

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)**—Graham Wilson is a sculptor, painter and designer whose work has been exhibited within Australia and overseas. Graham Wilson's work titled Dove Lake dawn, a hand carved impression of this spectacular Tasmanian natural environment, has been selected as a finalist for the 2021 Wynne Prize. The work speaks to the impact the wilderness can have on human emotions. Graham Wilson has dedicated himself to his art practice for more than 30 years. I congratulate him on the selection of this outstanding artwork into this prestigious prize and acknowledge the honour of having this large scale work hung on the walls of the Art Gallery of NSW.

#### KOTARA SOUTH NETBALL CLUB

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)**—Kotara South Netball Club has taken an innovative approach to fundraising. The COVID-19 pandemic meant the club had to think outside of the box in order to raise much-needed funds and what they have come up with might just be the "purrfect" solution. The club will publish

a 2022 calendar featuring images of the team's pets adorned in the club colours of black and orange. The calendar is expected to showcase cats, dogs, birds and even a fish. I commend Kotara South Netball Club for its creative approach to fundraising during the pandemic period.

#### **WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP GOLD BUCKLE CAMPDRAFT**

**Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government)**—After being cancelled in 2020 due to COVID-19, the World Championship Gold Buckle Campdraft returned to Willinga Park last month. Over three days of competition, the best campdrafters in Australia made their way to the South Coast to take part in this uniquely Australian sport. More than 5000 spectators were able to see the 210 riders take part in over 1000 runs across the duration of the competition, battling it out for the grand prize. After such an uncertain year in 2020, the competition was able to return and surpass expectations, with both grandstands sold out for the Gold Buckle final. The atmosphere was fantastic and it truly was great to be there for the return of this competition. Congratulations to everyone who participated in the Championship Gold Buckle Campdraft this year. I would also like to extend my thanks to Willinga Park owner, Terry Snow and all those involved in ensuring it was a huge success.

#### **MAITLAND JUNIOR FOOTBALL CLUB - DOLLY'S DREAM**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)**—I was pleased to attend the official launch of the partnership between Maitland Junior Football Club and Dolly's Dream on Saturday 15 May. The goal of Dolly's Dream is to change cultures and behaviours to prevent bullying, by increasing understanding of the impact of bullying, anxiety, depression, and youth suicide and by providing support to parents. The club's partnership aims to raise awareness about the impact of bullying on young people in our local community and ensure that they are aware on the services that are available to them if they are experiencing this behaviour. With over 1,000 members under the age of 17, the Maitland Junior FC President Mr Iain MacDonald wanted to make a strong statement against bullying. I support the pledge that Maitland Junior FC will not tolerate any form of bullying and will act as a safe place for those who are victims of this behaviour. I am pleased to announce that the Dolly's Dream logo will be donned by the 15/3's team this season encouraging the message of safety and inclusiveness for all wherever they play. Congratulations to all members of the Maitland Junior FC and #doitfordolly.

#### **VIEW CLUB**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)**—I recently had the pleasure of meeting with Anne-Louise O'Connor, National President of VIEW Clubs of Australia. Acting as an organisation who Voice Interests and Education of Women all over Australia, VIEW is a vital organisation in our local Maitland Community. Formed in 1960, there is now more than 300 VIEW Clubs Australia wide which are open and supported by over 15,000 women of all ages. This empowering organisation is led by Ms O'Connor who joined VIEW in 2001 and served at the Shoalhaven Heads Evening club for 16 years before moving to the Hunter Valley. Ms O'Connor has since played a vital role in campaigning for the development of Clubs in the Hunter and Central Coast region. Our very own VIEW Club was formed in 1965 and currently sponsors five Smith Family Learning for Life students. Thank you to past and present members of the Maitland VIEW Club for your dedication and commitment to ensuring disadvantaged children and young people in our community are provided with tutoring and mentoring to reach their full potential.

#### **ZIEMS BUTCHERS**

**Mr RYAN PARK (Keira)**—I bring to the attention of the House the end of an era in a Corrimal business. The iconic Ziems Butchers recently changed hands after being run by members of the same family for four generations. Rebecca and Robert Ziems were the original couple behind the business. Later the shop was run by brothers Ben, Charlie and Arthur Ziems. Charlie's sons Freddie and Robbie took over in time, before Freddie's sons, Matt, Danny and Robert. It was not all smooth sailing—5.00 a.m. starts and 7.00 p.m. finishes six or seven days a week were not uncommon. However, the brothers felt they were bound to the business by a very deep sense of duty to the family name. The family runs sheep and cattle on properties at Picton and Harden and now the family plans to spend more time on the farm and with their families. Thank you to the Ziem family for your commitment to our community.

#### **MALCOLM CROUCHER**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)**—I extend a huge congratulations to West Wyalong's long-standing paramedic Mr Malcolm Croucher. Mr Croucher was recently awarded his 40 year service bar for his continued act of assistance to the NSW Ambulance Service. Mr Croucher first joined the NSW Ambulance Service on 16 March 1981. Mr Croucher has also been awarded a Distinguished Service Medal, now called a Commissioner's Valour Medal, in 1991, having helped rescue a local three-year old who had fallen 30 feet down a disused mineshaft. Mr Croucher was the first person to ever receive this award. At this time Mr Croucher was awarded a

NSW Police Certificate which is the first time the award was presented to someone outside the Police Force. Mr Croucher's acts of kindness and service as a paramedic for the last 40 years to the Bland shire and the rest of the Cootamundra electorate is extremely appreciated and one that will definitely not go unrecognised. Congratulations Mal and thank you for your service. I look forward to catching up with you again soon.

#### **JACOB MASLIN**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)**—I extend a huge congratulations to Young Cadet Jacob Maslin who has been awarded DUX of the Cadet Under Officer [CUO] course. The Cadet Under Officer (CUO) Course is the highest course a cadet can undertake. The CUO Course is a four day Adventure Training Award hosted at the Holsworthy Army Base. Over the four days Jacob accumulated nearly 100km of walking, three hours of personal training per day and partook in navigation, abseiling and a number of other gruelling tasks. Of the hundred top ranking cadets from across the state only 56 completed the course. The cadets were grouped into syndicates with CUO Maslin's syndicate being the best performing. Jacob then went out to take out the DUX of the Course making him the highest ranking cadet across New South Wales. I congratulate Jacob once again on his amazing effort and I can't wait to see where his cadet training leads him in the future.

#### **TOONGABBIE WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL**

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills)**—Last week I was fortunate to visit Toongabbie West Public School and speak with their P&C Committee about all the wonderful work the school is doing. I was pleased to award the school with a \$5,000 grant which they are putting towards renovations and equipment for their uniform shop. Toongabbie West Public School has a proud community which will benefit greatly from the grant. The P&C Committee, who run the uniform shop, recognise the importance of providing opportunities for families and the school community, rather than profits for the school. They also operate a second-hand uniform program to assist families who may be financially troubled. I was amazed by the P&C committee's hard work to provide a warm breakfast for students in these winter months. I acknowledge Toongabbie West Public School P&C president, Matthew Chalmers, along with vice president Keyleigh Strike, for their ongoing efforts to support the school community.

#### **GYMEA MIRANDA BOWLING AND SPORTS CLUB**

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)**—I acknowledge the GyMEA Miranda Bowling and Sports Club who are the successful recipients of \$2,227 from the NSW Government's 2021 Local Sport Grant program. With over 60 years of history, GyMEA Miranda Bowling and Sports Club is a favourite amongst locals and caters for over 8,000 members with numbers expected to reach 10,000 by the end of the year. Through this grant funding, the Club will be able to replace the existing metal plinths which surround the bowling greens to increase safety and durability, and install four corner flags and windsocks. Of course, none of this would be possible without the outstanding executive committee including Chairman Kevin Jeffree, Vice Chairman Ian Clark and Directors Debbie Brooking, Marcus Worthington, Kathy Baker, Greg Letch and Terry Bouggas, alongside Greenkeeper Rod Powers and volunteers Len Crawley and Graham Kay-Spratley. I thank GyMEA Miranda Bowling and Sports Club for bringing the importance of this project to my attention and look forward to visiting soon.

#### **SOUTHERN DISTRICTS RUGBY CLUB**

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)**—I acknowledge Southern Districts Rugby Club who are the successful recipients of \$4,402 from the NSW Government's 2021 Local Sport Grant Program. Formed in 1989, Southern Districts Rugby Club have a strong culture of promoting women in their sport. The Club established the Rebelettes in 2017 after identifying a severe gap in women's rugby with nowhere for young women to play over the age of 16. The Rebelettes found instant success and are one of only two senior women's rugby union programs in the district. Through this grant funding, the Rebelettes are set to benefit from new equipment which will support the growth of female participation in the sport. Of course none of this would be possible without the Board of Directors including, Brad Devine, Warren Smith, Karina Bridges, David Cahill, Harrison Dale, Keith Holmes, Sam Lindsay, Jessica Reading and Paul Ridoutt. I commend Southern Districts Rugby Club for driving the participation of women in rugby and look forward to seeing the Rebelettes succeed.

#### **GLENHAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOL**

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)**—I recently had the pleasure of attending Glenhaven Public School to see the great work that the NSW Government's Community Building Partnership is having on the local community, as well as have a chat to the students about all things political. Over the last two years I have been delighted to be able to provide funding to the school's P&C, for the rejuvenation of the vegetable patch, and resurfacing of the basketball courts. I especially thank the P&C President, Scott Micallef, for his continued hard work in improving the lives of the Glenhaven students. I was also able to meet and talk to a group of students at the school who are currently studying politics in Australia. The students asked many high quality questions, and

it is always useful to get feedback on how our Government is helping young people. I thank the school for being such generous hosts and supplying a lovely morning tea, and I wish them all the best with their new veggie patch and basketball courts.

#### **KELLYVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL**

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)**—I recently had the pleasure of attending Kellyville Public School to give a talk to the local debating team, as well as all year 6 students. The Kellyville Public School debating team is made up of around 10 intelligent and confident young boys and girls, and it was wonderful to be able to impart on them the importance of being able to speak in public, whether their future job explicitly required in or not. The year 6 students at Kellyville are currently studying government and politics in Australia, and I was able to give them a MP's perspective on the way the NSW Parliament works, as well as what an MP does. I was thrilled to hear that the Metro is particularly popular in and around Kellyville, and that the next generations are engaged with politics from a young age. I especially thank debating coordinator and teacher Lara Fernie, for going above and beyond in organising such a wonderful day.

#### **VISUAL ARTS STUDENTS EXCEL AT GLENMORE PARK HIGH SCHOOL**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)**—I congratulate Glenmore Park High School on their impressive achievements within the Visual Arts sector. They are one of the very few schools to have a student's HSC Major Work selected by ARTEXPRESS to be displayed in various exhibitions, and have people nominated for the 2021 National Art School HSC Intensive Course. The 2021 HSC Major Work exhibition, 'Threads of Connection', highlights the importance of connecting through art. Kristina Santucci, Glenmore Park High School Dux, completed her HSC during the COVID-19 pandemic. Kristina's artwork called 'The Event Horizon' was selected to be displayed in the ARTEXPRESS collection. Kristina received a scholarship to the University of New South Wales. Furthermore, there have been 3 Year 11 students, Brianna Agius, Nawaab Qaumi and Carisse Irving selected for the 2021 National Art School HSC Intensive Course. These students were chosen for their incredible skillsets and commitment to their Visual Arts practices and studies. Congratulations to Kristina, Brianna, Nawaab and Carisse on their accomplishments. I look forward to hearing more about Glenmore Park High School's outstanding achievements.

#### **AUSTRALIAN AZERBAIJANI ASSOCIATION**

**Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)**—I recognise the celebration of Azerbaijani Republic Day held on Friday 28 May at Turkish House, in Gelibolu Parade, Auburn. The celebration was organised by the Australian Azerbaijani Association. This was the 103rd anniversary of the first Republic Day on 28 May 1918. On that day, following the end of the Russian Empire, Azerbaijani became the first secular and democratic state in what is described as the Muslim East. Those present and contributing on the night included Michael Oyta, President of the Australian Azerbaijani Association and Sara Azarsun a community activist. Also present were a number of diplomatic representatives, including Lakshman Hulugalle, Consul General of Sri Lanka and Ramil Gurbanov the Charge d'Affaires from the Azerbaijani Embassy as well as representatives from the Turkish consulate.

#### *Private Members' Statements*

#### **TAXI INDUSTRY**

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:57):** I place on record the huge disruption and disadvantage that has been caused to families in my electorate and across New South Wales by the Government's reforms to the taxi industry through the Point to Point Transport (Taxis and Hire Vehicles) Act 2016. Since that Act commenced we have seen many families forced into poverty and forced to refinance their homes after a significant loss of earnings from the legalisation of rideshare services in New South Wales. At the end of last year the upper House inquiry by Portfolio Committee No. 6 - Transport and Customer Service published its report on the impact of the reforms on the taxi industry. It found that 80 per cent of a taxi licence value had been lost due to the reforms. Up until the reforms were introduced, taxi licences were valued at up to \$450,000. That is a huge loss of value. That value is held by not just rich investors. There might be a few of those, but mostly it is in business loans taken out by families trying to raise their kids or trying to pay a mortgage.

In my electorate, owning a taxi licence has often been the first step up for migrant families towards becoming economically self-sufficient. People have come here, started driving cabs and bought a licence in the hope that in retirement they would still be able to lease out the cab and have a source of income. They would be able to send their kids to university, pay for a house and do better for their families. Instead, the Government has ripped that out from underneath them. It is not just any sort of business investment. It is not taking the usual sort of risk. What people bought for up to \$450,000 was a secure form of income. Back then, about 7,000 people were driving passengers around New South Wales. Now there are 20,000 because there are no barriers to entry anymore, for Uber drivers or for anyone like that.

The point to point reforms were supposed to ensure that there was still some reflection of the value of rank and hail services, but when we drive around we see people being picked up on the side of the road from anywhere by Ubers. Often they cut drivers off or drive in quite a dangerous way. It is noticeable that they are an Uber driver because there is a square in the back window, and then they stop and pick somebody up from the side of the road. This has been devastating for families in my electorate and it has got worse during COVID. When I was first elected, Premier Cabs was one of the largest businesses in my electorate. It was the largest employer on one site. The only larger employers were the Department of Education and the Catholic Education Office. Since then, Premier Cabs has had to close its call centre. It now operates all of its taxi services across Sydney and Melbourne from its Melbourne call centre. There is a yard full of cars where it is just holding the plates, because no-one is driving them.

The insufficient compensation that has been paid is most galling. The Additional Assistance Payment Scheme in particular has been ridiculously stingy. I supported a local man who I know named Gunay Oncu. He and his mother both own a taxi licence. They both took out business loans at 8 per cent interest. They applied for the Additional Assistance Payment Scheme and were knocked back. Out of the \$250 million compensation package, \$142 million was designed to go to the Additional Assistance Payment Scheme but only \$42 million has been distributed. It is too narrow. People cannot access it even though they are looking at losing their homes. Very recently Gunay told me that is what is likely to happen once JobKeeper ends. I have not heard from him since, but I am very worried for him and his family with the loss of their homes.

### **PUNCHBOWL BUS COMPANY**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:02):** I recognise an outstanding local business that is run in partnership with Transport for NSW—Punchbowl Bus Company. Thanks to Punchbowl Bus Company, our region has some of the most reliable and efficient bus networks in the State. In December 2020 external findings found that the company had 98.3 per cent of services run on time, and this increased to 99.1 per cent in January this year. Whether one is catching a bus to work, school or for whatever purpose, I believe it is fundamental that everyone has access to a reliable bus service. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when strict social distancing requirements were in place, the company still managed to run its services like clockwork. In April 2020 it recorded an efficiency rate of 99.9 per cent, meaning that its services were seemingly without fault. Each and every member of staff should be extremely proud of that statistic. Currently the company runs in excess of 5,000 trips across the region every week, which is truly impressive.

The services operate from Hurstville to Bankstown to Canterbury and everywhere in between. They are an asset to the transport network of the Greater Sydney region. The Punchbowl Bus Company was established in 1947 and will soon celebrate its seventy-fifth anniversary. In this time it has streamlined local services, provided additional services to cater for the needs of nearby residents and continued to provide a safe and reliable journey for all. Currently it employs over 200 staff within our region, with a team comprising individuals from 28 different nationalities. When our community has needed the Punchbowl Bus Company, it has been there to assist. In 2016 the Punchbowl Bus Company helped facilitate the provision of a direct bus service for local students to the Inaburra School in Bangor. More recently it has also been influential in the provision of a direct bus service for students travelling to the Penshurst Marist College campus in South Hurstville. To be externally recognised as one of the State's best bus services is no easy feat. With a number of privately owned and public services operating every day, competition is tough.

However, the Punchbowl Bus Company has consistently come out on top. Over the difficult past 12 to 18 months that we have endured, the team has continued to provide services with sufficient social distancing provisions and passenger hygiene requirements. The frontline staff in particular have risked their own lives to ensure that members of the public can navigate through the community safely. Members of our entire community are grateful for the staff's service, as they are for the commitment of all frontline workers throughout the State. The Punchbowl Bus Company also has solid plans for the future surrounding the introduction of electric buses to minimise its carbon footprint. I look forward to seeing that innovation become a reality. It is fantastic news for our State's environmental outlook, the reliability of our local services and the overall passenger experience.

The company has also utilised and implemented low-floor buses and on-demand services to greater meet the needs of local residents, particularly the elderly, the vulnerable and those in need. The incorporation of those technologies led to the organisation being awarded the 2018 Innovative Operator of the Year, which is an outstanding achievement. In 2019 the Punchbowl Bus Company was also chosen by New South Wales metropolitan customers as the number one private operator for both satisfaction and low levels of dissatisfaction. Whether it be additional and more direct bus routes, increased service reliability or its commitment to helping others through adversity, the Punchbowl Bus Company is assisting local residents each and every day. I thank Hamish Fraser, Steve Scott Jr, Steve Scott Sr, Alex Murray and the entire team for continuing to champion

improvements to our local bus service network. Our community is extremely grateful for their ongoing commitment and service.

### TANGAROA BLUE

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General, and Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence) (17:07):** Tangaroa Blue is a registered Australian charity that works to protect the health of the marine environment. It coordinates the Australian Marine Debris Initiative [AMDI], which consists of a vast network of agencies, organisations and individuals who volunteer their time to reduce the amount of debris entering our oceans. Since the program's inception in 2004, more than 17 million pieces of marine debris have been not only removed from our country's coastline but also analysed and catalogued in the Australian Marine Debris Database. The tool has been designed to identify the types, quantities and possible origins of ocean debris so that stakeholders can develop evidence-based solutions that tackle the issue at its source. Earlier this year I met with Dennis Dal Santo, Sarah-Jo Lobwein and Greg Storr.

Dennis and Rhonda Dal Santo started regular beach clean-ups in 2015 along the stretch of coast from Greenhills Beach north to Boat Harbour. Now the broader group conducts an average of six clean-ups a year across sites that also include Potter Point, Kurnell; Captain Cook's Landing Place to the Cricket Pitch picnic area at Kurnell; Boat Harbour Bay; and Burning Palms Beach in the Royal National Park. The group contributes its findings to the Australian Marine Debris Database. After each clean-up, debris is sorted according to a number of categories and subcategories. It is counted, weighed and photographed. Typically, members of the group find items like plastic straws, plastic lids, plastic bottles, hard pieces of broken plastic, plastic wrappers, plastic fish-shaped soy sauce containers, cigarette butts and lighters, balloons, rope and polystyrene foam.

The group observed, however, that where items are grouped together in the AMDI, no individual count exists for the items within that section. For example, straws, confection sticks, cups, plates and cutlery are all grouped together under "plastic consumer items". In an instance like this, if an item is particularly noteworthy for its reoccurrence, it cannot be isolated from the dataset. Consequently, and after years of noticing one such item, members of the group began to collect more granular data. They presented that evidence to me in a thorough, carefully considered report that highlights the prevalence of plastic cotton bud stems across all collection sites. That is not a problem unique to the shire. In Warrnambool, Victoria, community volunteers collected around 20,000 plastic cotton bud stems over a two-year period.

My local group found significantly higher quantities of cotton bud stems at ocean-facing rather than estuary sites. Across their six clean-up sites, the Voodoo Surf Spot at Potter Point consistently accounts for the highest number of stems collected. That also happens to be the site of the Cronulla Wastewater Treatment Plant. In addition, the cotton buds that the group collects frequently show patterns of cut markings. The report hypothesises that this probably shows they have passed through a mechanical system, in all likelihood rotary drum screens in wastewater treatment plants. The presence of fats, oils and grease on the debris supports the theory that those items have passed through the wastewater treatment system.

The group cites commercial literature from US-based company Ecologix Technologies Inc. relating to the manufacture of municipal wastewater pre-treatment equipment. The publication it references provides flow rate data for screen apertures of 0.5, one, 1.5 and two millimetres. These are significantly smaller than the screen opening sizes published in Sydney Water's technical data for both the North Head Wastewater Treatment Plant, at five millimetres and Cronulla Wastewater Treatment Plant, at six millimetres. Potentially, other Sydney plants have similar screening systems, but the group was unable to access those specifications. They therefore conclude that:

... the screen aperture sizes used at Sydney Water North Head and Cronulla WWTPs and possibly at the other WWTPs, may be large enough to allow plastic (polypropylene) cotton bud stems, which have a cross-sectional diameter of [approximately] 2.5mm to pass through the primary treatment stage of WWTPs that use either 6mm step screens or 5mm roller drum apertures.

That is some fine environmental sleuthing. I also note the comments made by Sydney Water General Manager Maryanne Graham to *The Sydney Morning Herald* on 4 June:

Two of the biggest causes of damage to [the] networks are... wet wipes and single-use cotton buds. These seemingly harmless single-use toiletries are not biodegradable and do not dissolve like toilet paper does.

The community's expectations around harmful plastics are changing. Aldi, Coles and Woolworths have already committed to removing plastic cotton buds from their shelves. Just like microbeads in cosmetic products, time is well and truly up for the plastic cotton bud. We need to move quickly to a sustainable alternative. Everyone can do their part by making wiser buying choices and ensuring waste is disposed of correctly. Biodegradable bamboo cotton buds are a better alternative than plastic but, in any event, those items should never be flushed down a toilet. I thank Dennis, Sarah-Jo, Greg and their teams of volunteers for sharing their findings and for their strong commitment to protecting the shire's spectacular coastal environment



## CLIMATE CHANGE

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (17:11):** If we are not planning for climate change in New South Wales, we are planning to fail. Australia's climate has warmed by just over one degree since 1910 and the best available science tells us that average temperatures are projected to rise further. Australia is already experiencing the impacts of climate change, including the warming and acidification of oceans, sea level rise, decreased rainfall in southern parts of the country and increased rainfall in the north, and the long-term increase in extreme fire weather. But currently in New South Wales the law has some major deficiencies in our climate readiness. Our planning laws, including the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979, are oblivious to climate change despite the New South Wales planning system having a key role to play in reducing contributions to greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation to climate change. That is alarming.

It means that planning decisions on everything from apartment blocks, suburb-sized subdivisions and new coalmines are made without specific consideration of their greenhouse gas impact. They are also made without proper consideration of the impact of natural hazards like bushfires, coastal erosion and sea level rise. It means we are building homes and offices with no basic standards on lifecycle emissions, waste levels and water sensitive urban design. It is still possible to build a home that is so poorly designed and insulated that it is virtually uninhabitable without air conditioning. Sweltering Cities revealed that nearly half of all apartment dwellers now leave their homes for a cooler location such as a shopping centre, cinema or library, compared with 27 per cent of people who live in houses, most of them because of the cost of air conditioning.

We are still building homes and offices in flood zones, on beaches that will be torn away by erosion, and in bushfire zones, oblivious to the inevitable fire. It should not be like this. We need to consider climate change mitigation and adaptation that permeates each key stage of the planning process, as well as the relevant laws and approvals. The planning Act has to be explicit about the planning system's role in reducing emissions and protecting New South Wales against climate change impacts. Many of those problems are amplified by other failures in the planning system, including the decreasing autonomy of local councils, the increasing use of exemptions from environmental protections and the pervasive influence of developers on the planning outcomes in our cities.

I bring to the attention of the House a range of recommendations put forward by the community. I also note some of those proposed by the Environmental Defenders Office which looks to fix this problem, as set out in its report *Climate-ready planning laws for NSW: Rocky Hill and beyond*. Among other things, we need to insert a new object in the planning Act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; develop an overarching climate change State environmental planning policy [SEPP] to improve integration of climate mitigation, transition and adaptation targets and measures within the planning system; and require all planning authorities to address climate change considerations when preparing and making strategic plans. That would include SEPPs, regional plans, district plans, local strategic planning statements and local environmental plans.

We need to provide additional guidance, funding and support to planning authorities preparing strategic plans; standardise and scale climate change impact assessment requirements and processes for different development pathways; mandate climate impact statements for major new projects; improve New South Wales building sustainability standards; and impose a duty to refuse projects that have unacceptable climate impacts and risks. Taking actions to implement those changes would help to curb emissions as far as possible to reduce the severity of climate change impacts in the future. The strategy would buy us the important time and space we need to accommodate the changes and challenges that climate change has already brought, and will continue to bring. We have to establish a mandatory and coordinated approach to tackling climate change to preserve our lives and our livelihoods. It does not matter whether one is in the city or a rural and regional area; our future depends on the actions we take now. Let us get going.

## SMART DRUM LINES

**Mr STEPHEN BROMHEAD (Myall Lakes) (17:15):** I call on the Government to install SMART drum lines in the Myall Lakes after a fatal shark attack last month, which has shaken our community. I pass on my condolences to the family. SMART stands for Shark Management Alert in Real Time. I recently met with the agriculture Minister Adam Marshall and demanded that two drum lines be located in our area. SMART drum lines are a new technology that allow targeted sharks to be intercepted beyond the surf break. Once caught, they are tagged and relocated one kilometre offshore. I call for this investment as it is crucial that locals and holidaymakers alike feel protected when enjoying our swimming beaches. This technology can keep them safe. Previously a six-month trial at Forster-Tuncurry showcased the following: After tracking, sharks did move away for a period. After tagging, the sharks were 15 to 20 kilometres offshore in the next two days. They did not come straight back to shore, which some people are concerned about.

There is a 100 per cent survival rate for the sharks that are caught, tagged and moved. The trial showcased that the devices removed the threat of great white sharks from popular beaches and protected swimmers, according to researchers. The devices effectively removed target sharks that came too close, thus reducing the likelihood of an attack. For those concerned about how ethical the practice is, in the trial period 100 per cent of sharks were captured successfully, tagged and released alive back into the wild. It took 17 minutes on average for a Department of Primary Industries [DPI] contractor to respond once the alert was sent. In the trial period of six months, 65 white sharks and two tiger sharks were captured. A temporary drum line was put in place at Tuncurry immediately following the fatal attack. Some people ask, "Why SMART drum lines over other methods?" Experts recommend this form of shark deterrence as research has shown that the sharks move away immediately after being tagged.

It will go hand in hand with other measures we currently have in place, such as drones and VR4G listening stations. To see someone lose their life on one of our beaches is an unthinkable tragedy. We need to do more to make people feel safe and protected. The technology is there and I am encouraging the Minister to use it. For those who think it is unethical, the six-month trial period which took place showed a 100 per cent survival rate for the sharks that were captured and tagged. The research shows that this method of mitigating shark attacks is effective in preventing sharks coming to shore and that they are unharmed in the process. Some people believe that one kilometre is not far enough and that they will come back in. Sharks that are tagged and relocated move away from the coast for an average of 74 days before they are again detected on a VR4G listening station. Post-release, the distance of the shark from the tagged location to the location of the VR4G was an average of 165 kilometres. They certainly move away and stay out at sea.

SMART drum lines are attached by an anchor out past the break—about 500 metres or more offshore. A satellite-linked GPS is attached to a hook baited with a sea mullet. A trigger magnet is released, alerting the boat crew and DPI scientists that there is an animal on the line. Once alerted, they respond immediately to tag and release the shark or other marine animal. SMART drum lines are set every morning approximately 500 metres offshore in eight to 15 metres of depth. They are collected at the end of each day. They are not left overnight, so it is not a case of someone having to go out at night if one is alerted. Once again, I call on the Government and the Minister to back this. Coupled with the drone and the listening station, it has already proven to be an effective way to keep beaches safe and to keep us safe when we are in the water.

#### LIVERPOOL RAILWAY STATION

**Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (17:20):** I raise the actions of Sydney Trains, which is getting rid of the Garrison at Liverpool railway station by way of demolition. As I understand it, the Garrison is also known as the Liverpool station GAC booth. It is also sometimes called the safety booth, which is how I will refer to it. The ill-conceived and unhelpful project commenced in October 2017. According to material I have seen, the aim of Sydney Trains is to provide additional gates, relocate passenger information screens and open up lines of sight between the paid and the unpaid concourses. That has certainly been forcefully opposed by Sydney Trains employees who work at the station and by their industrial organisation, the Rail, Tram, and Bus Union [RTBU]. It was also opposed by Liverpool City Council in 2019. The council adopted a resolution which said, in part:

The Garrison allows [staff] to perform their operational role safely when the rail network is in meltdown (train cancellations, out of course running). The Garrison in the past has assisted commuters and staff for events such as:

- Assisting a pregnant woman during a medical emergency
- Protecting the public and staff from a person wielding an axe
- Helping dementia patients
- Administering first aid
- Shielding staff from violent and abusive customers
- Protecting lost children
- Recuperating from heat exhaustion during summer

Council listened to the concerns of Sydney Trains staff. They thought the proposal was unreasonable and a threat to their safety. The staff and the council are both correct about that. It is not just those concerns; there is also the likelihood that the demolition will cost \$100,000. That seems a dubious expenditure of public money on such an unmerited proposal. One of the rationales used by Sydney Trains is that it wants to make space for more ticket barriers to accommodate possible growth in patronage. They could, in fact, easily have three more ticket barriers by simply removing a piece of railing between the existing barriers and the booth. The safety booth is not only important for protecting staff from violent customers; it can also be a shelter for commuters if they are threatened with violence. The RTBU applied to the Fair Work Commission to stop the removal of the booth. At the time, the RTBU said this:

Our members rely on the Garrison during degraded mode, out of course running, medical emergencies, and to quickly retreat in instances of imminent danger arising from the public. It is disappointing that Sydney Trains are disregarding our members' safety concerns and have forced this matter before the Commission.

Sydney Trains tried to argue the case that it was not within the commission's jurisdiction. The end result of the proceedings in the commission, including an appeal, was that the commission would not prevent Sydney Trains from removing the booth. The proceedings concluded in April last year. At that time Sydney Trains gave a written commitment, which I have seen, that it would not remove the booth until the COVID-19 pandemic was over. It wrote in an email:

We will not proceed to remove the GAC booth until after the COVID-19 pandemic situation ...

Despite that undertaking, Sydney Trains management is now removing the booth. When I last saw the booth, which was last week, it had hoarding up around it and the demolition was clearly proceeding. On its merits, removing the booth is a bad idea. The situation is made worse by this apparent breach of a promise. Government websites still strongly recommend wearing face masks on public transport. The pandemic is not over, despite the unilateral determination by someone in Sydney Trains that it is—so that it can get rid of the booth. Sydney Trains should not be removing the safety booth and it should not be breaking its word. This is treating the staff of Sydney Trains and the commuters of Liverpool with disdain and disregard.

### PRODUCTIVITY BOOTCAMP

**Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast—Minister for Local Government) (17:23):** On Tuesday 18 May I was honoured to attend the first Productivity Bootcamp graduation ceremony in Nowra and celebrate the achievements of those who completed the eight-week program. This facility delivers on the election commitment I made with the Premier in Nowra to announce the \$1.2 million package that secured the Productivity Bootcamp for the South Coast. During her visit the Premier outlined the importance of having a Productivity Bootcamp set up on the South Coast to ensure that young people across the region were given the opportunity to upskill and take advantage of the many construction projects happening across our community. Offering up to 100 training places for young people, the aim of the boot camp is to provide those who participate with intensive hands-on training in an eight-week program.

There is no cost for those who participate in the program, and the skills that participants learn are both extensive and invaluable. From carpentry to plumbing, formwork to bricklaying, these young people gain practical experience for the workforce. The program also allows participants, aged 16 to 25, to build on a number of transferrable skills including building a strong work ethic, improving their communication skills and punctuality. What makes the program so unique is the emphasis on work ethic and attitude, which is delivered through practical, hands-on training and a focus on experiential learning to achieve results. As a former teacher, I understand the importance of students developing a good work ethic and attitude, in addition to the practical skills that are needed for the workforce. The results are evident in the previous graduates of programs that have operated across Sydney since 2015 at sites such as Quakers Hill, Penrith and Campbelltown, with over 83 per cent of participants moving into paid employment once they graduated.

On 15 March the first group to take part in Nowra Productivity Bootcamp started its eight-week program. This program is the first of its kind for the South Coast. After its success and strong results from previous boot camps in places like western Sydney, it is a huge win for young people in the region. Since completing the program, a number of participants have noted their experiences of the program and I share some of them with the House. Blake Dixon is working towards becoming an electrician and heard about the Productivity Bootcamp from a school supervisor. His feedback on the program was that instructors have given him a strong insight into being a tradie. Zack Burge, another graduate, had originally never been interested in a trade but it was recommended he participate in the boot camp. He has a new-found interest in building house frames and has the potential to continue his interest in carpentry.

Those are just two stories from the 12 graduates in this first cohort, highlighting not only the success of the program but also the range of skills and knowledge that it provides. The executive director of Productivity Force summed up these experiences perfectly. He said that graduates are not only physically fit to work on a construction site but also instilled with the values needed to excel in industry and know what is expected of them once they gain an apprenticeship. I once again congratulate all the students who graduated from Team 55, including Aaron Dickson-Tompkins, Blake Dixon, Declan Johnston, Hannah Wallace, James Allison, Lawrence Gomez, Matthew Neal, Taj Hart, Thomas Taufa, Tyrone Walter, Xavier Pedrana and Zack Burge. In particular, I acknowledge Declan, who was the Ox Tools Golden Saw Award winner.

I trust this program has given these kids the skills and confidence to go out into the workforce and take advantage of the job opportunities available on the South Coast. I thank the New South Wales Government and Productivity Bootcamp for the work that has been done to establish this program on the South Coast. It was also

great to hear of Productivity Bootcamp's commitment to supporting youth across the South Coast. Only one day after Team 55's graduation the next eight-week program began with a new cohort. I had a fantastic time at the graduation meeting a great group of young people who had been through the program. I hope this next cohort of young people from across the South Coast also take advantage of this fantastic program and gain important skills and knowledge to excel in their future careers. I look forward to hearing their experiences at the end of the program and hope they too will be able to achieve the same successes as the students who graduated before them. I congratulate everybody involved in the program as well as the Premier, who came to the site originally to launch the South Coast boot camp.

### ROSEBERY ESTATE

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (17:28):** I share with the House the excellent news I recently received from the planning Minister about the future of residential development in the Rosebery Estate. Rosebery residents and local activists have struck a huge blow, with the planning Minister instigating a pause on the operation of the State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes)—or codes SEPP—in the Rosebery Estate from 14 May until the end of 2022. Those local activists, the City of Sydney and I have been campaigning for years for such an exemption in order to prevent development that was inconsistent with the covenant on the titles of residents' homes. The covenants largely restrict residential development to single-storey, double-fronted brick California bungalow style cottages. They date back over a century, and most residents have gone to great trouble and expense to maintain the special look and feel of Rosebery when renovating their homes.

However, some residents and property developers have been lodging complying development certificates with private certifiers who were all too happy to ignore the requirements of the covenant and approve ultra-modern box-type homes that were not in keeping with the special character of the Rosebery precinct. That is despite advice from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment confirming that those covenants still apply—a view that has been confirmed by independent legal advice. As covenants can only be enforced at the suit of those who are beneficiaries of the covenant—that is, owners of properties to which the covenant applies—the only recourse to object to an inconsistent development is to start proceedings in the Supreme Court against each and every development, which is an inconvenient, costly and unworkable process.

That was the rationale for a moratorium on the operation of the codes SEPP. While the current pause is due to expire in December 2022, I urge the Government to resolve the conflict between the codes SEPP and the restrictive covenant in a permanent fashion by maintaining the purpose of the covenant. At this point, I raise my grave concern about the impact of the New South Wales Coalition Government's privatisation of the State's land titles registry in 2017 and the way it has impacted upon residents of Rosebery. I was contacted recently by a number of families who live on the Rosebery Estate and are concerned about a complying development that will be carried out next to their homes. When they inquired with a private certifier about the impact of the covenant, they were shocked to be told that the covenant did not apply.

Not to be deterred, those residents made inquiries with NSW Land Registry Services [LRS] as to how and why the covenant did not apply to the land and how it had been lifted. LRS is the for-profit operator of the New South Wales land titles system, created by the privatisation of NSW Land and Property Information by the Berejiklian Government in 2017. What it told those residents was outrageous—that the removal of the covenant occurred "accidentally" through the process of updating the records at NSW LRS to an online system. When the residents pointed out to LRS that one cannot simply remove a covenant by accident, senior staff said they refused to reinstate the covenant as it is considered too old and deemed obsolete.

The explanation given that it is a matter of law is nonsense and defies belief. It is also completely contrary to the legislative process for removing a restrictive covenant as outlined in the Real Property Act 1900. I do not expect conservative governments to believe in much, but I do expect them to at least believe in property. Just because a law is old does not mean it is not the law. The State's role in land law stretches back as far as William the Conqueror's Great Survey in the *Domesday Book* of 1086. The Torrens title system of land registry we have in New South Wales means that the State guarantees your indefeasibility of title, your ultimate and inarguable right to the title of your land and the benefits that brings. This Government's privatisation obsession has left us in a situation where a private, profit-making entity can accidentally remove a restrictive covenant, which has huge ramifications for all landowners in the Rosebery Estate and which undermines the entire land titles system in New South Wales. I have written urgently to the planning Minister asking for an explanation and I urge him to intervene immediately to guarantee that no other "accidental" removals of covenants in the Rosebery Estate have occurred or will occur.

### ELDER ABUSE

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (17:33):** The World Health Organization [WHO] defines elder abuse as:

... a single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person. Elder abuse can take various forms such as financial, physical, psychological and sexual. It can also be the result of intentional or unintentional neglect. The WHO estimates that 15.7 per cent of people aged 60 years and older are subjected to abuse, but these rates are likely to be underestimated as many cases of elder abuse are not reported. The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety produced *Research Paper 17*, which identified that the prevalence of elder abuse in Australian residential care is estimated to be 39.2 per cent. This estimate includes only those who reported experiencing emotional abuse, physical abuse and/or neglect; it did not include financial abuse, social abuse and sexual abuse because the survey did not include questions to cover those other forms of abuse.

We can be certain that elder abuse is a crime. It is indefensible and still under-reported. A form of elder abuse being highlighted in other jurisdictions—but one that has as yet not reached our shores—is the pressure and burden felt by the older person to agree to the act of euthanasia because they are a burden to families, or families are consumed with inheritance impatience, or because of a range of other reasons. I will focus on data that has emerged from other countries. Euthanasia or assisted suicide—and sometimes both—have been legalised in a small number of countries and states in the United States. In all jurisdictions, laws and safeguards were put in place to prevent abuse and misuse of these practices. Prevention measures have included, among others, explicit consent by the person requesting euthanasia, mandatory reporting of all cases, administration only by physicians—with the exception of Switzerland—and consultation by a second physician.

However, J Pereira's paper entitled *Legalizing euthanasia or assisted suicide: the illusion of safeguards and controls* presents information that indicates that laws and safeguards are ignored and transgressed regularly in all the jurisdictions, and that transgressions are not prosecuted. For example, he reports that annually around 900 people are administered lethal substances without having given explicit consent. In one jurisdiction almost 50 per cent of cases of euthanasia are not reported. Increased tolerance of transgressions in societies with such laws represents a social slippery slope, as do changes to laws and criteria that followed legalisation. A terminal illness is no longer a prerequisite. Legalising euthanasia and assisted suicide, therefore, place many people, including newborns, children, and people with dementia, at risk.

The Netherlands legalised euthanasia and assisted suicide in 2002 for terminally ill adults who were mentally competent. In 2016 a bill that permitted assisted suicide in cases where people were not suffering from a disease but considered their life completed was introduced by the Government but defeated. Earlier in the year a private member's bill was introduced that would allow assisted suicide in people older than 75 years. In April 2020 the Dutch supreme court found that doctors could forcibly euthanise dementia patients if they had previously signed a document approving the procedure. Physicians are now authorised to sedate dementia patients without prior approval before euthanising them if it is conceivable that they will become agitated or aggressive while the doctor gears up to end their life.

The policy change comes after the review committee for cases of euthanasia updated its policies for patients diagnosed with dementia or a similar health condition. The Netherlands high court determined that a former nursing home doctor, Marinou Arends, had not broken any laws after she sedated her 74-year-old patient prior to euthanising her in 2016. The 74-year-old had to be restrained by her husband and daughter as the doctor injected her with the deadly drugs. According to the Dutch euthanasia review committee, which reviews every euthanasia case, the patient wrote that she wanted to be able to decide when to die while still in her senses and when she thought the time was right. Sadly, the fact that this 74-year-old lady had to be restrained by her husband and daughter suggests that at the moment the lethal injection was administered, she was not in control of when she wanted to die.

Since the Netherlands legalised euthanasia, more than 400 people have died by euthanasia as a result of dementia, psychiatric reasons and advanced age. Nearby Belgium is also debating the need to allow the elderly to be euthanised when they are tired of life. The *British Medical Journal* presented Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children's shocking paper on its controversial position on child euthanasia, whereby the young person's parents would not be notified of the intention to end their child's life until after the death is confirmed. Monica Burke, a research assistant at the DeVos Center for Religion and Civil Society at The Heritage Foundation, commented on the paper:

When a culture differentiates between lives worth living and lives worth ending, the consequences to vulnerable populations—the young, the old, the sick, and disabled—are disastrous.

We live in a world where humans make mistakes about prognosis and have selfish motives. The prospect of inheritance can bring out the worst in many people. For that reason, legalisation of euthanasia holds a number of risks, not least of which is a real and proven risk to the elderly within our community. We must protect our society against elder abuse and one certain way is to oppose the legalisation of euthanasia and assisted suicide.

## ELECTRIC SCOOTERS AND SKATEBOARDS

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (17:38):** I speak on the story of Max Sippel, an eastern suburbs local and a constituent of the Coogee electorate, who recently contacted my office fearful that he might soon be slugged with a heavy fine or the loss of his licence. Max was not engaging in any reckless activities or going out of his way to cause trouble; he was simply commuting to work. Max works as a nurse in Randwick and he rides an electric Onewheel skateboard to get to and from the hospital. Max is one of two hardworking local nurses who I recently met with my colleague the shadow Minister for Active Transport, the member for Summer Hill. Max and his colleagues are just looking to get to work without having to battle traffic and pay the excessive rates being imposed by the Government to use the crowded and overpriced hospital carparks or without having to struggle to catch a bus because the Government is about to remove 25 services.

Max is not alone. Recent sales data from one major retailer has shown that e-scooter sales have increased fivefold in the past year. Major cities across the world are moving to regulate electric devices and incorporate them into their transport mix. People in the eastern suburbs are buying electric scooters because they are cheap, quick and effortless to ride, as well as being clean, green and fun alternatives to battling the congestion on our routes to work. E-scooters are so cost-effective and good for the environment that one retailer has argued that the cost of fuelling an electric scooter is a little more than 1 per cent of the cost of fuelling an energy-efficient car. There is less cost, less environmental impact and shorter commute times—it sounds pretty good to me.

E-scooters and e-skateboards are legal and well regulated in every other State and Territory in Australia except New South Wales despite the fact that the National Transport Commission and the NSW Productivity Commission argue that e-scooters should be legalised, and the Minister's own hand-picked advisory working group recommended a trial. Despite all the evidence that provides for the merits of regulating the use of these devices, the transport Minister has ruled out a trial, stating that he is "not in the mood". Unfortunately for the Minister, it is his job to regulate transport in this State and it is about time he caught up to where the community already is and started to embrace this new technology. E-scooters and e-skateboards could offer a game changer in the way people in the east and, indeed, across New South Wales commute.

In fact, electric skateboards could even provide a solution to congestion issues across all of metropolitan Sydney. E-scooters are already part of the transport mix in New South Wales and we need to make sure they are ridden in a way that is safe for all road users. The roads of the eastern suburbs are clogged with traffic, especially in the morning and afternoon commutes during school term. We all know that our local roads are destined to become more congested, with the very same transport Minister currently gutting our local bus services—a move that is clearly going to force people into their cars, further worsening congestion across the eastern suburbs. Despite that, the Minister still refuses to even consider new forms of transport. These devices could be a game-changer in solving what is often called the first and last mile problem—that is, getting people to and from their local public transport stop. The eastern suburbs are hilly and, without their local bus services, many people will find this distance too far to walk, pushing them into cars.

By connecting people with their local public transport stop, e-scooters and skateboards can actively help reduce congestion on our local roads. With the cost of congestion in Sydney tipped to hit \$15.9 billion by 2031, getting people out of their cars and connected to public transport is going to be essential as we move forward. I will never stop fighting to save our beloved eastern suburbs buses. I believe getting more electric buses onto our roads is still a crucial objective. Indeed, I think that electric transport is the future for our public transport and our personal devices. With electric scooters and skateboards becoming more popular day by day, it is clear that a trial is well overdue and will be essential to find the safest way forward in New South Wales. The reality is that thousands of people are already using those devices. While they are lawful for corporations to import and sell, they are illegal for people to use every day. Not only does the Minister have a duty to reduce congestion and facilitate new transport options; he also has a duty to protect both the users of those devices and other road users and pedestrians. That protection can only be achieved through proper regulation, beginning with a well overdue trial. It is time for the transport Minister to get in the mood and do his job.

## AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY BLACKTOWN CAMPUS

**Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (17:43):** It is a pleasure to speak about the new Australian Catholic University [ACU] campus at Blacktown. I am amazed by the speed with which the campus is coming along. A university nice and close to home has been a long time coming for the area of Blacktown and its surrounding suburbs, including residents within my electorate of Seven Hills. I was fortunate enough to speak with ACU staff, who spoke highly of the university's development, adding that the students have responded well to the challenges of a new university campus.

The ACU is in the process of expanding the opportunities for students to study across many different faculties. It was terrific to see the state-of-the-art facilities for students and staff to access in western Sydney. I was

excited to see the many different opportunities afforded to ACU Blacktown students. The university offers tertiary study including in the fields of law, education, commerce, exercise and sports science, arts and social sciences, health and nursing. As one could imagine, having these opportunities locally for students is a great benefit in minimising travel time, as well as developing local businesses and building up the central business district of Blacktown.

Having ACU in Blacktown is a wonderful way to increase the supply of nurses within western Sydney and indeed New South Wales. With Blacktown and Westmead hospitals nearby, and continually expanding, the need for well-trained and highly skilled nurses is ever growing. ACU at Blacktown has recognised this need, and actively responded through the nursing and health facilities it provides. I was fortunate to be visiting the state-of-the-art nursing wards at ACU Blacktown so shortly after International Day of the Midwife and International Nurses Day—the days each year on which we celebrate all those who sacrifice to serve their great professions and the community at large. Seeing staff and students operate the leading-edge technology within the health and nursing facilities was inspiring to see.

Brand new, automated mannequins are provided within the nursing ward to imitate real patients. This provides prospective medical professionals with the highest level of training and preparation before they enter the high-paced and demanding workplace. I must emphasise to members the quality of facilities and the educational standards to which students are held, which will have the effect of creating a highly skilled and competent healthcare workforce in the years to come. As members are all aware, the test of any university's success is in the preparation of its graduates for the workforce. I can attest that ACU Blacktown has prioritised graduate qualities that mirror current employer standards and have emphasised this in the design of its facilities.

Open plan learning environments and flexible workspaces for students and staff will create the best standard of graduates coming from western Sydney and surrounding areas, ready to integrate into any industry. They certainly integrate into the industry well. In particular, it was great to see facilities such as a mock courtroom and the cutting edge computer labs filled with technology, providing invaluable pre-work experience for students that is highly valued in today's workforce. I look forward to engaging with ACU Blacktown law students in their mock trials and mooted competitions as they prepare for a career in the law profession. It was made obvious to me that the influence ACU Blacktown has on the wider western Sydney area is crucial to offering world-class learning opportunities that extend beyond the suburb of Blacktown.

Within the Seven Hills electorate alone a number of constituents have contacted me expressing eagerness to engage with and study at the university. This is made possible by the locality of the university, as students are sometimes less inclined to travel to inner Sydney to attain a university qualification. In addition, the ACU Blacktown campus location, in the heart of the Blacktown CBD, provides great access to public transport for all staff and students. One of the greatest assets of the university is that it has endless possibilities for growth in an area which is continuously growing. This university will benefit not only its students and workers but also people, businesses and the area as a whole. I look forward to working closely with the ACU in the future, particularly to ensure my constituents are able to reap its terrific rewards. I encourage all members to visit ACU at Blacktown and tour its brilliant facilities to see what a difference it is making for tertiary education opportunities right across western Sydney.

## DRUGS POLICY

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (17:48):** Tonight I call on the Parliament to work together to reduce harm caused by the drug crystal methamphetamine—ice—and other amphetamine type stimulants. New South Wales was once a leader in drugs policy. The 1999 Drug Summit led to innovative and evidence-based responses to harm from heroin including the world's first medically supervised injecting centre, expanded needle and syringe and methadone programs, and the increased availability of naloxone. Overdoses and blood-borne disease transmissions including HIV reduced dramatically. But New South Wales now has no formal drugs plan, despite high rates of amphetamine dependence and associated death. We rely on piecemeal and unsuccessful law and order responses, with our health systems, courts, social services sector and the wider community left to pick up the pieces.

The poor outcomes for people with a drug problem and their families are an embarrassment. Massive investment in law and order has had little effect on supply and demand; people continue to want to take illegal drugs and can easily get them. There are many reasons people take mood-enhancing substances, but only some go on to develop dependence or problematic use, often due to complex issues like trauma, childhood or partner abuse, unemployment, homelessness, entrenched social disadvantage, mental illness and loneliness. Their vulnerability makes prosecution even more damaging with lifelong impacts on employment, earning prospects, access to housing, relationships and wellbeing. While the threat of prosecution does not deter drug use, it stops people from getting help. People are less likely to open up about problematic use to their family, friends or health providers out of shame, stigma, fear of prosecution or having children removed.

The Special Commission of Inquiry into crystal-methamphetamine and other amphetamine-type stimulants was ordered to look at ways to reduce harm. The inquiry was wideranging and involved evidence from experts, affected individuals and communities, and assessment of international models. It produced over 100 sensible recommendations. The inquiry's key recommendation was to decriminalise drug use, in line with the recommendations of the coronial inquest into the death of six patrons of New South Wales music festivals. Decriminalisation is a proven harm-reduction strategy that replaces criminal convictions with cautions, fines and health intervention referrals. There would be no change to enforcement of drug dealing and trafficking crimes, and no increase in the availability of illicit drugs. New South Wales already has a number of decriminalisation policies in place including the Cannabis Cautioning Scheme, the Drug Criminal Infringement Notice Scheme and Amnesty Bins.

It is disappointing that the Government has already ruled out this vital reform, which will have far-reaching benefits across the lives of drug users, their friends and their families, the criminal justice system and health. Shamefully the Government also rejected other key recommendations for additional medically supervised injecting centres, retiring drug dog detection operations and pill testing, despite the proven potential to save lives. It is now 16 months since the report was handed down and we await the Government's response to other recommendations that are not controversial and could have immediate benefits. The Magistrates Early Referral into Treatment diversionary program, the Drug Court and the Koori Youth Court should be expanded so all willing participants have access. We must urgently establish the Wallama Court, which was also a recommendation of the Australian Law Reform Commission.

Aboriginal people disproportionately experience harm from illicit drug use—amplified by colonisation impacts, racism and intergenerational trauma. Alcohol and other drug services need to be provided on country and we need to work with Aboriginal communities to develop culturally appropriate solutions. Homelessness is a risk factor for problematic drug use and without stable housing it is hard to engage in treatment or have complex needs addressed. A Housing First approach must be the policy for housing drug users, with support to retain tenancies and engage in rehabilitation. The prevalence of drug use for people in custody is high and this presents an opportunity to provide treatment and services. But the Government has also rejected the recommendation to pilot a prison needle and syringe program, despite hepatitis C rates among prisoners at 30 per cent compared to 1 per cent in the wider population.

If we are too scared to implement well-researched, evidence-based, government-commissioned recommendations to save lives then we should not be in this House. We are elected to make brave decisions that protect the vulnerable. If we do it together as a Parliament, taking a multipartisan approach as was done in 1999, we will be able to reduce the fallout from scaremongering elements of the media while saving lives. Drug use is a health and social issue that deserves a health and social response. We now have a range of recommendations based on evidence from the special commission of inquiry. The time is now for this Parliament to work together to support a comprehensive drugs plan that is based on reducing harm.

### TWEED LIGHT RAIL

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (17:53):** I inform the House of the next step in the study about Tweed light rail. A new study will investigate a potential light rail connection to support journeys from Coolangatta to Tweed Heads. As the Hon. Paul Toole, Minister for Regional Transport and Roads said, the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government is delivering on its \$1 million election commitment to investigate bringing light rail to Tweed. Recently the Minister said:

We remain committed to developing a stronger public transport offering as part of our vision for a safer, stronger regional NSW.

The NSW and Queensland governments signed a Memorandum of Understanding last year to assess the busy cross-border region's needs.

We're now moving to the next stage of the process, with a new Multi Modal Corridor Study to identify a suitable five-kilometre corridor for a future light rail extension from Coolangatta to the Tweed, while Queensland will investigate the corridor to the north.

Jacobs has been appointed to carry out this study, and we look forward to presenting draft findings to the community for feedback in early 2022 with the study expected to be completed by mid 2022.

I think the multimodal corridor study will also tie into the place-based transport plan for Tweed shire. That will provide a vision for how the local transport network, infrastructure and services will be managed and developed to realise the long-term needs of our local community. The place-based transport plan will ensure that transport systems are developed to support future land-use changes and better connect communities as we deliver on our vision to make public transport a first-choice option for locals.

The light rail is coming down into Coolangatta. It is currently just below Broadbeach and the Burleigh section is being debated. Eventually it will connect to the Gold Coast Airport—the fifth-busiest airport in Australia—go through an old corridor at the back of Coolangatta and end up in the fabulous Tweed electorate.



Back in 1964 the Queensland Government decided to rip up the train tracks linking us to Brisbane, so it is an important step that we have our plans in place to eventually bring it down into South Tweed. That will be a tremendous bonus because every day 55,000 cars cross the border each way, 30 per cent of our people work in Queensland and 15 per cent of our kids go to school in Queensland. Our front door is Queensland; our back door is New South Wales.

The Queensland Government looks set to host the 2032 Olympics. I note that Queensland Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk recently got her COVID-19 vaccination—she was one of the last premiers in Australia to do so, but at least she got it—and she is looking to go to Tokyo. To host the 2032 Olympics would require 50 per cent funding from the Federal Government and 50 per cent funding from Queensland to update its infrastructure. That is why for a number of years we have been campaigning for this study: so that we can have one of the first regional light railways connecting us all the way to the northern end of the Gold Coast. Also, at the Gold Coast Airport the heavy rail is coming down the M1 and we will be ready to access that.

During question time today I was concerned to hear both the Premier and the health Minister say that the Queensland Government still owes us \$40 million for the people we brought back to Australia—that it has reneged again. I lived through 200 days of border lockdowns and 19 different border passes. It was very confusing and it upset a lot of people. I hope that the Queensland Government gets its budget in order. We have a memorandum of understanding. It is the way of the future to bring public transport to the great electorate of Tweed. Once again I am 100 per cent for the Tweed and 100 per cent for public transport.

### THE CANTERBURY-BANKSTOWN TORCH

**Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (17:58):** I am delighted to inform the House of the impressive anniversary that is being celebrated by Torch Publishing in Bankstown. Last year marked 100 years since the first edition of the Torch was published, but COVID-19 restrictions dampened celebrations and the *Canterbury-Bankstown Torch* was unable to publish its centenary issue. On 12 June 2021 we will officially commemorate the 100th anniversary of the *Canterbury-Bankstown Torch* and together enjoy the special centenary edition that was published on Wednesday. Throughout its long history, the Torch has remained fiercely committed to the principles it was established to uphold. Its founder, Leslie Engisch, promised that the Torch would act as a mouthpiece for the community "to give the residents of Bankstown and surrounding districts a paper on which they can rely to secure all local news of interest". This vision for the Torch has undoubtedly been upheld.

The paper is relied upon by many residents to provide reliable, trustworthy news on the issues that truly matter to them. It continues to provide a platform for local residents to discuss issues affecting them that may well otherwise go unduly ignored by other media outlets. The Torch has covered the historic events of Bankstown such as Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's visit in 1980, Bankstown local Paul Keating's political career, the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games events at Dunc Gray Velodrome, as well as the issues, big or small, which face residents each day.

Leslie Engisch also believed that the Torch should be an active voice for justice in the community, that "the Torch will be found quite prepared to battle sturdily for what it considers is best for the community". The Torch staff have always stayed committed to this principle, regardless of the cost. Whether the Torch is published by two people on a single press, as it was in 1920, or by its staff of 100 people, publishing digitally and in fourteen community languages, as it is now, these foundational principles have remained. Much of the Torch's success must be attributed to its ardent and almost unique commitment to remaining a family-owned and operated business that is undeniably integrated within the community.

The paper's long history began when it was first founded in 1920 by Mr Leslie Engisch. Following the strong foundation for the Torch set out by Leslie, his son, Phil, managed the paper for 51 years before "passing the Torch" on to his son, John, who remains the managing director and whose children, Trent and Christian, are today the general manager and the projects director. Throughout these four generations of the Engisch family, the Torch has maintained its outstanding reputation in the community. Separate from its significant and enduring contributions to Torch Publishing and news distribution in Bankstown, the Engisch family is itself a much-admired institution in the Bankstown community.

Mr John Engisch, OAM, has been a crucial part of the Bankstown Rotary Club for over 40 years, holding a variety of senior positions, including fundraising chairman. He has also served as the chair of the Queen of Bankstown Quest. John and the Torch have been responsible for a host of charitable events, which Trent and Christian have taken on with great interest and energy, including the charity golf tournament and Relay for Life events. They have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for the Cancer Council. The Torch has also supported the excellent work performed by non-government organisations in the Bankstown area, as well as the oncology unit at the children's hospital, Bankstown YMCA and the Bankstown Handicapped Children's Centre Association.

I extend my congratulations to John Engisch, Trent Engisch, and Christian Engisch for this remarkable milestone. It would be remiss of me if I did not extend my thanks to the longstanding editor of Torch, Mark Kirkland, whose diligence has been essential to the ongoing success of the paper. I acknowledge the efforts of all the other managers and staff in the advertising section and throughout the community section of the paper, the writers, photographers, administrators, and the entirety of the Torch Publishing team on this wonderful occasion. I know there have been many in the community, from councillors to Federal representatives and other State representatives, who have made their voices heard on the issue and commended the Torch for this significant milestone. I eagerly look forward to reading the Torch for many more years to come.

### **PUBLIC SECTOR WAGES**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:03):** Tonight I celebrate the hard work of essential workers in the public sector across New South Wales and abhor that today our paramedics have had stop work to send a very clear message to the Premier: they are not happy with their pay cut. In an absolute betrayal of the frontline and essential workers who have kept New South Wales going during this pandemic, the Treasurer cut their wage increase in the same year that they put their lives on the line to protect the people of New South Wales. During the height of COVID we all watched the ambulances going up and down the streets of Gosford and in towns across New South Wales, with fully PPE-clad paramedics fearful for their own and their families' well-being, simultaneously fearful for the people of their State, using their professional skills to serve our community and care for the people who were unwell.

When the virus hit, public sector workers had to work harder than ever and differently than they had before. Often they faced a greater risk of coronavirus by working in hospitals, cleaning public spaces, and working in schools and on building sites around our State. Our nurses managed to work in COVID wards across hospitals with hugely modified safety plans, and they came out the other side with no promised pay rise. Every day at the end of their shift nurses tell me—some crying—that they been working without enough staff on their ward. They are constantly worried about their accreditation with the short staffing that is going on, and that they cannot be replaced when they are on leave. This is happening in city hospitals. In rural and regional hospitals it is even worse because nurses do not have the option to take leave.

Experienced nurses are unsupported in their leadership and they watch nurses step into management roles and almost twist the knives in their back while trying to comply with what is going on upstairs and also look after the nurses on the floor. Nurses are also worried that they have no time to train young nurses to fill roles properly as they come into the system. They want the young nurses to be good but they are stuck out there on their own without the skills and support they need, so hospitals are losing young staff. We know that nurses continue to go over and above, often working through their breaks and past their deadlines and often working overtime. I say again: The wards are understaffed. Nurses legitimately are seriously worried about their profession.

I put on record that not only our nurses but also our amazing teachers—who shifted to working from home with only a few days' notice and then went back into the classroom despite their own health concerns—are worried about the future of their profession as they are piled higher and higher with increasing student needs, compliance requirements and administration as well as ongoing changes in policy, technology, curriculum, increased data collection responsibilities and reporting responsibilities. As well as the transition they went through—amazingly, transitioning completely to online technology, quite often unsupported—they were helping their families with their crises and sourcing computers so that disadvantaged kids could work from home.

And what did they get at the end of it all? They got no promised salary increase—which is massively impacting teacher morale—along with all the other work they are doing, while the Gallop inquiry is telling this Liberal Government that we need to see changes. Tonight I acknowledge the hard work of the NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association, the Health Services Union, the NSW Teachers Federation, the Australian Paramedics Association and their delegates across New South Wales who are supporting their colleagues in the workplace. I thank the public sector workers for all they do. I appreciate the personal stories that they have shared with us. Nurses from across New South Wales came to the Parliament and shared their stories of what it really looks like with the wheel-out doctor on the screen giving the diagnosis in hospitals and making the decisions. They also talked about having to drive 2½ hours one way to get an X-ray so they could come back to talk to the wheel-out doctor on the screen.

It is a tough world out there—even tougher, I think, for some of our regional and rural communities. When local teachers talk about the fact that they can no longer afford to live in my community on the Central Coast, we need to do something about their wages. Tonight I thank them for their dedication, commitment, passion and their bloody hard work while they were fearing for their lives and for being so strong despite the incredible pressure that continues to be put on them. We thank them so much for looking after the people of New South Wales.

## CURRAWONG STATE PARK

**Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (18:08):** I am delighted to note the 10-year anniversary of Currawong State Park in my community of Pittwater. The New South Wales Liberal Government purchased this beachfront bushland heritage in April 2011 and declared it a State park in 2015. Since then, more than \$2.9 million has been invested in restoring and rehabilitating this heritage gem for everyone to enjoy. Currawong exemplifies to me the value of public space and the need to fight for it. The campaign for Currawong has helped shape my political career, and has inspired me to continue to help protect and expand our public parklands. I learnt a salient lesson in that campaign: Lasting and positive change needs to transcend political boundaries, with all parties, groups and individuals putting aside ideologies and enmities to collaborate on a common goal.

No one group or individual can claim to have saved Currawong; it was a collective effort. During that campaign for Currawong, a disparate—some might say motley—group sidelined what we did not agree on and focused on what we did. Ultimately, that was to preserve pristine, beautiful bushland for future generations to enjoy. Protecting public spaces like Currawong from privatisation, from development and commercialisation is why I created the Greater Sydney Parklands when I became Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. We are blessed in this city and State by an abundance of bushland, waterways, beaches and parks compared to other global cities. Our parks define Sydney as the Emerald City. But we can do more—create more parkland, grow more trees, conserve more bushland and rehabilitate what has been degraded.

To create a city within a park, we need a parkland trust that is not only expansive and protective but also represents the entire Sydney community. How else will we create a greener city if our parklands do not work as one? I have been clear that we need a single strong voice for all parklands, but it does not also mean that individual parks and their communities are silent. In fact, the Government's legislative agenda, including the *White Paper—Parklands for People* released in May, is to strengthen the role of local voices for parklands while also providing a model that ensures our parklands can grow. Sir Henry Parkes' vision was for "the people's park" and the Greater Sydney Parklands seeks to continue this vision across all of the city. To ensure local communities continue to have a say in the future of their local parks, I want to enshrine in legislation a community engagement model to make local knowledge and passion part of the decision-making for individual parks—being Centennial and Moore Parks, Callan Park, Fernhill Estate, Western Sydney Parklands and Parramatta Park—as well as parks we can create in the future.

Locals know what is best for their parks and their neighbourhoods. By establishing local community trustee boards, we can create a balance between local knowledge and overarching citywide strategic direction. Creating a sustainable funding model is another challenge that we are currently working through. Since my appointment as Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, we have invested a record \$108 million in these parklands. This demonstrates that having a single clear voice in government can attract increased funding. But begging for funds from Treasury by competing against other public priorities—health, education, public transport—is not going to generate the funds needed to celebrate our parks as they deserve. How does a model that pits funding a park in Woollahra against funding for domestic violence prevention or homelessness ever going to work effectively? Surely a better way is to find sustainable ways to generate the funds parks need independent of Treasury?

Of course this objective cannot come at the cost of privatisation and alienation of parklands. But where there can be low-impact activities in the right part of the right park at the right time that can generate funds to achieve awesome public benefits then they should at least be considered. For example, using Centennial Park to film the *Peter Rabbit* movie, or having a pop-up coffee cart in Parramatta Park, or driving income through using a part of Western Sydney Parklands with zero environmental or social value by leasing it to create jobs in a part of Sydney that needs them. Should we also start to think about phasing out car parking revenue to which so many parklands globally have become completely addicted? Without changing the way our parks operate, funding parks for people is enslaved to building parks for cars. I encourage everyone to get involved, have their say on the white paper and pitch ideas for how we can strengthen legislation for our parklands now and for future generations. "Park" is Latin for fence and a fence is about separating land and excluding it from others. I want us to rethink what we mean by park and instead of atomistic parks scattered across the city, it is about time we think of a city embraced within a park.

## BLACKTOWN ELECTORATE FILIPINO-AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY

**Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (18:13):** Philippines Independence Day is celebrated on 12 June. I wish all people with a Filipino heritage a happy Philippines Independence Day. This year also marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of diplomatic relations between Australia and the Philippines. I thank the Philippines Embassy and Consulate for their great work in enhancing this relationship. The 2020 figures show that approximately 310,000 people born in the Philippines are now Australian citizens, making them the fifth largest birth nation in Australia. Of those, 94,100 live in New South Wales, with approximately one in three Filipinos

living in the City of Blacktown. People with a Filipino heritage make a wonderful contribution to the City of Blacktown through culture, dance, community involvement, fundraising and many wonderful businesses including food shops, education and entertainment providers, and professional services such as the law, accounting, nursing and medicine. Anywhere one looks one will find a wonderful, kind-hearted Filipino willing to help.

Countless Australian Filipinos have made a significant contribution to society, but I bring to the attention of the House some of the amazing contributions. Chris Pilao has been instrumental in establishing the Australian Philippines Services League, which is recognised by RSL NSW to be the official body to support retired Philippines military service people. Chris has been elected to the board of one of the largest clubs in Australia, West HQ, and has since been elected vice-president. Chris has also been making a significant contribution to the transformation of West HQ. He undertakes a number of community activities and is supported by his wonderful wife, Jossie. Lucas Cayan established the Woodcroft Festival some 16 years ago, and Woodcroft Christmas Carols, and is also involved in numerous community activities. He significantly contributed to the Doonside station lifts campaign.

We all know Filipinos love music, and it is great to see two from the Blacktown area playing a significant role on the international stage. Marlisa Punzalan became the youngest winner of *X-Factor* in 2014 at the age of 15. Marlisa has achieved ARIA platinum status with her number two hit song *Stand by You*. Brian Lorenz is a multi-awarded song and dance performer. Brian has an amazing repertoire from opera to pop and can sing in four languages. Some of his awards include the Rising Star Award at the Australian Clubs ACE Awards and the Johnny O'Keefe Encouragement Award for the best new talent at the Australian MO Awards. Brian also donates his time singing freely to help local community events such as the Doonside Community Festival.

Carol Israel was elected to Blacktown City Council in 2016. She has been active in many community campaigns and in standing up for local residents. Carol is also a union organiser with the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association, where she fights for workers' rights, pay and conditions. Rissa McInnes has made an amazing contribution to the community and has raised significant funds for charitable purposes. Rissa was the 2021 Blacktown City Woman of the Year and is significantly involved with Blacktown Ponds Lions Club. I also pay tribute to the Australian Filipinos that have given so much to the community but are sadly no longer with us. Lolita Farmer, OAM, was an accomplished lawyer and was a strong advocate for migrants as well as one of the pioneers for women's rights and child care. Her work in the community earned her the Order of Australia Medal in 1981. She was the first person of Filipino origin to receive the award.

Gil Belarmino had a strong Christian faith and undertook many community volunteering activities. He was an accomplished musician and had a heart of gold. He is survived by his wife, Beth, and children. Even though he passed away over a decade ago, he is still sadly missed. Recently, Ruben Valdez Pasion passed away. Ruben was a terrific singer and guitarist and never stopped giving of his time to help people to provide musical support for the seniors groups and other community activities. I have mentioned just a few people with Australian Filipino heritage but there are so many more that I can discuss and will do so in the future. I thank Australian Filipinos for their valued and wonderful contribution to our society and for making our world a better place. I wish everyone a happy Philippines Independence Day. Mabuhay.

### ASQUITH BOYS HIGH SCHOOL

**Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Minister for Energy and Environment) (18:17):** I acknowledge the sixtieth anniversary of Asquith Boys High School, which reached the milestone last year. The celebrations were cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions, so this year will mark the official celebrations for Asquith Boys High School. Asquith Boys, as it is locally known, was originally planned for the site where Hornsby TAFE is today. However, following the devastating bushfire of 1957 it was decided the area posed too great a risk for the school and so the search for a new site began. One of the proposed sites was at Mount Colah opposite the gates of Ku-ring-gai Chase, but this was opposed by councillors. Finally, a site in Asquith was chosen. Construction only began in term 4 of 1959 so the first group of 343 students was spilt between the Hornsby School of Arts site and Chatswood High School. It proved difficult to have students spread out across Sydney, so they were moved closer until the school was finished. By 24 June 1960 the buildings were complete and the students could move into the school. Construction still continued, with some parts of the school not ready until 1961.

The first principal was Mr Mervyn Brown, who was supported by a teaching staff of 19. The catchment area for the school covered a large area with students from suburbs between Galston and Lindfield and the Hawkesbury River through to Normanhurst. In 1961 the school population had almost doubled to 660 students and the following year it rose to 957 students. In 1964 the first induction of prefects, captain and vice-captains occurred and the school was officially opened on 7 August by the Director General of Secondary Education. The P&C has always been active at Asquith Boys High School from its first president, Mr Davies, until today. The first group of parents funded a number of improvements, including the installation of cricket nets in 1965 and

paying for a groundsman. More recently, I assisted the P&C with a Community Building Partnership grant of \$94,000 for the construction of an additional classroom. In 2017 the school received \$16,000 for the installation of a fan in the hall and in 2015 it was awarded \$20,000 for the installation of an electronic sign out the front of the school.

I am thrilled to work with the P&C to ensure that these upgrades are made. I know it works extremely hard to ensure that all students get the best possible facilities at Asquith Boys High School. I take this opportunity to congratulate the current committee, which includes my friend president Dawn Kilkelly, secretary Greg Cullen and ground development officer Sean Kilkelly. I have also worked with past presidents Michelle Roscarel and Tempe Bevan, who have made their mark on the school. Thank you to all those current and past members of the P&C who have contributed so much to our community. The school has produced some pretty amazing students. In 1968 and 1979 its students topped New South Wales with their leaving certificates. In 1968 Jim Richardson achieved a mark of 874 out of 900 and in 1979 Peter Robinson scored 495 out of 500. Jim went on to become a successful professor of mathematics and Peter a successful scientist.

The school continues to produce high achievers. The 2020 HSC examinations saw 25 HSC students listed as distinguished achievers. Band 6 results were achieved in 14 different subject areas and Asquith Boys High School ranked 217 overall and finished third in New South Wales with respect to comprehensive boys high schools. The school has also seen some of Australia's famous faces pass through the gates, including the current NSW Director of Public Prosecutions, Lloyd Babb; Olympic backstroker Daniel Arnannart; former Socceroo Robert Hooker; the former Federal member for Eden-Monaro, Dr Mike Kelly; former breaststroke champion Graeme Carroll; Fox Sports commentator Adam Hawse; and one of Australia's leading filmmakers, Rolf de Heer. There is also, of course, Academy Award winner Mel Gibson. I name just a few of the famous faces to have passed through Asquith Boys High School.

The school has been served by 10 wonderful principals: Mervyn Brown, Norman Bowles, Les Rodgers, Austen Hughes, Tom Mehigan, Frank Yardley, Chris Bonnor, David Short, Terry Griffiths and current principal Bryce Grant. Bryce is one of the most outstanding educators one will find anywhere in the State. As the local member, I have got to know both Terry Griffiths and Bryce Grant as excellent leaders. They provide support for their teaching staff and the best possible learning environment for the students. Asquith Boys High School does not just focus on academics; it also gives students the opportunity to participate in a wide range of sporting and extracurricular activities. That is because it has a dedicated staff who support students to be the best they can be and to take advantage of opportunities that present themselves.

There are too many to name today, but I thank each and every staff member who has made Asquith Boys High School the school it is today. I also thank Hornsby Councillor Nathan Tilbury and former student and teacher at Asquith Boys High School Chris Kent for their help putting this speech together. Chris Kent spent five years as a student and 23 years as a teacher and there is no-one else who knows Asquith Boys High School as well as Chris. He is currently co-authoring a book on the school, which I look forward to reading when it is published. Congratulations to Asquith Boys High School on 60 great years in education. I look forward to celebrating many more fine milestones in the years ahead.

### **SYDNEY TERMINAL CONTROL UNIT**

**Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne) (18:22):** I take this opportunity to speak about an issue affecting not only my constituents but also constituents right across Greater Sydney. Within air traffic control, the Sydney Terminal Control Unit is responsible for managing all flights within the Sydney terminal airspace. The airspace begins immediately above the runways at Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport and extends out to a radius of 45 nautical miles. It includes Kiama to the south, Katoomba to the west, Terrigal to the north and everything in between. The 65 controllers employed in the unit assume control of aircraft immediately on departure from Sydney airport and are responsible for the control of arriving aircraft until they are transferred to the Sydney control tower. Along with operations at Sydney (Kingsford Smith) Airport, the terminal control unit controllers provide the same control service to aircraft departing and arriving at Bankstown and Camden airports, and the Richmond RAAF base. They provide control and flight information services for all aviation operations within Greater Sydney. That includes all general aviation aircraft and helicopters that conduct scenic joy flights over Sydney Harbour and surrounds.

The unit assists the many flying schools at Bankstown and Camden in conducting their pilot training. It also provides life and death critical clearances for NSW PolAir, the Westpac Lifesaver Rescue Helicopter Service, CareFlight and the Toll Ambulance Rescue Helicopter Service so that they can attend accidents and emergencies as promptly as possible. Airservices Australia, the Federal government agency that provides air traffic control across the country, has proposed that the Sydney Terminal Control Unit and its 65 air traffic controllers be relocated to the facility in Melbourne within the next two years. While it is considered a Federal Government

issue, serious concerns relate directly to the New South Wales Government. My question is: What is the Government doing to keep local jobs in New South Wales?

The most obvious and immediate concern is the loss of 65 well-paid positions from Greater Sydney directly to Melbourne. The average annual income of a Sydney Terminal Control Unit controller is around \$225,000 plus super. That equates to over \$14 million of direct income lost to the New South Wales economy each year before also factoring in the income of partners and families. Those large disposable incomes will be spent in Melbourne restaurants, pubs, cafes and attractions rather than in New South Wales. Airservices Australia has stated that none of the affected controllers will be forced to relocate permanently. However, that does not mean that the positions will not be lost to the New South Wales economy forever. Other concerns revolve around the huge loss of experience that will be suffered under the proposal and the resulting loss of efficiency.

Some 1,000-plus years of experience operating Sydney airspace is at risk. Sydney airspace is by far the busiest and most complex in the country. The impact that a huge loss of experience will have on its operations cannot be understated. In real terms it means delays for airlines, an inferior service, the potential for more safety occurrences, extra aircraft noise and less timely clearances for time-critical emergency operations such as those conducted by NSW PolAir and the Toll Ambulance Rescue Helicopter Service. That is the feedback that came from Adelaide; its terminal control unit was moved to Melbourne in 2017 under a similar arrangement. Notably Adelaide processes one-third of the amount of air traffic as Sydney, so the impact here could be huge.

Another major concern is the loss of local knowledge. Currently all airspace over Greater Sydney is controlled by people who live and work in Greater Sydney. They understand the local weather conditions, they know the relevant landmarks by sight and they are familiar with the local terrain. To put that into perspective, the light aircraft that made an emergency landing on Collaroy Beach in late May made a mayday call to a controller working in the Sydney Terminal Control Unit. That controller happened to live up the road at Frenchs Forest. Thankfully it was a relatively safe outcome for all as far as maydays go but if the situation had escalated, at least the pilot would have known that they were in the hands of a local controller who could provide accurate assistance based on local knowledge. Mr Speaker, if you had this information would you rather flights be controlled by someone living in the next street or by someone living in St Kilda?

In my opinion the proposal is a failure. It appears that a desire to cut costs is prevailing over safety and best practice in the industry. Why would the New South Wales Government let those highly skilled professionals move to Melbourne? I strongly urge all members of the House to contact their Federal counterparts and encourage them to stop the proposal. The Premier and transport Minister must step in to save 65 highly skilled jobs and keep the sky above Sydney as safe as it is now. People in this State deserve nothing less.

### CHRISTIANITY IN THE PHILIPPINES

**Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (18:27):** In a couple of weeks I will attend a day of celebration at Mary Immaculate Catholic Parish in Quakers Hill, at which the local Filipino-Australian community will mark the 500th anniversary of Christianity in the Philippines. In March this year I was privileged to attend a similar event at Nagle College Blacktown. For most Australians it is an unfamiliar occasion to celebrate a 500th anniversary of any kind. Half a millennium of shared faith and lived experience is certainly something to be very proud of and grateful for. The Philippines proudly boasts to be the only Christian nation in Asia. More than 86 per cent of the population is Catholic and about 8 per cent belong to other Christian denominations. In addition to the Christian majority, there is a small Muslim minority concentrated on the southern islands of Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan. Scattered in isolated mountainous regions, small communities follow indigenous beliefs and practices. The Chinese minority, though small in number, has been culturally influential in colouring Filipino Catholicism with many of the beliefs and practices of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism.

Catholicism came to the Philippines with the discovery of the archipelago on 6 March 1521 on an expedition led by Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan. Upon his arrival, he planted the cross on the island of Cebu, the cradle of Christianity in the Philippines, and began to convert the local people of a number of islands to Christianity. The evangelisation of the Philippines began in earnest with the appointment by Spain of Miguel Lopez de Legazpi, who arrived in Cebu on 27 April 1565. De Legazpi firmly established Spanish colonial rule and many conversions took place during this period. The first bishop of Manila, Domingo de Salazar, who served from 1579 to 1584, became known for his strong opposition to the introduction of slavery into the Philippines, although it was practised in some parts of the Spanish empire at the time. He also resolved to spread the Gospel using the native languages. Evangelisation made use of the existing structures and retaining native practices while rejecting pagan ways.

The friars, with the help of locals, built roads, bridges, hospitals, asylums and orphanages, constructed large-scale irrigation and brought in new crops. The Augustinians and Franciscans recognised education as an important component of evangelisation and established schools for basic education. The Jesuits opened the

University of Saint Ignatius in 1590, the first university in Asia; however, it closed in 1768. They also opened the San José Seminary in 1601, which still operates today. The Dominicans founded the University of Saint Thomas in 1611, and that too still operates today. To Australians, these dates and events sound like a long, long time ago. It puts into perspective the history of the Philippines under Spanish rule and colonisation compared with our experience here. In 1637 Lorenzo Ruiz was martyred for refusing to renounce his faith. Some 300 years later he was canonised as the first Filipino saint. Pedro Calungsod died a martyr in 1672. Nearly 350 years later he was also proclaimed a saint. The first native Filipino to be ordained to the priesthood was Agustin Tabuyo of Cagayan in 1621. Today the Philippines has a total of 86 archdioceses, dioceses, prelatures and apostolic vicariates with over 85 million faithful, the third-largest Catholic population in the world, behind Brazil and Mexico.

Many people of Filipino ancestry now call Australia home. The Blacktown electorate in particular, part of which I represent, has a very significant population of Filipino Australians. Many of those are this year celebrating that 500th anniversary, something that is very important to their identity, their culture and their whole life experience. It is something they brought with them and that is precious to them. This year the Philippine Catholic Church celebrates the 500th year of the arrival of Christianity, a momentous event in the country's history. All Filipinos in the Philippines, Australia or indeed anywhere in the world are forever grateful for the gift that was given to them so long ago.

#### *Bills*

### **MUTUAL RECOGNITION (NEW SOUTH WALES) AMENDMENT BILL 2021**

#### **Returned**

**The SPEAKER:** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill with an amendment. I set down consideration of the Legislative Council amendment as an order of the day for a later day.

### **PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS AMENDMENT BILL 2021**

#### **Amendments**

**The SPEAKER:** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council informing the Legislative Assembly that it does not insist on its amendments Nos 2 to 4 disagreed with and agrees with amendments Nos 1 to 3.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to resolution. at 18:35 until  
Tuesday 22 June 2021 at 12:00.**