



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Wednesday 8 June 2022

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 8 June 2022

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

TREASURY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) BILL 2022

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Felicity Wilson, on behalf of Mr Matt Kean, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (09:48): On behalf of Mr Matt Kean: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Treasury Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2022 provides for a series of miscellaneous amendments to legislation primarily allocated to the Treasurer and largely serves to catch up on minor and uncontroversial amendments that are normally part of the annual Statute Law Revision Program. The changes proposed in the bill are minor and broadly administrative in nature. The bill comes after consultation with key stakeholders to ensure that the changes reflect accurate requirements to keep the legislation up to date. The bill proposes amendments to the following pieces of legislation: the Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers (Superannuation) Act 1941, the General Government Liability Management Fund Act 2002, the NSW Self Insurance Corporation Act 2004, the Government Sector Audit Act 1983, the Government Sector Finance Act 2018, the Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Act 1971 and the First State Superannuation Act 1992. The bill is proposed to commence on 1 July 2022 to align with requirements around financial reporting, compliance with changes to federal law and generally for administrative ease across the sector.

I will now address the bill in each of its component parts. The Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers (Superannuation) Act 1941 was legislated in 1941 in order to implement the key recommendations of the 1940-1941 royal commission of inquiry into mine safety. The Act was originally conceived in order to mandate the prohibition of employment of mine workers beyond the age of 60 and established a pension scheme for coal workers and their widows. Since then, of course, our industrial relations landscape has evolved considerably, and the Act now outlines the superannuation arrangements for coal and oil shale mine workers. The amendment is required to bring the trustee arrangements in line with new Commonwealth legislation that was introduced in response to the Royal Commission into Misconduct in the Banking, Superannuation and Financial Services Industry, otherwise known as the Hayne Royal Commission.

As a result of this Commonwealth legislative change, AUSCOAL Superannuation Pty Ltd is in breach of its registrable superannuation entity licence conditions, as it is both a corporate trustee of the Mine Superannuation Fund and administers the subsidy fund under the Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers (Superannuation) Act 1941. AUSCOAL currently has an exemption from the Australian Prudential Regulatory Authority which is due to expire on 30 June 2022. Therefore, this proposed amendment will separate these functions and introduce a new entity, the subsidy fund administrator, to administer the subsidy fund. This will bring AUSCOAL into compliance. The entity will be appointed by the Minister responsible for the Act.

The General Government Liability Management Fund Act 2002 was legislated to establish the General Government Liability Management Fund and provide for its management. Payments are made out of the General Government Liability Management Fund to pay employer contributions to the SAS Trustee Corporation fund on behalf of agencies, among other statutory purposes. The NSW Self Insurance Corporation Act 2004 is an Act to reconstitute the NSW Insurance Ministerial Corporation as the NSW Self Insurance Corporation. The NSW Self Insurance Corporation operates Government-managed fund schemes, among other functions. An amendment to the General Government Liability Fund Act 2002 and the NSW Self Insurance Corporation Act 2004 is required to remove references to "Crown Entity" or "Crown Finance Entity". The terms "Crown Entity" and "Crown Finance Entity" are not legal entities required to produce financial reports.

This amendment ensures compliance with the Australian Accounting Standards, specifically AASB 1050, which requires that separate financial statements should not be prepared for the Crown Entity. The Crown Entity's activities are administered by NSW Treasury on behalf of the State and will be included in Treasury's financial statements from the financial year end 30 June 2021. These reporting changes do not alter the underlying operations of Treasury and there are no budgetary impacts associated with this change. The critical date for these changes is 1 July 2022, in order to give effect to the change in reporting convention from the end of the financial year on 30 June 2021.

I now turn to the Government Sector Audit Act 1983. The Government Sector Audit Act 1983 governs the audit of government sector finances, and the establishment and functions of the Public Accounts Committee. The amendment proposed is required to align the time frames for auditing and tabling of the Consolidated State Financial Statements and ensures consistency of the terminology between the Government Sector Audit Act 1983 and Government Sector Finance Act 2018. The amendment removes redundant reference to "General Government Sector Financial Statements". It also makes amendments regarding the timing of the provision of audited Consolidated State Financial Statements and audit opinions by the Auditor-General. It removes the references to specific dates and replaces them with obligations to provide statements and opinions as soon as practicable. The Auditor-General has also been consulted on these changes and is supportive of the changes proposed.

I now move to the Government Sector Finance Act 2018. Also related to the preparation and auditing of financial statements is the amendment to the Government Sector Finance Act 2018. The Government Sector Finance Act 2018 was legislated to establish a framework for government sector financial and resource management in New South Wales. This includes the financial reporting of government sector finance agencies and the auditing of government sector finance agencies' financial statements. The amendments to this Act are required to clarify the timing and sequence of the provision of signed certification statements and compliance statements. An amendment is also proposed to the Government Sector Finance Legislation (Repeal and Amendment) Act 2018 to repeal redundant instruments and uncommenced amendments that have since been superseded. I now move to the Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Act 1971. The Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Act established a contributory superannuation scheme for members of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly.

[Government members interjected.]

I note the interjections of my colleagues. An amendment to the Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Act 1971 is required to update provisions relating to the eligibility, appointment and removal of trustees—and I welcome the member for Macquarie Fields naming those in his contribution. The Act currently requires the trustees of the fund to be sitting members of Parliament. However, the fund was closed to new members in 2007. There are now only 14 members of the fund who are still sitting members of Parliament. I note one of those members is present in the Chamber. The proposed amendments will allow past members of Parliament—I am sure we do not want any of the 14 to be a past member anytime soon—who are also fund members, to be appointed as trustees. In addition, the board is proposed to be given the ability to appoint and remove trustees with a majority of a quorum of voting trustees, and the Treasurer, acting reasonably, will also be given the ability to remove a trustee.

The First State Superannuation Act 1992 provides for employer contributions to superannuation for public sector employees. On 7 September 2020, the FSS Trustee Corporation, commonly referred to as First State Super, changed its name to Aware Super Pty Ltd. This amendment reflects the name change throughout the Act as well as references to "First State Superannuation" and "FTC" in other Acts and regulations. To conclude, the bill gives effect to necessary administrative changes to these pieces of legislation administered by the Treasurer and the Minister for Finance. They must be passed before the end of this financial year. They represent a number of amendments that normally form part of the annual Statute Law Revision Program and should not be considered controversial. I acknowledge the work of Treasury and Dimitry Palmer and Charlie Hoffman from the Treasurer's office in putting together these incredibly important amendments for the House to consider. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

ICAC AND LECC LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

First Reading

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

Second Reading Speech

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (09:59): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

There are five upcoming appointments of commissioners and inspectors of the Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] and the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission [LECC]. The appointment of the Hon. Peter Hall, QC, as the Chief Commissioner of the ICAC, and the appointments of Mr Stephen Rushton, SC, and Ms Patricia McDonald, SC, as commissioners of the ICAC, will expire on 6 August 2022. The appointments of Mr Bruce McClintock, SC, as Inspector of the ICAC and Professor Terry Buddin, SC, as Inspector of the LECC will expire on 30 June 2022. The current appointees are not eligible for reappointment to their current roles, as each will have held office for the maximum available term of five years. The Government is conducting a publicly advertised recruitment process to identify eligible candidates for appointment to these statutory offices.

At the outset, I note that proposed appointments arising from this recruitment process will be considered by the joint parliamentary Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption in respect of the appointments to the ICAC and the joint parliamentary Committee on the Ombudsman, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission and the Crime Commission in respect of the appointment of the inspector of the LECC so that they may consider exercising their power of veto. A nominations panel consisting of the immediate past chief justice of New South Wales, the Hon. Thomas Bathurst, AC, QC; retired Federal Court of Australia judge the Hon. Dr Annabelle Bennett, AC, SC; the immediate past president of the Law Society of NSW, Ms Juliana Warner; the Secretary of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Mr Michael Coutts-Trotter; and the Secretary of the Department of Communities and Justice, Mr Michael Tidball, has been appointed to consider applications and make recommendations to the Government on candidates suitable for appointment.

During the ongoing recruitment process, inconsistencies in certain provisions enabling the revival of a person's judicial commission once the person ceases to hold statutory office in the ICAC or the LECC have been identified. I will now briefly describe those provisions. Section 4 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption (Commissioner) Act 1994—the ICAC commissioner Act—and clause 6 of schedule 1 and clause 8 of schedule 2 to the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission Act 2016—the LECC Act—enable, if certain conditions are complied with, the commission of a judge of the Supreme Court who has resigned immediately prior to their appointment as a commissioner of the ICAC or the LECC or as inspector of the LECC to have their commission as a judge revived by force of those provisions when the person ceases to hold office as a commissioner of the ICAC or the LECC or inspector of the LECC, causing the person to become a judge of the Supreme Court again from that time.

Where these provisions apply, for the purposes of the Judges' Pensions Act 1953, the person's service as a commissioner of the ICAC or the LECC or inspector of the LECC is taken to be service as a judge of the Supreme Court, and references to notional judicial salary are references to the salary payable to the holder of a judicial office having a status equivalent to that of the judicial office held by the person immediately before being appointed as a commissioner of the ICAC or the LECC or inspector of the LECC. Unlike the provisions I have discussed, the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988—the ICAC Act—does not currently make provision for a Supreme Court judge appointed as inspector of the ICAC to have their commission as a judge revived. In addition, the provisions are not available to judges of the District Court who may be appointed as a commissioner or inspector.

The purpose of the bill is to address these discrepancies and ensure that the provisions apply consistently to Supreme Court and District Court judges who may be appointed to the statutory roles. Meritorious applicants may be discouraged from accepting an appointment without legislative amendment to extend the benefit of the existing provisions in the ICAC commissioner Act to judges of the District Court. This is of particular significance in circumstances where the holder of a judicial office is not eligible to be appointed as a commissioner of the ICAC, requiring judicial officers to resign from their judicial office prior to being appointed as a commissioner of the ICAC. There is no compelling reason to exclude judges of the District Court from the benefit of these provisions. The qualification requirements for appointment to both the Supreme Court and District Court are broadly the same, namely, to be an Australian lawyer of at least seven years' standing or a person who holds or has held a judicial office.

Senior members of the bar and highly experienced legal practitioners are frequently appointed to the District Court. Judges of the District Court have varied expertise and experience that would be of benefit to the ICAC and the LECC in performing their statutory functions. I note that a comparable Western Australian commission reviving provision for former judicial officers appointed to statutory offices extends to judges of its Supreme Court and District Court. For these reasons, the Government proposes to amend the ICAC commissioner Act to extend the existing provisions relating to a judge of the Supreme Court to a judge of the District Court. The bill also proposes equivalent amendments to the ICAC Act and the LECC Act to ensure consistency between relevant provisions.

I will now deal with the provisions of the bill in detail. The bill has three schedules. Schedule 1 to the bill proposes amendments to the ICAC Act. Schedule 1A to the ICAC Act contains provisions relating to the inspector and assistant inspector of the ICAC. As I previously indicated, the ICAC Act does not currently make provision for a judge of the Supreme Court appointed as inspector of the ICAC to have their commission as judge revived. Item [1] of schedule 1 to the bill, if passed, will insert a proposed new clause 6A into schedule 1A enabling a person who was a judge of the Supreme Court or the District Court and who resigned immediately prior to their appointment as inspector of the ICAC to have their commission as a judge revived by force of those provisions when the person ceases to hold office as inspector of the ICAC, causing the person to become a judge of the relevant court again from that time.

Items [1] to [4] of schedule 2 to the bill extend existing provisions in the ICAC commissioner Act enabling the revival of the commission of a Supreme Court judge appointed as a commissioner of the ICAC to a District Court judge. Item [6] of schedule 2 to the bill proposes to insert a new section into the ICAC commissioner Act enabling the making of regulations of a savings or transitional nature consequent on the commencement of a provision of the Act or a provision amending the Act. Schedule 3 to the bill proposes amendments to the LECC Act. Schedule 1 to the LECC Act contains provisions relating to the commissioners of the LECC. Items [1] to [4], if passed, will extend existing provisions in schedule 1 to the LECC Act enabling the revival of the commission of a judge of the Supreme Court appointed as a commissioner of the LECC to a judge of the District Court.

Schedule 2 to the LECC Act contains provisions relating to the inspector and assistant inspector of the LECC. Items [6] to [8], if passed, will extend existing provisions in schedule 2 to the LECC Act enabling the revival of the commission of a judge of the Supreme Court appointed as inspector of the LECC to a judge of the District Court. The bill contains savings and transitional provisions providing that amendments made by the bill apply on and from 30 June 2022. This will ensure that the provisions apply to any relevant persons appointed as part of the ongoing recruitment process should the proposed Act commence after the appointment of those persons. The proposed savings and transitional provisions are at item [2] of schedule 1, item [6] of schedule 2 and item [10] of schedule 3 to the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

MOTOR ACCIDENTS AND WORKERS COMPENSATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2021

Consideration in Detail

Consideration of Legislative Council amendments.

Schedule of amendments referred to in message of 19 May 2022

No. 1 PHON No. 1 [c2021-090A]

Page 2, clause 2(2), line 8. Omit "and [3] commence on a day or days". Insert instead "commences on a day".

No. 2 PHON No. 2 [c2021-090A]

Page 10, Schedule 2.1[3], lines 26-34. Omit all words on those lines.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government)
(10:09): I move:

That the Legislative Council amendments be agreed to.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (10:09): I thank the Minister and the good people in his and my offices who have worked on the Motor Accidents and Workers Compensation Legislation Amendment Bill 2021. The bill was first introduced a year ago. I am not happy about the delay. However, we have all worked together—I acknowledge the members of the crossbench in this place and the upper House—and have come to a landing. Some of these important benefits will support, for example, volunteer firefighters. I put on record my concern about the effect of the delay of the bill on the additional support for volunteer firefighters in particular. The Minister may wish to provide a response now or write to me later.

One of the amendments in the bill responds to community concerns about workers compensation entitlement discrepancies between volunteer firefighters and paid Rural Fire Service workers in recognition of the important work undertaken by volunteer firefighters, especially during the 2019 bushfire season. The bill ensures that volunteers are able to access the same benefits as rural Fire Service Workers. I have spoken to the Minister's office about the need for retrospectivity and the effect of the delay of the bill on those people.

Another important workers compensation amendment in the bill entitles the family of a worker who dies of a workplace injury to a lump sum death benefit. If dependent children are under 18, their share is paid to the NSW Trustee and Guardian who will manage the lump sum on behalf of the child. The bill creates an additional

compensation entitlement to cover the fees charged by the NSW Trustee and Guardian to manage a dependent child's lump sum death benefit. That ensures that the sum is not at risk of being swallowed up by fees over time, which is very good. Again, I have spoken with the Minister's office and I have sought advice. Hopefully, only a small number of children will be affected. Given the delay of the bill, again my concern relates to the need for retrospectivity and how we can help those families. I put that on the record. Again, I acknowledge that we all worked hard.

One of the amendments that we pushed for in this place related to deemed diseases. Sometimes we have to fight very hard, but good sense and understanding comes into it also. The report of the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Law and Justice on its dust diseases review will be tabled at the end of the week. I note that the bill includes some aspects of dust diseases. But I urge the Minister to address the additional dust diseases raised by the Driscoll report, which has not been made public. I have written to Minister Dominello, the Treasurer and Minister Tudehope about bringing a bill to the Parliament. The committee's report will be the fourth dust diseases report tabled in this Parliament. Most of the recommendations are proposed by the chair of the committee, who is a Government member. Yet we still have not seen any movement. I urge the Minister to consider the recommendations and establish a time line so that progress can be made to help these people. They are dying and they need support.

My colleague the shadow Minister for Customer Service, Yasmin Catley, has raised in this place the issue of medical treatment. Our strong stance was that we would not support the bill unless the Government fixed the section on medical benefits. In particular, we said it should not be dealt with by regulation. I note that the Government agreed to an amendment moved by the Hon. Rod Roberts in the upper House. Work has been done to improve the bill. My view is that workers compensation needs a lot of changes. But the changes made by this bill are long overdue. I also urge the Government to address those two issues relating to retrospectivity to help those families.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government) (10:15): In relation to dust diseases, at this stage we anticipate introducing a bill to the House in the later part of this year. In relation to the other issues raised by the member, I undertake to provide a more formal response once I get some advice.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the Legislative Council amendments be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL 2022

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 17 May 2022.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (10:16): I lead for the Opposition in debate on the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2022, which is, largely, uncomplicated. As the Parliamentary Secretary said in her second reading speech, the bill follows the long tradition of statutory miscellaneous provisions bills, which have been a feature of this Parliament for 35 years. Such bills make inconsequential amendments, so to speak, to certain Acts.

Schedule 1 to the bill contains amendments of a non-controversial nature. The schedule makes changes to proposals that are too inconsequential to warrant the introduction of a separate amending bill. This bill makes substantive amendments to three Acts. Firstly, schedule 1 introduces a power of delegation into the Public Works and Procurement Act 1912, which will allow the Minister and the so-called constructing authority to delegate certain functions to government agency employees or nominated persons who are authorised by the regulations. Secondly, schedule 1 amends the Subordinate Legislation Act 1989 to postpone the repeal of certain statutory rules which, but for the provisions of the bill, would have been automatically postponed by virtue of the inherent mechanisms in the statutory rules. The Subordinate Legislation Act provides a mechanism for statutory rules to remain in force until a specified date.

The bill postpones the repeal of four regulations that were to be postponed this year. Firstly, the repeal of the Heritage Regulation 2012 is postponed because a bill has been prepared by the Government in response to a Legislative Council committee report. Secondly, the release of the Animal Welfare Bill 2022 for public consultation has prompted the postponement of the remake of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulation 2012. The Parliament has been advised that, if enacted, the Animal Welfare Bill will replace the Act under which the regulation is made. Therefore, the automatic repeal of the regulation should be postponed until new regulations can be made. Thirdly, the bill postpones the repeal of the Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011 to account for the recently promulgated Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022, the effect of which

will be to repeal and replace that legislation. Finally, the amendment also provides for the postponement of the automatic repeal of the Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Regulation 2008.

Schedule 1 to the bill amends the Western Sydney University Act 1997, which provides that a member of the board of trustees of Western Sydney University, appointed by that board, is to preside at meetings of a committee that is constituted by the board. The amendment is considered appropriate and allows for the good governance of committees. Schedule 2 to the bill deals purely with statute law matters consisting of changes of a minor or technical nature to legislation, which the Parliamentary Counsel considers appropriate for inclusion in the bill. Also a whole host of amendments fix up very slight typographical errors, remove duplication, insert missing punctuation and things of that nature. The Opposition does not oppose the bill.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (10:20): On behalf of Mr Dominic Perrottet: In reply: I thank the Opposition for its support for this bill, which is an important piece of government machinery. It is non-controversial. I thank also the shadow Attorney General for his support and remarks in the Chamber today. The bill before the House continues a long-term program, which has been in place for over 35 years, as the shadow Attorney General recognised in this House. It is a feature of most of our parliamentary sessions. It makes for effective policy changes of a minor nature and improves the quality of the New South Wales statute book.

A number of categories of changes are in this bill—one is policy changes—but they are of a minor, non-controversial nature. Therefore I thank the Opposition for its support. There are changes to three Acts. We had the postponement of four regulations this year, which were mentioned in my earlier speech to the Legislative Assembly. A schedule amends the Western Sydney University Act and makes its operational business a little easier by providing that a chairperson appointed by the board can preside at meetings of the committee of the board. Then there are things of a minor nature which are about typographical and other errors to upgrade the quality of our statute book.

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

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON: On behalf of Mr Dominic Perrottet: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Motions

STOLEN GENERATIONS APOLOGY TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Debate resumed from 7 June 2022.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly—Minister for Environment and Heritage) (10:22): On 18 June 1997 this House apologised to the Aboriginal people of Australia for the systematic separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, their families and their communities. Twenty-five years later, we are reflecting on this apology and reaffirming our commitment to reconciliation in New South Wales. This is about acknowledging wrongs, making amends and showing our respect and appreciation for the rich history and precious natural places of this land we all call home. It is critical that we continue to forge ahead with the commitments made following Mr Carr's apology in 1997. Whilst we have come a long way, there is still much more to be done.

As the Minister responsible for national parks, I understand the vital role that national parks have in providing Aboriginal people with connection to country and in delivering cultural, social, health and economic benefits to communities. New South Wales national parks contain Aboriginal sites, places and objects of exceptional significance, ranging from small ceremonial sites to iconic landmarks like the Three Sisters. These important cultural sites are protected and cared for by the National Parks and Wildlife Service in partnerships with Aboriginal people, many of these through the Aboriginal joint management program. Aboriginal joint management fosters self-determination for Aboriginal people by increasing their opportunities to make decisions and provide advice about how land is managed and embodies the New South Wales Government's commitment to closing the gap. There are now 33 joint management agreements, covering over one-third of the national park estate.

This Government is committed to expanding Aboriginal joint management opportunities. Since 2019 there has been an expansion of the Aboriginal-owned lands at Mount Grenfell Historic Site. In April this year Bulagaranda Aboriginal Area was handed back to the Anaiwan people, who will now manage that precious place in partnership with the National Parks and Wildlife Service. The Government is also commencing the historic transfer of Me-Mel to the Aboriginal community. This unique island in Sydney Harbour has important Aboriginal,

historical and natural heritage value. In May this Government committed \$42.9 million to support the transfer. The transfer will provide outcomes and opportunities for Aboriginal people, as well as an important connection to country and culture as a cherished Aboriginal site.

Joint management also provides social and economic outcomes for Aboriginal people, such as employment, contracts for Aboriginal-owned businesses, statewide networking and a role in influencing government policies and laws about national parks and cultural heritage management in national parks. Today there are over 220 Aboriginal members of joint management boards and committees, and approximately 11 per cent of National Parks and Wildlife Service employees identify as Aboriginal.

New South Wales has more than 60,000 years of rich Aboriginal cultural heritage. I am deeply committed to the management, protection, repatriation and conservation of this heritage. Heritage NSW's Aboriginal cultural heritage conservation and programs, and recognition of Aboriginal places continue to help us learn and ensure that we do not repeat the wrongs of the past. There are 141 declared Aboriginal places in New South Wales, and I am proud to have made three of these declarations in the time that I have been Minister.

It is vital that we recognise the uncomfortable truths and traumas of the past so that we can both learn from them and acknowledge suffering. The Heritage Council of NSW has identified frontier conflict as one of two priorities for listing items on the State Heritage Register from 2021 to 2025, in recognition of the need for truth-telling within New South Wales' history and heritage. This Government recognises Aboriginal cultural heritage as fundamental to and inseparable from the history, heritage and natural landscape of New South Wales. I hope that we can continue to move towards a place of deep respect and shared commitment to the ongoing protection and conservation of the complex and profound places, objects, stories and traditions of the oldest culture in the world.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle) (10:27): Today I am speaking from the land of the Gadigal people, which is part of the Eora nation. As the member for Newcastle, my electorate spans the lands of the Awabakal and Worimi peoples. I pay tribute to Elders and members of these communities. I have been privileged to meet passionate and powerful Aboriginal people who are striving locally for better outcomes—people such as proud Wiradjuri man Nathan Towney, who has been a leader in high school and tertiary education; proud Wiradjuri woman and lawyer Taylah Gray, who fights every day for her people; and proud Worimi man Professor Kelvin Kong, who is Australia's first Aboriginal surgeon. Today we speak on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology to the Stolen Generations, when a motion came through this Parliament. That motion read:

That this House, on behalf of the people of New South Wales—

- (1) apologises unreservedly to the Aboriginal people of Australia for the systematic separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families and communities;
- (2) acknowledges and regrets Parliament's role in enacting laws and endorsing policies of successive governments whereby profound grief and loss have been inflicted upon Aboriginal Australians;
- (3) calls upon all Australian Governments to respond with compassion, understanding and justice to the report of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission entitled *Bringing them home*; and
- (4) reaffirms its commitment to the goals and processes of reconciliation in New South Wales and throughout Australia.

That motion went through this Parliament some 25 years ago, but the journey to reconciliation is not over. Members of the Stolen Generation survived emotional, physical and sexual abuse. They survived separation from family and separation from culture. They continue to survive the lifelong effects of this trauma and the severe mental health impacts that it created. But this does not end with them. The effects of intergenerational trauma are being laid before us every single day. We see it in continuing poorer health outcomes when compared to the wider community. We see it in the fewer education and training opportunities and the lower life expectancy. We see it in the wildly high rates of incarceration. First Nations people are still fighting to have their voices heard. I thank former Premier Bob Carr for leading the way in acknowledgement and apologies from Australia's Parliaments. That was only the start. We still have a lot of work to do.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (10:30): When New South Wales surveyor Hodgkinson toured the mid North Coast of New South Wales in the 1850s, he wrote, "I think that all endeavours to make them adopt more settled habits will be useless, for what great inducement does the monotonous and toilsome existence of the labouring classes in civilised communities offer to make the Indigenous people abandon their independent and careless life, diversified by the exciting occupations of hunting, fighting, and dancing." I think this sums up life before white man arrived. It is a reflection of the beauty and natural elements that favour the wonderful life that the mid North Coast of New South Wales provides. I raise this because of the incredible address yesterday by James Michael Widdy Welsh, who was a resident of the Kinchela Boys Home.

Kinchela Boys Home is about 20 kilometres from Kempsey on the banks of the mighty Macleay River. You wonder about the pain, the dispossession and the sadness that was the existence of many Indigenous people

since white settlement, and that sadness still exists today. But we saw healing from James, as he is known in the court system, Michael as he was at Kinchela and Widdy as he is with his people. He talked about how the recognition of the Stolen Generations and the motion moved by Bob Carr 25 years ago was incredibly important to his healing. I respect that, but I also represent the electorate of Oxley, where Kinchela boys home is. I also accept the comments from the Premier that there are many who worry that the moments of sorry, the moments of reflection or the symbolism will not fix the problems that still exist. I would not be true to myself, to my electorate or to my communities if I did not acknowledge that there is still so much healing, so much pain and too many children without their families because of an ingrained cycle of poverty and drug and alcohol obsession that we still need to come to terms with.

Still our incarceration rates are too high. The number of children taken is too high. Our education results are not what they should be, and not what all members of the community want. We have to strive and be honest with ourselves—all of us need to be honest with ourselves—about how we fix the families. James Michael Widdy Welsh said that yesterday. Putting people into the families before we tear those families apart is at the heart of fixing many of the problems. I am going to call it out. I am going to say that agencies, whether it is the Department of Education, the Ministry of Health or the Department of Communities and Justice, need to stop acting in silos, and public servants need to come together and respect what our communities are saying. We need to put resources back into individual homes. We need to use midwives as a beacon to give us examples of those families where the struggles are going to be most felt and then, off the back of the advice from midwives, put resources into those homes. That is just common sense. That needs to be what drives government policy to get the outcomes that we need.

We also need to face the facts and the truth. There is a problem in Kempsey, and it is a strong problem. There is a belief that the population of Kempsey voted against recognition in the Constitution in 1967. It was not one of the best votes by far, but the majority—nearly 70 per cent of that community—voted for Aboriginal recognition in the Constitution. I note the presence of the member for Maroubra, whose family hails from that town. I think he would agree that that pain is still there, and we need to work together to fix it because everybody wants it fixed. I also acknowledge the contribution from Bob Carr at the lunch where he said that having George Souris, the leader of the National Party at that time, walk with him on the Sydney Harbour Bridge was very important symbolism for regional New South Wales. We want things to be better. Yesterday's commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the sorry moment was a very important part, but we all need to work together with common sense and outcomes in policy so that we can be prouder of our education results, our average death age results and our educational outcomes.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (10:36): I am proud to make a contribution to debate on this motion, which commemorates the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Parliament of New South Wales apology to the Stolen Generations. I do so acknowledging the Gadigal people of the Eora nation and the Bidjigal people, who are the people from La Perouse. I said in my very first speech to the Parliament in 2005 that I was very proud—and still am—that in my electorate the community of La Perouse is a place where original families who have an unbroken connection to the land still reside, and they are a great community. This Chamber heard from Uncle James Michael Widdy Welsh, Auntie Lorraine Peeters and Uncle Richard Dawes, who walked onto the floor of this Parliament, in what is a rare occurrence, to tell us about their thoughts on being survivors of the Stolen Generation. You can read all you want about the Stolen Generation and the things that have been done to First Nations people, but when you sit and listen in silence and look at the pain that is etched in those people's faces and hear the pain that emanates from their voices, it is powerful. There were tears in this place when they spoke, as there should have been, and mine were among them.

When I listened to those people, I thought of my life and the upbringing that I had with my mum and dad in a loving family. They made me. I think of my kids and tucking them into bed every night. Then, you imagine in the dark of night someone kicking the door in and taking your kids away. You picture one of them walking home from school and being kidnapped. That is what happened to these young people. Uncle Richard Dawes told us that when he was walking along Silverdale Road on his way home from school, a car pulled up and kidnapped him. It took him decades to find his mum and brothers and sisters again. This is unacceptable. It is just mind-boggling that this stuff happened in a modern nation. But this was institutional, it was deliberate and it was based on a desire to de-Aboriginalise these children.

We have built a wonderful country, but we have to admit that these things sit alongside the admirable things we have done in our history. The damage to these people has been profound beyond belief. It cannot be restored, but we can do our best to heal. When these survivors tell their stories over and over again—remarkably without anger—one thing that comes out powerfully is the crucial importance of truth-telling. You cannot have healing without understanding. You cannot have understanding without empathy. You cannot have empathy without knowledge about what really happened to these people. We should not sit around and flagellate ourselves

as a nation, because we have built a good nation. But the survivors stress that we must acknowledge that they cannot properly heal and we cannot properly reconcile unless the truth is told.

The truth is still not being taught. The victors are great at erasing history. The truth is not being taught in schools as it should be, in my view. There are still too many grown-ups—if you want to put it that way—who do not know or do not really want to know what happened. I say to all of them to take a little time to learn about what really happened. There are many simple ways to do that. At the moment SBS On Demand is showing a documentary series called *First Australians*. Those who watch it will be astounded to see what we did to our First Nations people and the destruction that they suffered. Many people thought our First Nations people would die out as a race, but they did not. They are still here, they are still alive and they are still proud. I am wishing and willing that we all move forward together on this healing journey.

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (10:41): I acknowledge that we meet today on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. I also acknowledge that I represent a community that is founded on the traditional lands of the Awabakal people. I pay tribute to those Aboriginal people and their Elders past, present and emerging. To have a future where we embrace, respect and celebrate our differences, we must first acknowledge our indifferent past. If we long for a future in which we embrace all Australians, we must embrace the very first Australians—those who occupied these lands for thousands of years, those whose culture we should celebrate and those whose culture was brutally affronted and systematically attacked when European settlement came to the shores of what is now New South Wales.

Let there be no doubt that 25 years ago we truly began moving forward by acknowledging and apologising for one of the very darkest moments of our history. Twenty-five years ago the New South Wales Government, through Bob Carr, apologised to the Aboriginal people of New South Wales for the forced removal of their children over generations. Since then we have taken steps, although not always big ones, in the right direction towards what I would call a proper reconciliation, a proper acknowledgment of where we have been, of what happened and of where we truly want to be as Australians. I am not certain when I first heard the term Stolen Generation, but it was a long time ago and then only because brave parents, siblings and community members decades ago said enough was enough and that taking their children was not in any way acceptable.

Sometime later, during the time that I was Mayor of Lake Macquarie, I met Gary and Brenda Simon, or Uncle Gary and Auntie Brenda as they became known to me. I share a little of their story. In 1971 they lived in Gilgandra with their seven children. On the day that government officials came knocking, Gary was away working. He was building the nation, on the railways as I recall. They loved their children as much as we all love our own, and Gary worked hard to provide for his family. All seven children were taken away on that day in 1971. They were aged between one and eight. Gary and Brenda spent the next four years in court fighting to get them back. Auntie Brenda recalled:

They said that they had to take them now and not wait for my husband to come home. I didn't know what to do.

During those four years Gary and Brenda moved to Blackalls Park in my electorate. By 1975 the children began returning home one at a time and for the first time met a new brother. Gary and Brenda were never told where their children were or who they were with. Brenda would later tell the *Newcastle Herald*:

We couldn't write to them and tell them that we were still here and we loved them and think the world of them and that one day we'd all be back together.

It later emerged that the children were regularly moved to different homes over the four years they spent away from their parents and were most often separated from each other. Marie, one of the children, was five when she was taken. She still tells the story of how she was forced to take the surnames of the white families she was placed with. She recalled:

We were lucky when we eventually came back together, because I know others came back and their mother and father had died.

Marie's sister, April, recalled that she was eight when taken away from her family. When she was reunited after a four-year separation, she had to be reintroduced to her parents and siblings because she did not recognise them. Her younger sister, Lacey, did not even know the names of her parents and siblings. Some years later Uncle Gary became a pastor. He and Brenda never surrendered in their fight for their children. They never surrendered their hope. The impacts of those years will never be erased. It takes more than a "sorry" to heal those wounds. It is for those reasons and my understanding of those stories that I agreed to bring to this House on behalf of the former member of the upper House Mr David Shoebridge the Family is Culture review bill. I hope that as we go forward, members in this Parliament can deal with the issue, because we need to address the tragedy that occurred in the past and unfortunately continues to occur.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (10:46): I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Lake Macquarie. I also acknowledge in the public gallery today the former Mayor of Orange, Reg Kidd. It is appropriate

to highlight that Reg showed leadership in his community when I was the Minister responsible for Crown lands. We created the first Aboriginal land use agreement, sorting out hundreds of Aboriginal land claims in Orange and coming to a decision that benefited the community and the Aboriginal land council, which effectively gives 80 hectares of land in the heart of Orange to the Aboriginal community. It is wonderful to have Reg Kidd in the Chamber today.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (10:47): Every day when we enter this place we acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, and acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands we each represent. For me, that is the Cammeraygal people. The Cammeraygal area of the Eora nation was known to be women's country. Obviously, many people would know Barangaroo as a leading Cammeraygal woman of her time and as well as now, looking back in history. It is fitting for us to have this conversation at a time when we have renewed understanding of Indigenous history and our First Nations people across Australia. It highlights to us that we need to increase our empathy and our understanding of more of the modern history of our First Nations brothers and sisters.

For me, that is what this 25-year anniversary of the New South Wales apology to the Aboriginal people of Australia for what was systemic separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families, communities and country is all about. It is usually members who speak in this place. Instead, yesterday we had a profound opportunity to hear other people's voices. Uncle Michael, Aunty Lorraine and Uncle Richard shared personal, deep and challenging stories and pushed us to do better and be better. The fundamental principles that came through in their contributions to us were that reconciliation requires truth-telling and that healing requires truth-telling and listening to survivor-led initiatives and ideas. We did that yesterday, but we need to do it every day and we need to recommit ourselves to do better.

I acknowledge that, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Australia's colonial history is characterised by devastating land dispossession, violence and racism. Over the last half century, however, many significant steps towards reconciliation have been taken. But, as we have been reminded yet again, reconciliation is an ongoing journey. While generations of Australians have fought hard for meaningful change, future gains are likely to require just as much, if not more, effort. Today I reaffirm my own unreserved apologies to all Aboriginal people across New South Wales and Australia for the systemic injustices of separating Aboriginal children from their parents, families, communities and country.

I express my sorrow and sincerely apologise for the intergenerational trauma and the deep-seated agony that those policies and laws have inflicted onto many generations of Aboriginal people in our State, which still today have ripple effects for individuals and communities. Uncle Michael spoke about that so eloquently yesterday. We reiterate our continued commitment in a bipartisan fashion to effective reconciliation in New South Wales and to supporting the implementation of the Government's response to Unfinished Business by working in direct partnership with Stolen Generations survivors: the Elders, aunts and uncles. We will also continue to work closely with the Stolen Generation Advisory Committee organisations: the Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation, the Coota Girls Aboriginal Corporation, the Children of the Bomaderry Aboriginal Children's Home Incorporated and the Stolen Generations Council NSW/ACT.

Yesterday we heard an acknowledgement of the impacts on Aboriginal and First Nations people today of the actions that were taken during the Stolen Generations. It was most profound for me when Uncle Michael spoke about his own reaction and the decades it took for him to even understand that he was living through trauma. He spoke about how he dealt with trauma he did not know existed through violence, aggression, not speaking and closing up and how that impacted his own children and his behaviour—his fleeing home, not feeling safe and not feeling as though he had a safe environment for his children.

That still happens to Indigenous people across New South Wales today. It is not good enough. We need to do more. I acknowledge what the member for Oxley, who lives and breathes this every day in her community, said: We need to do better, particularly around education, incarceration, health outcomes and addiction. We need to acknowledge the link to the intergenerational trauma that creates those outcomes and that does not create the opportunities that those families, individuals and children deserve. I commit to doing what Uncle Michael said and working always to heal families first and ensure that children are no longer taken from their communities.

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (10:52): I contribute to debate on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology to the Stolen Generations. Each year Australians commemorate National Sorry Day, a day in which we acknowledge and remember the forcible removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, known as the Stolen Generations, from their communities. On this day we action remorse and healing towards Indigenous communities, families and individuals. We acknowledge the trauma and loss that the Stolen Generations experienced from their mistreatment, which still impacts them today. We also take the time to respect and admire the resilience and courage of the Stolen Generations survivors and to think about how we can contribute to the healing process.

The government laws and policies that dictated the removal of those children are a sad part of our judicial history and reflect a period of injustice and trauma for our Indigenous brothers and sisters that has never left them. Those laws and policies were formulated in an attempt to assimilate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children into a mainly white community. The *Bringing Them Home* report of 1997 outlined the magnitude of the forced removals between 1910 and the 1970s. On 18 June 1997, in response to the *Bringing Them Home* report, former New South Wales Premier Bob Carr formally apologised to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of New South Wales for the past implementation of policies that led to the removal of Aboriginal children from their families. It was the first response from a State government to the report. The motion read as follows:

I move:

That this House, on behalf of the people of New South Wales—

- (1) apologises unreservedly to the Aboriginal people of Australia for the systematic separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families and communities;
- (2) acknowledges and regrets Parliament's role in enacting laws and endorsing policies of successive governments whereby profound grief and loss have been inflicted upon Aboriginal Australians;
- (3) calls upon all Australian Governments to respond with compassion, understanding and justice to the report of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission entitled *Bringing them home*; and
- (4) reaffirms its commitment to the goals and processes of reconciliation in New South Wales and throughout Australia.

Needless to say, it was passed without dissent. Stolen Generation survivors remain some of the most vulnerable people in our wider community and suffer lasting trauma. In fact, their trauma is of such magnitude that they were reluctant to speak of their stories and experiences for many years. However, the sharing of their stories has brought a greater understanding of what it is to be a Stolen Generation survivor and how we as Australians can join and contribute to the healing process and carry it into the future. As the Hon. Bob Carr stated, "The lost generations of the stolen children have been given a voice at long last." Loss of family, culture and identity are common themes and we cannot help but feel empathy and sadness for the survivors of such trauma. Their experiences must be acknowledged. We must be accountable; there must be compensation for such mistreatment. It is the very least we can do as Australians. In his words to this Parliament, the Hon. Bob Carr referred to a statement from Link-Up, an organisation which reunited Aboriginal families throughout New South Wales and Australia, that moved me in particular:

We may go home, but we cannot relive our childhoods. We may reunite with our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, communities but we cannot relive the 20, 30, 40 years that we spent without their love and care, and they cannot undo the grief and mourning they felt when we were separated from them. We can go home to ourselves as Aboriginals, but this does not erase the attacks inflicted on our hearts, minds, bodies and souls, by caretakers who thought their mission was to eliminate us as Aboriginals.

These raw, unfiltered words of pain are hard to listen to but must be acknowledged if ever there is a chance of restitution and true reconciliation. As a nation, we have made progress but it cannot stop there. We need to achieve so much more. Moving forward, it is incumbent upon all Australians to continue to strive towards true reconciliation and to building meaningful and respectful relationships with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community in unity, equality and treaty.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (10:57): I begin by acknowledging members of the Stolen Generations and their families, and all First Nations people who have been present over the past few days in this place. Aunty Lorraine, who spoke in the Chamber yesterday, clearly reminded everyone of the ongoing significance of the apology to the Stolen Generations. She said:

You are just recycling the trauma and contributing to intergenerational trauma ... It needs to stop. We need to break the cycle and continue to close the gap.

She called on us to embrace truth, healing and trauma-informed care. Uncle Michael also spoke movingly and powerfully. His experience was that he was removed from his mother at the age of eight and that his eldest son suffered the same fate many years later. I acknowledge Uncle Richard, who spoke from the heart too. I thank all the speakers for their truth, courage and leadership. Survivors of the Stolen Generations tell us of ongoing trauma. To this day, that trauma is fresh and sends waves of pain across the nation. For me, those lived experiences powerfully illuminate the twenty-fifth anniversary of then Premier Bob Carr's apology on behalf of the New South Wales Government. In doing so at that time, he spoke with bipartisan support from the then Opposition leader, Peter Collins. It was not an occasion for politics then, and it should never build a barrier between us. That was a landmark moment for our State and was the nation's first such apology.

Our Premier has already acknowledged the role that government plays in the ongoing pain felt most deeply by Indigenous people. As leader of this Government, the Premier said that pursuing equality was his priority. I draw truth from the Premier's words yesterday. Today the gap in basic living standards that First Nations people endure remains completely unacceptable. We must act with urgency to secure all Indigenous Australians true

equality and true economic, social and political opportunity. The Premier has reaffirmed our sorrow in Parliament on this quarter-century anniversary, and with those words came a commitment to provide funding of \$15.3 million over four years to establish memorials at former children's homes. Stolen Generations survivors will use those memorials to record, preserve and share their stories so that all may benefit, and remember what transpired and the reality of the pain and trauma still felt so keenly today. I hope visitors to those cultural memorials will gain or regain courage to ensure survivors' needs are being met and mistakes are not endlessly repeated.

I particularly acknowledge the Indigenous nation in my own community, the Wiradjuri, on whose land the Albury community live, and other First Nations. It is my deep privilege to be able to walk and yarn with them and to be given the opportunity to listen, to learn and to gain glimpses of their experiences on their long and often painful journeys. I am thankful for those most valued and heartfelt opportunities. The wounds are real, and the process of healing is essential to the wellbeing and progress of our State and of our nation.

Debate interrupted.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: BILLS

Mr RON HOENIG: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to provide for:

- (1) The calling on forthwith this day of the general business notice of motion for the introduction of the Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2022.
- (2) The introduction and mover's second reading speech of the Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2022 this day.
- (3) Resumption of the debate on the bill to resume on 9 June 2022 after the giving of general business notices of motion.
- (4) That debate, if not already concluded, to be interrupted at 1.00 p.m. to allow all remaining questions on the bill to be put.

Motion agreed to.

Bills

PARLIAMENTARY BUDGET OFFICER AMENDMENT BILL 2022

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Ron Hoenig, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (11:03): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2022 is very brief. It is simply to enable the appointment of the Parliamentary Budget Officer to be brought forward to 1 July, rather than 1 September as required in the principal bill. It removes the words "1 September" and inserts instead "1 July". The purpose of the bill is to ensure that appointments to the Parliamentary Budget Office can be made sooner, to enable it to function in an efficient way more quickly.

The words "as soon as practicable" are retained within the proposed amendment because experience has shown that it takes a while from the time of an appointment for the Parliamentary Budget Office to be up and running and able to do its work efficiently. The proposed changes are very minimal, and I express my appreciation to members of the crossbench for the support that they have provided and the input that they have had. I express my appreciation to the Leader of the House, who—as always, ultimately, when faced with the reality of the numbers in this House—readily agreed with the proposals.

Debate adjourned.

Commemorations

STOLEN GENERATIONS APOLOGY TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai—Minister for Skills and Training, and Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology) (11:06): Yesterday we witnessed an extraordinary moment in this House with the Premier's motion commemorating 25 years since this Parliament apologised for government's role in the forced removal of Indigenous children from their parents, families and communities. Unless someone was made

of tin, they could not have failed to be moved by the survivors' addresses to the Parliament yesterday, preceding the Premier's speech and moving of the motion.

Uncle James Michael "Widdy" Welsh's story was incredibly credible in the way in which it was delivered and the sincerity and the truth of what he said. The story of him walking along the street near Warragamba Dam with his siblings and being taken and put in a home was incredibly sad. It was incredibly moving, and very few people would have doubted the injustice of what occurred to him and his siblings. Our system of government has at its very heart the idea that all people are equal before the law, and it is an incredibly confronting realisation that there was a government-backed system of treating some of our citizens differently to others.

When I made my first speech in this place, I spoke about the greatest opportunity that I had in life, which was having a loving home. The motion moved by the Premier yesterday highlighted the way in which Indigenous Australians were robbed of that basic right and fundamental first step to which everyone should be entitled—that is, to have a loving home. Although there was a concern 25 years ago that this was a symbolic gesture, the symbolism is incredibly important in that this was an act of government. In law, there is the idea that governments have perpetual succession. We, as members of Parliament today, and those members from 25 years ago, are the inheritors of the governments that performed these acts so many years ago. It is appropriate that we acknowledge those wrongs and state an intention to right those wrongs.

As many of the speakers to this motion have said, it is important that we embrace practical action in addition to acknowledgement. It is unacceptable that Indigenous Australians have a life expectancy, health metrics, educational outcomes and opportunity outcomes that are so different in their percentages to non-Indigenous Australians. It is important that we acknowledge that and try to create greater opportunities within our Indigenous communities. The acknowledgement and the Premier's motion, remembering the bipartisan resolution of this House 25 years ago, is a poignant reminder that there is much more work to be done in this area. We need to acknowledge that, remember that and be motivated by that in our efforts to close the gap and right those wrongs.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (11:12): As my colleagues from all sides of the Chamber have mentioned, this is an important debate on an issue on which the New South Wales Parliament has a proud history of leading the nation. On 18 June 1997 former Labor Premier Bob Carr delivered the first apology in any Parliament in the country in response to the national inquiry into the Stolen Generation. The motion that Premier Carr was speaking to read:

That this House, on behalf of the people of New South Wales—

- (1) apologises unreservedly to the Aboriginal people of Australia for the systematic separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families and communities;
- (2) acknowledges and regrets Parliament's role in enacting laws and endorsing policies of successive governments whereby profound grief and loss have been inflicted upon Aboriginal Australians;
- (3) calls upon all Australian governments to respond with compassion, understanding and justice to the report of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission entitled *Bringing them home*; and
- (4) reaffirms its commitment to the goals and processes of reconciliation in New South Wales and throughout Australia.

Twenty-five years later, we still have so far to go before we deliver on this promise of reconciliation. Former Premier Carr's apology on 18 June 1997 was an important step in formally acknowledging the role our Parliament played in a shameful period in our nation's history. While so much of our recent history is viewed through the prism of the Federal Government and Australia as a nation, it is important for us to recall and reflect on the fact that until Federation the injustices and persecution of Aboriginal Australians was done by and in the name of the States, including New South Wales. Laws enacted in this Parliament by governments formed in this Chamber often led to the dispossession, disenfranchisement and mistreatment of Aboriginal people throughout New South Wales. It cannot be forgotten that for almost 115 years the New South Wales Government, not the Australian Government, was primarily responsible for these injustices.

We still have a long way to go to deliver on the promise of reconciliation, but I am proud of the Carr legacy in beginning the process of healing in New South Wales. The apologies made by former Premier Carr and former Prime Minister Rudd were important historic moments that helped parliaments, governments and the nation as a whole reconsider the impact of colonisation and the truth of how this society came into being. While these grand gestures matter a great deal, we must remain vigilant and attentive to the real-world experience of Australia's First Nations people living with the laws and policies we enact in parliaments such as this one. Sorry means not doing it again. It is a common refrain and one that this Parliament must keep at the forefront of its thinking.

Twenty-two years ago, I marched across the Sydney Harbour Bridge with 250,000 others for reconciliation, but all these years later many of the statistical markers for health, education and incarceration reveal that Aboriginal people are not in a significantly better position now than they were a quarter of a century ago. One of

the most important steps in our journey towards reconciliation now lies in front of us, with former member of this Parliament and now Federal Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon. Linda Burney, tasked with implementing the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full. I was filled with pride when Prime Minister Anthony Albanese began his speech on election night by reiterating his support for the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full and an Indigenous voice in that Parliament.

An Indigenous voice in Parliament is a vital mechanism for direct, grassroots engagement by First Nations people with the government of the day, speaking to parliamentarians about the impact of legislation on First Nations communities throughout Australia. This is crucially important in closing the gap, delivering justice and improving the lives of First Nations people. I look forward to this referendum and to fighting alongside each and every one of you to see an Indigenous voice to Parliament become a reality. As we heard from survivors of the Stolen Generations on this twenty-fifth anniversary, the pain and suffering of the impacts of the Stolen Generation is intergenerational and is still hurting First Nations people. We must address the gaps in life expectancy, health outcomes, education outcomes, employment outcomes, housing outcomes, incarceration and deaths in custody of our First Nations people. That is our obligation as parliamentarians.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Transport, and Minister for Veterans) (11:18): I make a small contribution to this debate not only as a current member of this House but as someone who was there 25 years ago, when Premier Carr and my then boss, Peter Collins, were significant in making sure that this recognition was made. I acknowledge that my friend the Hon. Walt Secord was then Bob Carr's press secretary and my counterpart. I learnt that day that no number of words in the Oxford dictionary will correct the wrongs of history, particularly when it comes to Indigenous history in this State and country.

No number of words in the Oxford dictionary is going to rectify the wrongs of history, anywhere. As a young bloke growing up in western Sydney, I was taken to Bimbadeen Aboriginal Training College by my school and parents as a possible means of rectifying my behaviour. By then, Bimbadeen was an Aboriginal college for theology and agriculture. While attending the college in the 1980s, I heard stories of its past wrongs and how between 1911 and 1968 the Cootamundra Girls Home was a fundamental part of the Stolen Generations.

I recognise Uncle Jake and the other Elders at Bimbadeen college, who taught me not only a love of rugby but also the knowledge that we had to create our own paths in life. In their attempt to ensure that I took the right path, the Elders taught me about the need to celebrate those who overcome difficulties to make contributions in life. There is so much in Indigenous history—in recent times, particularly—that is worth celebrating. As we discuss, debate and acknowledge the Stolen Generations, I am disappointed that we are not also celebrating the successes of Indigenous Australians.

Of course, as a military historian, it would be wrong of me not to recognise Captain Reg Saunders—a man who broke glass ceilings in the Australian army before they realised glass ceilings were there. I have been reading about Alfred Hearps, one of our Indigenous soldiers from Tasmania, who was also commissioned. Of course, I must mention the lovable Uncle Harry Allie, who at the moment runs the Black Diggers RSL fraternity. No man has a better sense of humour than Harry. In politics we should celebrate the wonderful work of Warren Mundine and Aden Ridgeway. We have heard about Linda Burney and Neville Bonner, the wonderful Liberal senator from the Gold Coast—

Mr Geoff Provest: Born in Tweed.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: —born in Tweed. He also broke through glass ceilings. In the world of sport we celebrate Cathy Freeman, of course, Mark Ella and "Artie" Beetson—a name that will probably be mentioned a lot today. Members of this House, particularly those of us on the wrong side of 50, would know that "Mum Shirl" was paramount to providing guidance and welfare to young Indigenous kids growing up in Redfern. As the former police Minister, it would be remiss of me not to thank Indigenous trackers for their work, from the nineteenth century up until now. There are now record numbers of Aboriginal kids coming through the police academy and joining the rank and file of the men and women in blue. I also recognise Sir Douglas Nicholls, the first Aboriginal to ever be appointed to a vice-regal position as the Governor of South Australia, who did such a dignified and wonderful job.

I acknowledge the very personal contribution that a number of Elders made in my life as a young man, which is why I was so glad to be part of the team led by Peter Collins and Bob Carr that delivered the apology to the Stolen Generation 25 years ago. I stand here today, 25 years later, and acknowledge that there will always be work to be done. The sun will never set on this campaign. Let us come together as a Parliament, as a nation, and highlight the need to encourage each other with the wonderful stories of success and deliverance that has occurred in recent times, but also in the times when our nation had its very darkest period of history when it came to Indigenous affairs and recognising the ancient people that lived in this nation before us. Again, I thank the Premier

and the Opposition leader for their contributions to this debate. I acknowledge what I believe is an earnest attempt by this House to "bring them home".

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (11:23): I acknowledge that today we are on Aboriginal land. This Parliament stands on the land of the Gadigal people. The electorate I represent is the land of the Gadigal and Wangal people of the Eora nation and I pay my respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. No-one can stand before the House and not be moved by the call from the survivors of the Stolen Generations that we heard in this Parliament yesterday. I acknowledge, of course, former Premier Bob Carr and former Leader of the Opposition Peter Collins on this twenty-fifth anniversary of this Parliament's apology to the Stolen Generation. I acknowledge all of the First Nations people who have fought so hard to be heard. I acknowledge the Premier and the Leader for the Opposition for their words, and also this House for supporting such a powerful presence in this Parliament.

We have a chance to help stop what we are apologising for here today. We heard the call yesterday from First Nations people: "Stop taking our children." We have heard big talk here from members of the Parliament about how sorry they are and how they want to work together, but what we can do is act. Aboriginal children today are 11 times more likely to be taken from their families than their non-Aboriginal counterparts—11 times. As at 30 June 2020, one in 18 Indigenous children in Australia were in out-of-home care—one in 18. These are absolutely staggering numbers. That is 18,900 kids, 6,600 of whom were taken here in New South Wales. In Australia, 40 per cent of the kids in out-of-home care are Indigenous, yet Indigenous people are only 3.3 per cent of the population.

Professor Megan Davis' independent review into Aboriginal children and young people in out-of-home care in New South Wales sought to look into the reasons why so many Aboriginal kids are still being taken from their families. The Government takes some credit for commissioning the review. The Family is Culture final report was released in 2019. I urge every member to read the review report because it has some critical answers to how we can stop what we are apologising for from happening again. The report was delivered in October 2019. At the time, the Government said, "Maybe we'll look at introducing reforms in 2024." So my former colleague in the other place—now Senator-elect—Mr David Shoebridge introduced those reforms in the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Amendment (Family is Culture Review) Bill 2022. The bill passed the upper House—great work. The report was commissioned by the Government and released in 2019. Its findings have the support of a huge range of Indigenous organisations, who are saying, "Hear our cry to stop taking our children", and yet when it came to the lower House, there was no support from Labor or from the Government for the bill.

Members of this House are talking big about how concerned they are about the Stolen Generations. There is an independent report written in 2019 that puts forward clear and—let's face it—non-controversial solutions, but we cannot get the mechanisms of this place to make it happen. It is incredibly disappointing because First Nations children are still being taken from their families, their culture, their communities and their country. There have been a lot of empty promises and upset voices in this Chamber, but that report is absolutely critical. The Aboriginal Legal Service and a broad range of people in our communities are saying, "Bring these recommendations into Parliament and get it done", yet it is not happening. The Government is now saying, "We will think about doing something this year—or maybe next year we will have a look at it." It is incredibly disappointing.

I acknowledge the remarkable work that has been done by Indigenous organisations to build up and strengthen their mob. I recognise the Aboriginal Legal Service, Aboriginal Medical Service, Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-op, First Nations Response, Glebe Youth Service, Yabun, and Koori Radio. These are the types of organisations in my community, and the places where people in my community live and meet, which work with Indigenous Australians and do such important work. We have not truly come to terms with Australia's violent colonial history. We are yet to have the truth about genocide of First Nations people accepted. We do not have a treaty that recognises First Nations peoples' histories and prior occupation of this land, and that sovereignty was never ceded. We must recognise that we can do something. We cannot just say, "Something should happen." We can do something. Every member of this Parliament needs to go to their party leader and say, "Let's get the Family is Culture bill through." Let us get the review recommendations adopted. We can do something right now, instead of just saying how something needs to happen in the future.

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (11:28): I contribute to the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology to the Stolen Generations. Firstly, I acknowledge Uncle James Michael "Widdy" Welsh for his incredible, moving speech given in this place yesterday about his traumatic experience as a member of the Stolen Generations, specifically his harrowing experience as a young boy at the Kinchela Boys Home. I acknowledge Aunty Lorraine Peeters and Uncle Richard Dawes, chair of the NSW/ACT Stolen Generations Council, for their powerful words in speaking to the past traumas they and their families and communities have endured as members of the Stolen Generations. On 18 June 1997 former New South Wales Premier Bob Carr,

who was in the Chamber yesterday, gave the first apology in any Parliament in Australia, in response to the national inquiry into the Stolen Generations. In his address to Parliament, the then Premier said:

... the meaning of reconciliation, the purpose of our apology today, the lessons we take from this report, our acceptance of its hard truths, our determination to make amends, all these things can best be understood and fully realised as part of a great national act of bringing us all home. The path home for all Australians lies through the achievement of justice, equality and respect for the Aboriginal people ...

While the overwhelming, deep pain and hurt caused by previous Australian government policies requiring the forced removal of Aboriginal children and their subsequent assimilation can never be undone by symbolic words and gestures, it was the first step on a path to healing for so many families blighted by such traumatic past injustices. We must never obscure the hard truths of such catastrophic injustices. The forced removals of children numbered in the thousands and were carried out by governments, churches and welfare bodies. These children, many young babies, were adopted, fostered out and/or left in terrible states of neglect in hellish institutions.

It is estimated by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies that anywhere from one in 10 to one in three children were affected, and the removal of children broke important cultural, spiritual and family ties which has left a lasting and intergenerational impact on the lives and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As noted yesterday by the New South Wales Labor leader, Chris Minns, 25 years ago Nancy de Vries gave voice to her story of how, at only 14 months old, she was removed from her mother before being moved a shocking 22 times before the age of 18. Nancy's story is heartbreaking but one that should never be forgotten.

In light of Bob Carr being the first Australian parliamentarian to deliver an apology to the Stolen Generations, I will now reflect on Prime Minister Rudd's apology to the Stolen Generations, delivered on 13 February 2008. My personal experience on the day that Prime Minister Rudd gave his apology was one of deep sadness. But it also provided me with a profound sense of togetherness, as at that time, in my capacity as then mayor of Bankstown, I had assembled a group of Aboriginal Elders from my local community to watch the apology in our council chamber as it was broadcast live from Parliament House in Canberra. I will never forget the tears that streamed down the faces of the many aunties and uncles who were present in that chamber as Prime Minister Kevin Rudd uttered those transformative words that set this great country and all of its people on the path towards healing:

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry.

I myself addressed the long-lasting effects of the deep trauma endured by the Stolen Generations in my former capacity as the shadow Minister for Family and Community Services when I spoke in this place for more than 6½ hours against the then Minister's draconian policies that prevented separated families from reuniting, under changes made to the New South Wales guardianship laws. I had severe reservations about the law being passed, and I know a number of my colleagues and members in this House did too. It was pushed through in the dying days of that Government, at the end of 2018, and it was disturbing to see the House put these arbitrary time frames around reuniting families, where guardianship orders would override families being able to be brought together. It is extraordinary that that was passed in this House at the end of 2018 and yet people are saying sorry now. There is so much work to be done. There is more that needs to be done for our Aboriginal communities in Australia, and we can start by reflecting on some of the laws we have passed in this House in recent years.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (11:34): I make a contribution to the commemoration of the apology of some 25 years ago. Jingi Walla! That is Bundjalung for "welcome". I come from the land of the Bundjalung nation and the Minjungbal people, and I pay my respects to them. I was born in Bowraville, which is up near Nambucca Heads. My father was a schoolteacher. As I grew up as a young fella in the town, a lot of my friends were Indigenous, and we got on extraordinarily well. I always remember as a young fella coming to school one day and finding out that a couple of my friends were taken away from their families. As a seven or eight year old, it was pretty hard to understand that the fellas I played with were no longer there. Obviously, no answers were given; they were just no longer there. I can relate to the anguish and the concern that those people would have gone through because, as a young kid, I went through a little bit of that. I lost some of my best friends. Years later, I made contact with a couple of them. They were moved around and moved around. It is very sad.

Up in the Tweed we have a land council with Uncle Des Williams, Leweena Williams, Auntie Jackie, Auntie Desiree and my good friend Uncle Vic. We have come a long way from there, and we still have a long way to go. One of the unusual things we have been able to do there has to do with the Fingal headland, which is very unique. In the Dreamtime, it is the green turtle and the echidna. It was eroding badly and it was very difficult to repair it because it is very sacred land. But with the help of Melinda Pavey, the then Crown lands Minister—thank you, Mel—and of Crown Lands itself, we appointed the land council as the manager of the land. It has appointed three Indigenous rangers, and guess what? The headland is repaired, to the benefit of all the people there.

The Tweed is very special. We have Mount Warning, as some people refer to it. Our Indigenous brothers and sisters call it Wollumbin, which has a few definitions, from "cloud catcher" to "great warrior". I was very touched on Anzac Day; I am sure the Minister at the table was as well. I have often sat through Anzac Day services and heard the New Zealand national anthem sung half in Maori and half in English. This time, at Twin Towns Services Club, our national anthem was sung half in Bundjalung and the rest in English. I have a recording of it. Not many people made a recording of it. I found it to be one of the most moving ceremonies that I have ever been privileged to see.

I was a member of this Parliament at the same time as the Hon. Linda Burney. I remember discussing Bowraville and a number of other issues with her. One of the other things the Tweed is famous for is Ukerebagh Island. The Minjungbal cultural museum and some of the original bora rings are there. It was also the place where Neville Bonner—and I note that the Minister made reference to Neville Bonner. Our first Indigenous senator was actually—

Mr David Elliott: Liberal.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST: —born there, and was a Liberal. I acknowledge that interjection. We have a proud culture. We also have a shameful culture, in a way. We were the last bastion of blackbirding, when a lot of South Sea islanders were brought over here for the harvesting of the sugar cane. Queensland introduced the White Australia policy and started to return those islanders, after many years here, to their homelands. A lot of them ran across the border and lived within my electorate. We also have the South Sea islanders association. They are a very proud people and a very important people. In fact, we are building a new hospital at the moment and we are assembling walls that they made out of stones. The stones would blunt the cane knives in the paddocks, so they used them to make walls.

I am proud to be from Bundjalung country, but I am also really proud to come from Bowraville. I am very saddened every time I think of my early days and my young friends being forcibly removed. I was a member of a committee inquiry into juvenile justice, as well as the member for Newtown and a few other members. It was heartbreaking to go to the facilities at Wagga Wagga, Reiby and Dubbo and to see the young Indigenous people there. I think we can do a lot more, and I am 100 per cent behind it.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (11:39): I contribute to debate on the motion commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology to the Stolen Generations. I acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, who are the traditional custodians of the land on which this Parliament sits, and pay my respects to their Elders past and present. I also acknowledge the Dharug people, on whose traditional lands the residents of my electorate live. For over 60 years, between 1910 and 1970, between one in 10 and one in three Indigenous children were forcibly taken from their families and communities across the nation. That policy, which allowed the forcible removal of children from families across our State, was debated and affirmed here in this Chamber. For 50 years it was administered by the New South Wales Aborigines Protection Board. In this House on 18 June 1997 the then Premier of New South Wales, Bob Carr, formally apologised to Aboriginal people for the separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families and communities. He said:

... the meaning of reconciliation, the purpose of our apology today, the lessons we take from this report, our acceptance of its hard truths, our determination to make amends, all these things can best be understood and fully realised as part of a great national act of bringing us all home. The path home for all Australians lies through the achievement of justice, equality and respect for the Aboriginal people of Australia.

Yesterday I met Wongaibon man Wayne Fazldeen, who is a member of the Stolen Generations, who lives in Granville. He gave evidence to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Wayne told me that he was taken from his mother at age two and placed into foster care. The day after his second birthday, he was brought before the courts in Cobar and "charged" with being a neglected child. Two of his brothers and a sister were also taken away. To SBS News, he said:

"Throughout my childhood I used to ask myself, 'why am I here?'"

...

"With my foster mother, I never really quite understood why she would pretend, or somebody could pretend, 'yes, I will take this child and raise him as my own', however they do the opposite."

...

"My foster mother was a cruel woman who regularly bashed me and never gave me any love or affection," he told the commission. "I felt like the house slave; the whipping boy."

It was years before he was told about his past and reconnected with his family. I thank Wayne for sharing his story. I also thank the thousands of others for telling their similar stories. Wayne said he was taught that Aboriginal people were dirty and that the only Indigenous people he knew of were the ones that he saw on the television. We cannot reverse history, but we can tell the truth about it. Saying sorry for the mistakes of the past is important.

Wayne received a hand-delivered and unreserved apology from the Department of Family and Community Services for the abuse he suffered whilst in State care. To SBS News, he said:

"It's a very important piece of paper to me. It's more important than money to me," ... "Money's nothing. That apology is the one."

In my part of Sydney, the Parramatta Girls Home—which operated under various names from 1887 until 1975—was one of the most notorious child welfare and juvenile justice institutions run by the New South Wales Government. Up to 30,000 girls passed through its doors, making it a significant site of women's incarceration and experience. Girls could be moved to Parramatta because their foster placements failed or because they had problems in other institutions, such as those run by the Aborigines Protection Board. At the turn of the century, about 4 per cent of girls who were committed were recorded as being part of Aboriginal communities.

Former residents told the royal commission that they had teeth forcibly removed as punishment. Girls were stripped naked and sent to isolation cells, where many reported they were sexually and physically abused by staff members. It was not until the end of 1974 that the institution was officially closed. Today there is much to celebrate, but there is still much more to do. The Uluru Statement from the Heart is important for many reasons. A constitutional convention in May 2017 brought together over 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders. The resulting Uluru Statement from the Heart states:

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs.

...

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

As the next step, it is important that we commit to the Uluru Statement from the Heart. I urge all members to support that, as we have supported the apology.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (11:44): I speak in debate on this motion commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of this Parliament's apology to the Stolen Generations, which was given in the New South Wales Parliament on 18 June 1997. I acknowledge that we are gathered on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging. I acknowledge the survivors, families and friends of the Stolen Generations who have been present with us during this debate. In particular, I acknowledge the contributions of Uncle Michael, Auntie Lorraine and Uncle Richard for sharing their stories and their truth with us in this Chamber. On behalf of the people of Newtown and as a representative of The Greens, I also offer an apology to the Stolen Generations for the wrongs and trauma inflicted and the harm perpetrated by this State. Let us be clear that this is not just about the past; it is still happening today. In her address to this Parliament prior to this motion, Auntie Lorraine said:

... our children are still being taken. Our women and men and young people are still being incarcerated ...

She urged the Government:

Stop removing our children. You are just recycling the trauma... We need to break the cycle ...

She continued:

... please listen to us, hear us and take action.

In addressing us 25 years on from the apology, Uncle Michael asked us to "act with urgency" in relation to the ongoing incarceration and removal from family. We need to heed those calls. Another 25 years cannot pass. Uncle Richard made it clear that changes must be made to the reparations scheme, which, through a cruel technicality, compensates only those stolen by one branch of the bureaucracy and not by others. The New South Wales Government has unreservedly apologised and acknowledged the crimes committed by successive Australian governments in removing generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families and communities in New South Wales and the resulting profound grief and loss.

The apology came shortly after the release of the devastating Bringing Them Home report, which documented the testimonies of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people about the impacts of the horrific circumstances they faced as members of the Stolen Generations. We know that the removal and abuse of Aboriginal children has and continues to have incalculable impacts on the lives of so many and that the harm caused has resonated in subsequent generations on children, grandchildren and whole communities. That is why, after all this shocking evidence, the personal testimonies, the 53 strong recommendations and the formal apologies from Prime Ministers and Premiers, the same issues still exist right now in this State.

Today many thousands of Aboriginal children are being removed from family and put into out-of-home care. Many of them are being separated from their culture and their community and are being robbed of essential parts of their identity. Many Aboriginal children are being taken into custody at an unacceptably young age. We

cannot accept that; it must be stopped. All of that is a clear violation of their human rights. It is also morally bankrupt and absolutely heartbreaking. In 2020-21 nearly 7,000 First Nations children were in out-of-home care in New South Wales. Those damning figures are taken from the 2022 Productivity Commission report, which indicates that that number represented 43 per cent of all youths in State custody. But Indigenous youth account for only 6 per cent of the New South Wales population. Some 25 years after the Bringing Them Home report, the number of Aboriginal children who are in so-called care nationally is equally disproportionate and disgraceful.

In response to the strong advocacy over years of the Grandmothers Against Removals and others, in 2016 the New South Wales Government commissioned an independent review into the high removal rates of Aboriginal children. That review was led by First Nations legal expert Professor Megan Davis. The 2019 report *Family is Culture* offered 125 recommendations and a comprehensive analysis of the failures of the New South Wales child protection system and the training, processes and policies of the Department of Communities and Justice. A bill to implement those recommendations, which was developed by my Greens colleague and former member of the other place Mr David Shoebridge and his team, sits on the *Business Paper* for consideration by this House. We must heed the urgent cries and do all we can to ensure that saying sorry means that these things are never repeated. I urge the Government and the Opposition to support the *Family is Culture* review bill so that that change can occur.

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (11:49): Yesterday the Premier moved a motion to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of this Parliament's apology to the Aboriginal people for the separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families, communities and country. Present yesterday in the public gallery were also the then Premier and the then Leader of the Opposition, showing the bipartisanship of the historic apology that was made 25 years ago. Listening to the speeches of the politicians yesterday underlined how far we have come, but listening to the stories of the survivors yesterday underlined just how far we have to go. There is much more to be done to make amends with the Stolen Generations survivors and their families. I believe it is important to reconcile the truth of our past in this country to heal the present and to create a better future for Aboriginal people.

In my electorate of Coffs Harbour, strong steps are being taken towards reconciling our past and creating a better future. One of those steps is the formation of the Gumbaynggirr Giingana Freedom School, which is the first of its kind in New South Wales. It is a bilingual school with classes taught in the Gumbaynggirr language and English. It is starting off as a primary school for kindergarten to year 2, with plans to go to year 3 and year 4 next year and a full primary school the year after that. One reason why the school is so important is that it takes such great steps towards creating a better future for Indigenous people by preserving the culture and language of the local Gumbaynggirr community. As someone who is bilingual, I understand that language is very important when it comes to culture because not every word can be translated directly. The aspects of teaching that mix language and culture are very important to the Gumbaynggirr community.

It is important to recognise that our history in Australia stretches further than when our particular ancestors might have come here. It stretches beyond the past 230 years. Australia's history is tens of thousands of years old. Reconciling such old history with the culture that was here during that time will be better for everyone here, create more harmony in our society and recognise the contributions of the Indigenous culture to our landscape and to our society. I support the motion that the Premier moved yesterday. I believe it is a very important recognition of that incredible step taken 25 years ago.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (11:52): At the outset, I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet today, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, and also the traditional custodians of the land I represent, the Awabakal people. I acknowledge and thank Uncle James Michael "Widdy" Welsh, Aunty Lorraine Peeters and Uncle Richard Dawes for graciously speaking yesterday in this House about their truth and their trauma experienced as survivors of the Stolen Generations. I pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

In 2014, as the new member for Charlestown, I began my inaugural speech by reflecting on the day of Kevin Rudd's apology to the Stolen Generations. I watched that momentous event with my father, Clive, a non-Indigenous man, who shared with me the story of his upbringing in Port Macquarie. He told me of when he was in primary school and he and local Aboriginal children played together. He told me of when he got to high school and he was told that he should not associate with his Aboriginal mates anymore. And he told me of his deep regret that he took that advice and of the part he played in the injustice faced by Aboriginal people in this country.

I occasionally hear people say, "Why apologise? I didn't have anything to do with it. It wasn't something I did." I would be surprised if any of us has not, at some time in our lives, turned a blind eye to the difficulties and challenges experienced by First Nations people. I cannot believe that anyone could truly listen to the stories of the Stolen Generations—stories of incredible injustice like those told to us here yesterday by Uncle Michael, Aunty Lorraine and Uncle Richard—and not be sorry.

I remember a First Nations boy, Paul, who was in year 6 with me at Panania Public School in 1980. I saw Paul as just a naughty kid. He was always at the door to his classroom, out in the corridor, because he had been playing up in class. He frequently got the cane. I do not know Paul's story because I never asked him, but he may well have been one of the last of the Stolen Generations. I say to Paul, if he is by chance listening to or reading these words, that I am sorry for my part in not listening to him and to his truth and for not trying to make both of our lives better by being his friend.

At this time, as we commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology offered by Bob Carr to First Nations people for the role the New South Wales Government played in their dispossession, it is important to remember the continued pain of First Nations people. It is important to remember that we still have so much work to do. It is important to remember that First Nations people still do not have equal access to educational opportunities, they still are disproportionately likely to live below the poverty line and they still face ongoing racial discrimination. It is important to remember that First Nations people still have lower life expectancies, they still have higher rates of death from preventable illness and they still have higher infant mortality and maternal mortality rates. And it is important to remember that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are vastly over-represented in our criminal justice system.

In my work as a member of the Committee on Children and Young People, I have heard testimony of the effect that ongoing parental incarceration has on those who April Long from Shine for Kids called the invisible victims of crime: the children of prisoners. The disruption from incarceration has a particular impact on Aboriginal families. The committee heard from Helen Eason of Keeping Women Out Of Prison Coalition, who has had personal experience with the criminal justice system. She spoke of the alienation and the trauma of dealing with a system that was not set up to understand her, her family, her culture or her community. Ms Eason said:

It is also about a culture that comes from a long line of trauma. We have suffered genocide for a long time.

I hope that we see some positive recommendations come out of that inquiry to assist the lives of First Nations people in the State. No apology, not Bob Carr's and not Kevin Rudd's, can heal the trauma. No apology can fix the deeply entrenched problems caused by the dispossession of First Nations people. But an apology can offer hope. It can offer a reset and a basis on which to build. An apology is not an ending; it is a beginning. It is the beginning of atonement, of healing and of reconciliation. We cannot change the past, but we can acknowledge and apologise for the wrongs and the hurt, and we can create a better future.

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (11:58): On 26 May 1997 the Bringing Them Home report was tabled in the Commonwealth Parliament. It was a moment that changed our nation forever, a moment that brought the voices of the Stolen Generations to the most powerful place in Australia, a moment that demanded that our nation be held accountable for the horrors of government policies that forcibly separated First Nations children from their families and communities, a moment that called on each of us to stop, to listen and to act. As we know, it took another 10 years for the Australian Parliament to respond to that call, with Prime Minister Kevin Rudd offering an apology on behalf of the nation on 13 February 2008. However, on 18 June 1997, mere weeks after the release of the Bringing Them Home report, then Premier Bob Carr issued an unreserved apology on behalf of the people of New South Wales to the Stolen Generations. His was the first State Government to do so. The Premier's motion of unreserved apology was a powerful act of recognition, regret and reconciliation. We mark that historic apology today.

The National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families found that between one in three and one in 10 Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families and communities between 1910 and 1970. Not one Indigenous family has escaped the effects of removal, with most families affected over multiple generations. The inquiry found that Indigenous children removed from their families were discouraged from contacting their families or communities and were taught to reject their Aboriginality. The institutions housing children were rudimentary and harsh. Education was basic. Children were forced to work and excessive punishments were common. One in five who were fostered and one in 10 who were institutionalised reported being sexually abused. Removed children were twice as likely to have been arrested more than once and three times more likely to have been incarcerated. It is hard to read these findings and to understand how Australian political leaders could not have apologised. However, if saying sorry means not doing it again, we have to really ask ourselves how far have we come and what did those words mean?

The Family Matters Report 2021 reveals that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children continue to be removed from their families at alarming rates. On 30 June 2021 there were 21,523 Indigenous children in out-of-home care. Indigenous children are 10 times more likely to be in out-of-home care than non-Indigenous children. Every child deserves to be safe and to thrive in their homes. As a community, we have a shared responsibility to protect the most vulnerable amongst us from harm. But the data reveals a terrible truth, and that is that we have a long way to go before the words of apology issued in this Chamber in 1997 and in the Australian House of Representatives in 2008 have effect and meaning. "Sorry" has to mean not doing it again.

We have a new opportunity to walk together towards reconciliation and respect and to show that the act of apology is just the beginning. The Uluru Statement from the Heart is described as an invitation from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to "walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future". It represents an overwhelming consensus of First Nations people calling for a voice to Parliament and the establishment of a Makarrata Commission. The statement is a call for voice, treaty, truth—a clear pathway to self-determination that accords with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The statement calls for the Australian people to enshrine a First Nations voice in the Australian Constitution, enabling First Nations people to provide advice to Parliament on issues, policies and projects that impact their lives.

With the election of an Albanese Labor Government, we have a renewed opportunity to deliver the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full. There is a sense of optimism and hope that we can turn a new chapter and realise the full potential of reconciliation through truth-telling, justice and self-determination. I humbly thank the extraordinary First Nations people who told their stories from the floor of this Parliament this week. I also thank the New South Wales Government for taking the time to mark the historic apology issued by the former Premier Bob Carr back in 1997. As we consider the weight and importance of those words from a quarter of a century ago, let us not forget that their resonance comes from taking action to eliminate discrimination against First Nations people. The resonance of the apology made here in 1997 comes from recommitting to justice and reconciliation and lending our weight as a Parliament to delivering the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full.

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (12:03): I support the motion before the House moved by the Premier. I was a member of this place when the House adopted the motion of apology to the Stolen Generation 25 years ago. It was moved by then Premier Carr, with bipartisan support. In February 2008 I was a State Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and present in the gallery of the House of Representatives Chamber to hear the apology delivered, at last, by then Prime Minister Rudd. As a member of this place, I was in this Chamber to hear a member of the Stolen Generations, Nancy de Vries, address the Legislative Assembly from the floor of the Chamber. Auntie Nancy was a constituent of mine, living in Heckenberg at that time.

She was not the only member of the Stolen Generations living in Liverpool. One other in particular I would like to acknowledge was Kate Nicholas. Kate survived—and "survive" is the correct word—the Cootamundra Domestic Training Home for Aboriginal Girls, known more simply as the Cootamundra Girls Home. She also survived the equally horrific Parramatta Girls Home. She gave evidence to the Senate inquiry and was a good mate of mine. Nancy told the Parliament and Kate told me that none of us can really comprehend the life of a child taken from family, parents and culture. But we must acknowledge the history. After the Bringing Them Home report, we have no excuses not to know what happened and not to tell the truth about our history. It is not about prosecuting a black armband view of history. It is about truth-telling—telling the truth about children being stolen, about massacres in the killing times, about taking away land. These are not mere items of history. The Uluru Statement from the Heart has truth-telling as one of its central elements. It is not mere history. It is a present demand, and it is essential for the future of this land.

The pain and trauma arising from children being stolen has not somehow dissipated or disappeared. It is still very real. Since the release of Bringing Them Home, there have been annual Sorry Day events commemorated in many parts of Australia, including in Liverpool. The most recent Liverpool Sorry Day event was on Thursday 26 May at the Liverpool Regional Museum. It was an event attended by many local community members, with cultural displays and a welcome to country by a representative of Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council. The horror of the removal of children is well caught in the words of Peter Read. In his paper "The Stolen Generations", he wrote, and I quote from a 2010 edition of it, to which I contributed a foreword:

White people have never been able to leave Aborigines alone. Children particularly have suffered. Missionaries, teachers, government officials have believed that the best way to make black people behave like white people was to get hold of the children who had not yet learned Aboriginal life ways. They thought that children's minds were like a kind of blackboard on which the European secrets could be written.

He wrote about the stealing of children:

It is the story of the attempt to 'breed out' the Aboriginal race. It is the story of attempted genocide.

The number of children stolen can never be precisely known. At best, estimates can be made. Certainly the numbers are in the thousands. Peter Read's estimate in 2006 was that between 1885 and 1969 in New South Wales alone the number exceeded 6,000. The current level of First Nations children in out-of-home care is still scandalously high. Removing children has not stopped. Forty-one per cent of all children in Australia in out-of-home care are First Nations children. Likewise, over-representations of First Nations people in the criminal justice system continues. Health outcomes are worse for First Nations people than for other Australians. Australia can never be what we should be whilst this level of disadvantage continues. A number of years ago an Elder said to me that until Aboriginal disadvantage is removed, the bones of this country will never be right. That has always

struck me as a very powerful image. I conclude with some other powerful words, famously spoken in Redfern in 1992 by Paul Keating:

Isn't it reasonable to say that if we can build a prosperous and remarkably harmonious multicultural society in Australia, surely we can find just solutions to the problems which beset the first Australians—the people to whom the most injustice has been done.

And, as I say, the starting point might be to recognise that the problem starts with us non-Aboriginal Australians.

It begins ... with that act of recognition.

Recognition that it was we who did the dispossessing.

We took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of life.

We brought the diseases. The alcohol.

...

We practised discrimination and exclusion.

It was our ignorance and our prejudice.

And our failure to imagine these things being done to us.

With some noble exceptions, we failed to make the most basic human response and enter into their hearts and minds.

We failed to ask—how would I feel if this were done to me?

As a consequence, we failed to see what we were doing degraded all of us.

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (12:08): I support the Premier's motion commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology by this House for the Stolen Generation in 1997, and I congratulate and thank those involved in the events of yesterday. In particular, I thank Uncle Michael, Uncle Richard and Auntie Lorraine for their testimony in this House. The motion and the events surrounding it are important and timely, not to congratulate ourselves and slap each other on the back but because we need, firstly, to keep in mind, now more than ever, the events and circumstances over almost a century—certainly 70 years—that led to the Stolen Generation; and, secondly, to recognise that this remains an important issue today. There is work still to be done.

I speak to the first point, keeping in mind what has happened. Yesterday when the Leader of the Opposition spoke, he noted that the Holman Government in 1915 passed the legislation that created the powers of the Aborigines Protection Board. My grandfather was an ALP member, elected in 1930. He was a member of the House at that time. That is a very salutary reminder to me that we are all implicated in this. I grew up, as many of us did, in a family that thought the principles of that legislation—the underlying thoughts in it—were correct. How wrong we were, and yet how blind we were. It is a deep reminder that with power and authority goes a need to recognise responsibility, humility and care, and to always keep in mind that we need to build a just society for all and be mindful of those who our legislation and workings affect.

I thank all of the Aboriginal leaders and the Aboriginal people in my community who have helped me understand over the years just what they have been through, and what the implications of the Stolen Generation have been, in particular. I note especially Aunty Isabel Reid, a senior Aboriginal leader in Wagga Wagga, who is a member of the Stolen Generation and a former resident of the Cootamundra Girls Home. I note and thank Aunty Isabel for her courage in speaking out—which cannot be easy—but also for her grace, kindness and warmth, and her forgiveness and respect. When I hear and read the reports of what has happened and the ongoing suffering of so many, I am frankly amazed that we are treated with such grace and kindness by members of the Stolen Generation and members of the Aboriginal community. I thank them for their understanding and for allowing us to try to correct those wrongs. I make it very clear that I am sorry, and I apologise for what has happened and any part that I have played in it.

That brings me to the second reason it is important that we discuss this issue: There is work still to be done. Many members have commented on this, and I back up those requests. First of all, in terms of making reparations, although some of the compensation applies to people taken by the Aborigines Protection Board, clearly there are others who have missed out: people affected by welfare and police. That should be rectified. That comes to another related point, which is that we still have a Stolen Generation. Some 43 per cent of people in out-of-home care are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders. That is an extraordinary statistic. They are 11 times more likely to be in out-of-home care. That is now—today. Our system is still producing that outcome 25 years after an apology by this Parliament. That must make us think. I think there are people in the system who would acknowledge that something needs to be done. They would acknowledge the correctness of the apology. They would think they are doing the right thing, yet we have a system in which 43 per cent of people in out-of-home care are from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.

I know; I hear the stories from people in the electorate of young men and women cycling through different custody arrangements, winding up with mental health conditions not treated or, worse, winding up in the custodial

system. We have a system that thinks we are doing this to protect them. It should make us reflect deeply on this. That is why I was very happy to sponsor the Family is Culture review bill. I acknowledge the work of David Shoebridge and The Greens in developing that legislation. It is an important response to the Megan Davis review—to address the issue of out-of-home care and take the legislative action necessary to bring that to a conclusion. I come back to the underlying point I make today—that we think we have done with this in terms of an apology. We have not done with it. We still have a system that is perpetuating many of the circumstances that led to the original Stolen Generation. That should give us cause to think deeply and reflect. On that basis, I am very sorry.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (12:13): I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we stand today. We are on Gadigal land of the Eora nation. This was and always will be Aboriginal land. I am very lucky that the electorate of Coogee is made up not only of Gadigal land but also of Bidjigal land. I thank the Elders and Indigenous owners for their custodianship and care for this land and its seas for tens of thousands of years. This is stolen land; it was never ceded. I acknowledge the importance in establishing treaty or treaties with First Nation peoples in New South Wales as part of our steps towards true reconciliation. I acknowledge the survivors of the Stolen Generation who were here yesterday, particularly those who shared their stories.

We are commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology to the Stolen Generation that was given by the Hon. Bob Carr when he was Premier. I acknowledge his leadership in this space and thank him. It was an unreserved apology that it was never a right or okay to forcibly remove and steal children from their loving families based on race. This was the first response by an Australian State Government to the Bringing Them Home report, which has revealed the magnitude of the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families in the twentieth century. The report was an important step towards truth-telling and acknowledging Australia's very dark and shameful history. It is a history that we cannot shy away from. If we want to acknowledge the past and move on, we should deal with it head on. If we are to right the wrongs of the past, we must face it head on. It is a past that continues to inflict intergenerational trauma on Indigenous Australians.

While the apology was an important step in acknowledging the pain and intergenerational trauma inflicted and forced upon Indigenous Australians by consecutive white Australian governments, let us be very, very clear that Aboriginal children today continue to be forcibly removed from their families. Forty-three per cent of children who are in out-of-home care are Indigenous. The gap that exists between Indigenous Australians and non-Indigenous Australians continues today, and in some cases it is growing. Indigenous child mortality rates are twice that of non-Indigenous children. The average Aboriginal life expectancy is almost 10 years less than non-Aboriginal Australians. Indigenous Australians are still far more likely to be jailed or die by suicide. This is not okay. So much more needs to be done.

In New South Wales we must stop removing Indigenous Australian children from their families and communities. We must properly fund and support survivor-led initiatives, rather than imposing further government-led programs. We must listen to the communities. We must properly fund and support Walama and Koori courts, and involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders in sentencing decisions. We know that this works and reduces recidivism. Federally, the next step is the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the establishment of a First Nation voice enshrined in the Constitution. I am thankful that the Albanese Government has made that one of the first and primary items on its agenda. Thank you.

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (12:17): I make a contribution to debate on the motion regarding the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology to the Stolen Generation. I also acknowledge that I make this contribution on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. I say proudly that I represent a community that is the junction point of three different Aboriginal nations: the Awabakal to the east, the Darkinjung to the south, and the Wonnarua through the centre and up to the west of the Cessnock electorate. Some people say that recognition statements at the start of speeches are woke. There are many commentators who say that it is unimportant and insignificant and is somehow pleading to the bleeding hearts of the left. These important recognitions are pleading for forgiveness from the Indigenous people whose country was essentially invaded 230 years ago. Invasion is another woke issue.

I refer members to the many Australians who have walked the Kokoda Trail and other recognition of wartime interactions, whether it be in Sydney Harbour, Newcastle Harbour or Darwin or off the coast of Queensland. They were foreign invading forces coming to this country. At the time the people in this country—by then well and truly run and ruled by white European settlers and colonisers—considered them to be invaders. Imagine Indigenous people seeing those boats sail in 230 years ago and those white people from the other side of the world settling. I do not know how we can consider that anything other than an invasion. But plenty of commentators would consider that a woke issue. Certainly in 2022, if a foreign nation sailed ships into any of our harbours and established a footprint and started to treat those of us already here cruelly or committed potential genocide, I think we would call that an invasion. But, again, some commentators would call that a woke issue.

Yesterday in this Chamber a number of Indigenous Elders who were directly affected stolen children made powerful, moving speeches. "Stolen" is a very important word and should not to be undermined or underplayed. They told stories about how they were literally plucked from the streets while they were walking home or around a reserve. They were literally kidnapped, just taken off the streets and to a home—a different place to stay. I say a "home", but I do not think it was being described yesterday as a home. It was more of a camp or an internment. They were taken away from their families. There was no explanation. The laws at that time allowed that to happen.

I am a father of four children. I cannot for one second imagine what it would be like for one or three or four of my kids to go out one day and never come home and for the government of this land to say, "We did that and that is okay." I would be in absolute despair. I would fear for my children and the life they would have. I like to think they live a lovely life with a roof over their heads, food on the table and loving parents—we are doing our best; we are not perfect—but I wonder what it would be like if they were just plucked off the streets, taken somewhere separate from each other and forced to stay until they were into their teens or early adult life.

That is stolen. It is kidnapped and abducted. In this world, in this place and in this country today, it is against the law. But there was a time when it was against the law for white or European children but not for our Indigenous people, who were here for 50,000 years before we were. What does 50,000 years mean? Think about a one-metre ruler. Break it down into all the millimetres along it. There are 1,000 of them. Go to the very last millimetre at the very end of that one-metre ruler—we have all seen them—and mark that point. That last one millimetre is how long white Europeans have been here on the journey of this country and the journey of people occupying this country. For the other 99.9 centimetres, only the wonderful Indigenous people cared for this beautiful country.

I am proud that Labor gave the apology in New South Wales, that it gave the apology at the Federal Government level, that the recently elected Federal Labor Government is committed to the Uluru Statement from the Heart, an Indigenous voice to government, and that a future Labor government in this State is committed to treaty. I am proud that just about every member of the Labor caucus was out the front of Parliament yesterday for the smoking ceremony—as were half of the Coalition Government MPs. I am proud of them as well. We have to be leaders in this space. We have to take the entire community on a journey, lest they call this issue woke. Leadership is the responsibility of every person in this House, not just some of us. There is so much more to do.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (12:23): Some 25 years ago one of my predecessors as member for Wollongong, the late Colin Markham, who was the then Parliamentary Secretary for Aboriginal Affairs, stood in this place and concluded his contribution to the apology to the Stolen Generations as follows:

Counselling is about people being able to tell their stories unfettered. I shall conclude my remarks by referring to the Link-Up report to the human rights commission. I recommend that everyone obtain a copy of this report because it is a great book; it tells some tragic stories, and it has been one of the driving forces in bringing the children home. I recite a poem entitled Coming home, which was written by Bill Hennessy in January:

Finding our people
and coming home
Is like lighting a fire
and catching the smoke.

So much is hidden
living memory our fire
has been silently smothered
by indifference and time.

We stand in the ashes
and sift through the dust
Searching for traces
of what we have lost.

I say to all indigenous Australians: I am very sorry for what happened in the past and I will do whatever I can to make the future better for all of us.

Colin was a champion of Indigenous rights who continually campaigned for action long after he left this place. Yesterday we heard that that journey is long from over. We heard of the pain, torment and trauma that still afflicts the survivors of the Stolen Generations and their families. We were reminded that more needs to be done. More must be done because it is the morally right thing to do. I note the commitment of the NSW Labor Leader in apologising for the role our party played in past crimes against Indigenous communities and in reaffirming that NSW Labor will continue to work with Indigenous communities towards a treaty.

I also acknowledge the commitment by the Federal Labor Government to implementing the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full and to work to progress a referendum to constitutionally enshrine a voice to Parliament in the Australian Constitution as a matter of urgency. While healing can begin with an apology, it must flow through to real and meaningful changes in the lives of Indigenous Australians. In the spirit of the many steps

on the journey to reconciliation, mid-last week the Indigenous flag finally flew permanently at the Wollongong Police Station—by no means an end to the journey of reconciliation but certainly another important step along the path. The local police district added to the significance of flying the Indigenous flag by commissioning an Indigenous artwork for the station foyer and naming a conference room Yulunga Ngurang, or "meeting place".

I understand that only around 30 police stations in New South Wales fly the Indigenous flag. All should already be flying one, in my view. It should not have taken this long to take such a small but important symbolic step. At the official ceremony we heard from Aunty Lindy Lawler, a survivor of the Stolen Generations. Aunty Lindy and her twin sister were removed by authorities when they were six months old. They were not reunited with their family until a generation later when they were 18. I think about those lost years. In his moving Redfern speech in December 1992, former Prime Minister Paul Keating said:

... we cannot confidently say that we have succeeded as we would like to have succeeded if we have not managed to extend opportunity and care, dignity and hope to the Indigenous people of Australia ...

This year marks some significant anniversaries on our journey to build a genuinely inclusive nation. Yesterday we marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology of this Parliament to the Stolen Generations—the first Parliament in the nation to do so. Last week we paid respects to the thirtieth anniversary of the High Court's seminal Mabo decision that set aside the myth—the lie—that no-one had settled this ancient land before Europeans came along. It is also the thirtieth anniversary of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, a shameful compilation of tragedy that still leaves outstanding business for our governments and parliaments to address.

These are reminders of where we have come from as a society but, equally, powerful reminders that we have not done nearly enough. The job remains unfinished. Indigenous Australians still experience lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality, lower high school and tertiary educational attainment, and poorer health outcomes. The Hon. Adam Searle, the chair of the Legislative Council's Select Committee on the High Level of First Nations People in Custody and Oversight and Review of Deaths in Custody, noted in his opening comments in the committee's report:

... sadly, we are no closer to addressing the over-representation of First Nations people in the criminal justice system.

Yesterday we heard three powerful speeches that spoke to the personal and intergenerational trauma that past policies and governments of this place and others have wrought on people and that recognised that, while first steps have been taken, there are still so many more to take. Reports like *Bringing Them Home* should not be left gathering dust; they must be acted upon. In another quarter of a century another Parliament will sit in the Chamber and may not have the opportunity to see and hear firsthand from Stolen Generations survivors. But I sincerely do hope that those future parliamentarians can say that the work of this Parliament and of the ones that followed it truly created a land of the fair go for Australians; that we passed the most basic of moral tests; and that we acknowledged and said a heartfelt "sorry"—an expression of deep regret—and acted to make right historic injustice and ill-treatment. Today I add my apology to Indigenous Australians and, like my predecessor the wonderful Colin Markham, commit myself to doing whatever I can to make the future better for all of us.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (12:28): Yesterday the New South Wales Parliament commemorated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the New South Wales Government's apology to the Stolen Generations. What a heartfelt day that was for each and every one of us in this place. On 18 June 1997 the Hon. Bob Carr, then Premier of New South Wales, moved a motion for the New South Wales Legislative Assembly to issue an unreserved apology. It received unanimous support. That was the first response by an Australian State government to the *Bringing Them Home* report, which had revealed the magnitude of the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families in the twentieth century. As a mother, I cannot even begin to imagine how those mothers felt to have their babies just ripped away from them because they were the wrong colour.

The Australian Capital Territory Government had moved its apology a day previously, on 17 June 1997. The New South Wales Department of Communities and Justice issued a further apology following an apology from the then Prime Minister, the Hon. Kevin Rudd, to the Stolen Generations on behalf of the Australian Government on 13 February 2008. Yesterday's special event, "After sorry", brings together more than 50 Stolen Generations survivors and their supporters and families, who have been acknowledged in both Houses of Parliament and have shared with us their personal stories during this ceremonial proceeding to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the New South Wales Government's apology to the Stolen Generations.

Between 1995 and 1997, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission conducted a major inquiry into the historical practice of forcibly removing Indigenous children from their families and the effects of that removal. The result, the *Bringing Them Home* report, was subsequently delivered on 26 May 1997. The inquiry heard testimony from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, government agencies, churches and individual

community members. It investigated forced removal policies, laws and practices. The report included 54 recommendations to address the impacts of the forced removal policies and the ongoing trauma experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We saw that in this place yesterday when we listened to those brave people who told us their stories. It further recommended issuing a national apology, paying reparations and improving services for survivors of the Stolen Generations. The release of that report was a landmark moment in our nation's history.

The first National Sorry Day was held on 26 May 1988 to commemorate the tabling of the Bringing Them Home report in the Commonwealth Parliament. It has been held each year since, on the same date, to remember and acknowledge those who were forcibly removed from their families and communities. Each year on 26 May, we as a nation remember and acknowledge the mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were forcibly removed from their families and their communities, which we now know as the Stolen Generations. It is an opportunity to acknowledge the strength of the Stolen Generations survivors and reflect on how we can all play a part in the healing process.

I stand before the House today proud of Labor's commitment to the First Nations people and the work of my party that continues to elevate First Nations voices, to remove the barriers to full participation in our national life and to close the gap in social outcomes that is holding people back. Labor is absolutely 100 per cent committed to that. The recent election of Anthony Albanese as Australia's thirty-first Prime Minister has only reinforced Labor's commitment to prioritise First Nations policy, starting with the commitment to implementing the Uluru Statement from the Heart in full. We are the only political party that has committed to implementing the Uluru Statement in full. The Statement from the Heart was delivered in 2017 and was developed by delegates at the First Nations National Constitutional Convention.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart was the ultimate act of generosity—the offer of a genuine partnership between Aboriginal people and all Australians, and a real chance to create a reconciled Australia. This statement seeks structural reform and constitutional change based on three things: voice, treaty and truth. I stand here before you today in that spirit and give that my 100 per cent support.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (12:33): Aboriginal people are our First Nations people, and I pay my respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. I recognise that Aboriginal people are the first peoples of Australia, having been here for thousands of years prior to colonisation. On 18 June we recognise the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology delivered by the Hon. Bob Carr in this place in 1997, acknowledging the systematic separation of generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their parents, families and communities. In the 1900s thousands of Indigenous children were taken away from their families by the Australian Government, which put them into missions, placed them with white foster families or put them in orphanages. Whole families were torn apart in the mistaken belief that it would be better for them to be placed with non-Indigenous Australians, changing their names and stealing their identities. That action was extremely misguided and showed a total lack of understanding from the Government at that time.

Between 1997 and 1999, all State and Territory parliaments officially apologised to the Stolen Generations, their families and communities for the policies, laws and practices that had governed the forcible removal of their children. In the past, Aboriginal people have been horribly wronged, and the effects of those actions are still being felt today. Today we must commit to achieving reconciliation with our First Nations people. We have much work to do together. In my electorate of Mount Druitt, many organisations and individuals are working hard to heal the mistakes of the past—people such as Uncle Greg and Uncle Wes Marne. Uncle Wes Marne is a founding member of the Mount Druitt and Districts Reconciliation Group. Uncle Wes recently turned 100 years of age—45 of those years spent as a resident of my electorate. Uncle Wes has dedicated his time to sharing his traditional knowledge of Indigenous culture as well as his work on behalf of the Indigenous community. Uncle Wes also established Kwinnies Garden, a place where he can share his stories with the community as they listen and connect to country.

The policies of the past are a shameful blight on our history. We must take every action to ensure that we never repeat those past mistakes. I sincerely apologise to those of the Stolen Generations, to their families and to their descendants. I am truly sorry for the trauma that has been passed through the generations.

Debate interrupted.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: STANDING ORDER 131

Mr ALEX GREENWICH: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to provide for the calling on forthwith this day of the general business notice of motion 3548 – Proposed amendment to Standing Order 131.

Motion agreed to.*Standing Orders***STANDING ORDER 131****Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (12:37):** I move:

That during the current session, unless otherwise ordered, Standing Order 131 be further amended to insert a new clause:

- (10) When under Standing Order 49A the Speaker has stopped the clock during an answer in Question Time, the Member's speaking time clock shall be stopped but the overall timing clock for Question Time shall continue to run.

This technical change to the standing orders should be seen as an efficiency measure for question time. There is an anomaly that when the Speaker instructs the Clerk to stop the clock, the clock is stopped not just for the person giving their answer but also for question time itself. It is important that question time does not go beyond 75 minutes. My name is Alex Greenwich, so I support Greenwich Mean Time and do not think we should play with it. I hope this amendment takes effect very quickly and we continue our improvements to question time.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai—Minister for Skills and Training, and Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology) (12:38): This change to the standing orders is a consequence of a discussion between all the various different groups amongst the MPs within the Chamber. It is a sensible change, because the recent amendments to Standing Order 131 inserted some new provisions with regard to the absolute time for question time. The amendment that the member for Sydney is proposing works with those recent amendments. It was a great surprise to many of us to find out that the world apparently stops spinning when the Speaker stops the clock not only on a speaker's time but also on the overall time from the beginning of question time going forward. That was an absurdity, and this is a commonsense change to the standing orders to make clear what many of us already thought was the case. The Government supports the change.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (12:39): I support the proposal by the member for Sydney and his assiduous examination of the standing orders to ensure that they are precise and consistent. A short while ago the Leader of the House drew to my attention that I said something in debate on a suspension of standing orders this morning that inadvertently offended him. I certainly did not intend to do so or to say anything to the House that is inaccurate. I apologise to the Leader of the House for anything I might have said that either caused offence or may not have been as accurate as it should have been, and I will take more care in the future.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (12:40): In reply: I thank the Leader of the House and the Manager of Opposition Business. I note that we were able to make these changes. It is not about the numbers in this place; it is about the goodwill that is shared amongst colleagues. I thank the Government and the Opposition for their support.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that the motion be agreed to.**Motion agreed to.***Commemorations***STOLEN GENERATIONS APOLOGY TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY****Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (12:41): I support the motion moved by the Premier yesterday and acknowledge that I do so on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. It has been 25 years since the Bringing Them Home report was tabled in this Parliament and former Premier Bob Carr apologised unreservedly to the Aboriginal people of Australia for the systematic separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families and communities. The motion carried by this House in 1997 reads:

That this House, on behalf of the people of New South Wales—

- (1) apologises unreservedly to the Aboriginal people of Australia for the systematic separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families and communities;
- (2) acknowledges and regrets Parliament's role in enacting laws and endorsing policies of successive governments whereby profound grief and loss have been inflicted upon Aboriginal Australians;
- (3) calls upon all Australian governments to respond with compassion, understanding and justice to the report of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission entitled *Bringing them home*; and
- (4) reaffirms its commitment to the goals and processes of reconciliation in New South Wales and throughout Australia.

It was a significant step forward in the healing process for the children who were stolen from their loving families and lost their connection to family, community, land, culture and language. Next year will mark 15 years since

the national apology, yet Stolen Generations survivors, their families and their communities still face a significant burden of disadvantage. Over time we have moved to a more equal and inclusive society; however, there is much more to be done. Respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, languages, histories and cultures should be at the forefront of the minds of all Australians and an integral part of our national conversation.

This Parliament has an integral role to play in ensuring that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are not further adversely affected by laws and policy that may compound the past injustice. I acknowledge the work of Reconciliation NSW and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations on the Central Coast that work to create a more reconciled, just and equitable New South Wales for us all. As the representative of the people of The Entrance electorate, I add my apology to that embodied in the motion. I will work with all my gamarada to build a better world for all.

Debate interrupted.

Committees

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ROAD SAFETY

Reports

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The question is that the House take note of the report.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (12:44): As Deputy Chair, I speak in debate on the Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety report entitled *Mobile speed camera enforcement programs in NSW*. In November 2020 the Government announced changes to the program, including the removal of warning signs and an increase in enforcement hours. The committee's report looked at the November 2020 changes that were introduced to address recommendations made by the New South Wales Auditor-General in 2018. Transport for NSW told the committee that the changes aligned the State with similar programs in other jurisdictions and enhanced the perception that mobile speed cameras can catch speeding drivers anywhere at any time. To increase public understanding and acceptance of mobile speed cameras, the committee recommended that Transport for NSW promote the program in a public education campaign, including how it supports keeping drivers safe. The committee also recommended that an independent review of the changes be commissioned and published on the Centre for Road Safety's website.

The report goes on to make key findings and recommendations that address the public's concerns around mobile speed camera signage. In doing so, the committee took into account the November 2020 changes, as well as changes made to signage after the inquiry commenced. The committee recommended that Transport for NSW make mobile speed camera operations sufficiently overt to address key community concerns. In December 2021 the Government announced that retractable warning signs would be installed on mobile speed camera detection vehicles. All mobile speed camera detection vehicles have visible signage. Fixed advisory signs increasing community awareness of the use of mobile speed cameras have also been installed across the road network.

The committee acknowledged the Government's decision and found that the installation of this additional signage has helped to address concerns raised by the community about the mobile speed camera program. It also found that visible signage on mobile speed camera operations helps to promote community confidence and acceptance of the program. The report also includes a number of other recommendations that aim to increase understanding of the mobile speed camera program and how it makes our roads safer. For example, the committee recommended that Transport for NSW promote in education campaigns the policy criteria for the locations of mobile speed camera enforcement. It also recommended an education campaign to inform the public about how fine revenue from the program is spent on road safety initiatives through the Community Road Safety Fund.

The committee understands the need to communicate with various stakeholders when changes are made to the mobile speed camera program. For this reason, the committee recommended that Transport for NSW increase its consultation with stakeholders, including with local councils, relevant peak bodies and road safety advocates when implementing future changes. This will help to promote understanding and awareness. I thank the Chair for his insight and for guiding the work of the committee. I also thank my fellow committee members for their contributions and the committee staff for their work. I commend the report to the House.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (12:48): On behalf of the Opposition, I welcome the report by the Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety. The report emphasises the importance of overt enforcement for driver education, safety and public confidence in the mobile speed camera program. It could not be clearer that the Government's partial backdown has not worked. I speak to some key points in the report. Firstly, the report spells out how the decision by the New South Wales Government in November 2020 to remove mobile speed camera signage did not meet community expectations. To quote from the report:

The NSW Government's decision to install signage on mobile speed camera detection vehicles does not meet community expectations about making mobile speed cameras more overt. Visible signage should be used to warn drivers of the camera's presence and notify them of the posted speed limit.

The former New South Wales Minister for Roads, the Hon. Duncan Gay, explained to the committee that when rolling out extra speed cameras "you need to have the public on side" and that "mobile cameras are important" but it is also important:

... to indicate that it is ... fair ... so that we can get the community support with us ...

The report summarises the reasoning in support of overt enforcement, that is, one, it is educational and slows people down; two, it is safer; and, three, it is fairer and promotes public confidence in the program. Of the 1,400 submissions received, the majority strongly opposed the removal of speed camera signage. The concerns could be broken down into two main camps: concerns about the safety impacts of removing signage and concerns about revenue raising. The opposition to covert operations also aligns with the NRMA's understanding of the public's view. Secondly, I want to draw attention to where the report deals with the introduction of retractable signs—a move which has not adequately dealt with the lack of public support for the program. The report states:

...the Committee is also concerned that these signs do not make operations sufficiently overt so as to address key community concerns around the removal of advance warning signs. It notes the educational value of the advance warning signs which, unlike the retractable signs being installed on detection vehicles, included the speed limit. It also queries whether the changes increase the visibility of operations to the extent that safety concerns including erratic braking behaviour will be avoided. If not, the Committee considers there is a risk that public cynicism towards the mobile speed camera program, fuelled by the November 2020 changes, will continue.

It is clear that the Government's solution to the problem that they created for themselves is not enough. This is a key reason why the Opposition has been calling for the reintroduction of overt signage. Finally, I want to speak to the impact of fines on drivers, which is discussed in the report and which is very important in the Opposition's view, considering that the number of fines and value of revenue has continuously skyrocketed. The report states:

Fines for speeding, and loss of licence, can cause financial hardship for some people, especially those in rural and regional areas with limited or no public transport options.

The Opposition believes it should not be the case that when a driver makes a mistake, receiving a fine can make the difference between being able or unable to pay bills and buy food. For some people in New South Wales, the truth is just that. While the Opposition welcomes the report, I draw the House's attention to how road safety issues have historically been dealt with in New South Wales. It has been the Staysafe committee of the New South Wales Parliament that has been responsible for the most significant and productive changes to road safety in this State.

Report noted.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE AND ETHICS

Reports

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The question is that the House take note of the report.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:52): As Deputy Chair, I speak to report No. 2/57 of the Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics entitled *Options available to the House regarding the withholding of remuneration and other entitlements of a Member suspended from the service of the House*, dated 19 May 2022. The report concerns the question of possible action against a suspended member. It was tabled in the House on 19 May. The committee's inquiry followed the 24 March suspension of the member for Kiama, Mr Gareth Ward, MP, pursuant to Standing Order 255. Mr Ward is currently facing criminal charges. Standing Order 253 provides the consequences for a member suspended from the service of the House are that he or she cannot enter the parliamentary precincts or take part in any proceedings of the House or its committees for the period of the suspension. Further action, such as withholding pay, is not provided for.

A week after Mr Ward's suspension, on 31 March 2022 the House resolved to refer the inquiry to the committee, stipulating that it was to examine, one, the options available to the House regarding the withholding of remuneration and other entitlements of a member suspended from the service of the House; and, two, any other related matter. The inquiry raised complex legal, constitutional and procedural issues, and the committee sought expert opinion from Professor Anne Twomey, AO, from the University of Sydney, and legal advice from Mr Stephen Free, SC, and Mr Jackson Wherrett, Counsel. On behalf of the committee, I thank these individuals and the instructing solicitor, Mr Mark Smyth, for sharing their knowledge and expertise with the committee.

Drawing on expert opinion and advice, the committee found that any additional measures that would involve the withholding of remuneration and other entitlements of a member suspended from the service of the House would require legislation to be enacted. The committee determined this would not be appropriate. The committee noted from the expert opinion and advice that legislating to provide for punitive powers against a

suspended member would present significant constitutional issues and have the potential to be challenged in the courts. In addition, the committee identified that it is important that a member who is suspended from the service of the House is still able to continue to represent his or her constituents, who should not be penalised for the alleged actions of the member. The committee also considered that current arrangements are sufficient to protect the dignity and effective functioning of the House and that the current standing orders enable the House to deal with conduct that has the potential to disrupt or impede the orderly conduct of the House. Therefore, the committee recommended against enacting legislation to withhold the statutory remuneration or entitlements or access to employment of staff from a member suspended from the service of the House.

In addition, the committee recommended that a suspended member be able to continue to serve his or her electorate through the remaining mechanisms available to him or her as a member that do not involve actual participation in debates or proceedings in the House or its committees. This includes the member being able to access his or her electorate office resources and staff, make representations on behalf of constituents, and engage in parliamentary activities such as lodging questions on notice and petitions. Finally, in noting that pursuant to Standing Order 253 a suspended member cannot participate in "any proceedings of the House or its committees", the committee also recommended that the House consider delegating to the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee the ongoing role of reviewing the adoption of new procedures, which may have implications for the operation of Standing Order 253, for example, due to technological developments providing for written community recognition statements to be lodged.

In closing, I thank my fellow committee members—especially the member for Heffron, who is in the Chamber—for their valuable contributions throughout the inquiry process. The time lines for the committee to report were tight and could not have been achieved without the dedicated and collegial approach displayed by all members. I also thank the following officers for their professionalism and support in the conduct of the inquiry: Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Ms Helen Minnican; Clerk-Assistant, Mr Jonathan Elliott; Manager, House and Procedure, Ms Elspeth Dyer; and Parliamentary Officers Mrs Rickee Murray and Mr Ze Nan Ma. Again, I acknowledge the work of the committee members, including Temporary Speaker (Mr Alex Greenwich) and the member for Holsworthy. We had a very tight time line, but we agree that the report is correct. I commend the report to the House.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (12:57): On 24 March 2022 I made a substantial contribution to this House when it carried a motion to suspend the member for Kiama. It was at that stage I suggested that the matter be referred to the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics because it raised complex legal and constitutional issues in relation to a member of this House. On 31 March 2022 the House agreed with that suggestion, and I am appreciative of the Leader of the House who, like me, recognised that significant constitutional issues were involved. As indicated by the member for Terrigal, the committee heard expert opinion from Professor Anne Twomey from the University of Sydney and obtained legal advice from Mr Stephen Free, SC. In fact, the Clerk instructed private solicitors for the purpose of obtaining that advice.

It is hoped that as a result of this report and the advice obtained, some of these constitutional issues in relation to members of this House can be somewhat resolved and clarified. The member for Kiama, who is charged with some serious criminal offences, is entitled to the presumption of innocence. I said on 24 March—and this is verified by the advice provided to the committee—that there was no power upon this House to expel the member for Kiama simply based upon the charges that he faced. The House's powers have also been clearly set out in the committee's report. The House's powers are such that they protect the dignity and effective functioning of the House and prevent the disruption or the impeding of its orderly conduct. That is the extent of the House's powers in relation to members. Therefore, there is no inherent power to impact upon the entitlements of the member for Kiama, nor is there any inherent or constitutional power to impact upon the member's salary.

In relation to the issue of legislation and the ability of the House to legislate to achieve that objective, if the House were to do so for the purposes of utilising punitive powers against a suspended member then it is likely, on the best legal advice available, that such legislation would be unconstitutional. Whatever views members might have in relation to what should or should not happen, as a result of the work done by the committee and arising from this report, the rights and entitlements of members are now clear. It is important because in a parliamentary democracy, where this House involves people representing an entire cross-section of the community, there will be times when members will be alleged to have contravened the law. The report that has been provided shows the constitutional way forward. The House cannot be in a situation where members of the Executive Government, irrespective of the part of that branch, can impact upon the democratic fabric of this House or try to impose a political and unconstitutional solution.

Report noted.

LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**Reports**

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The question is that the House take note of the report.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (13:01): As Chair: I address the House regarding the Legislation Review Committee's report entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 44/57* tabled on 7 June 2022. In the forty-fourth digest, the Committee examined five bills introduced during the sitting week beginning 17 May 2022. I will now draw the Parliament's attention to some of the issues raised in this digest.

The Disability Inclusion Amendment Bill 2022 was introduced to give effect to recommendations arising from the statutory review of the New South Wales Disability Inclusion Act 2014. In addition to amendments under the Disability Inclusion Act, the bill makes consequential amendments to the Coroners Act 2009. In particular, it amends section 24 (1) (e) of the Coroners Act, which extends a senior coroner's jurisdiction to a person who, at the time of their death, was living in, or temporarily absent from, specialist disability accommodation. "Specialist disability accommodation" is a term which may be prescribed by the regulations. The committee generally prefers for significant definitions to be dealt with in primary legislation to ensure an appropriate level of parliamentary oversight. However, the committee also recognises the benefit of flexibility that is afforded by delegating this definition to the regulations and, in the circumstances, made no further comment.

Another bill introduced was the Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2022. This bill amends various statutes, such as the Public Works and Procurement Act 1912 and the Subordinate Legislation Act 1989. The committee examined changes to the Public Works and Procurement Act and commented on the wide powers of delegation proposed under section 5B. This section provides the Minister and the constructing authority with the power to delegate their statutory functions to, firstly, a government agency or a government agency employee, or, secondly, an authorised person or class of persons. The committee noted that there are no restrictions on this delegation; for example, by restricting delegation to employees with a certain level of seniority or expertise. Though the provision is intended to facilitate cost-effective and efficient administration, the committee generally prefers provisions concerning the delegation of powers to be drafted with greater specificity. The committee therefore referred this matter to Parliament for its consideration.

I now turn to a private member's bill, the Animal Research Amendment (Right to Release) Bill 2022. The bill amends the Animal Research Act 1985 by inserting part 6A, titled "Rehoming". New part 6A also creates a number of strict liability offences. For example, under section 54C (1) an offence is established where an authorised person fails to take reasonable steps to rehome a cat or dog when they cease to be used for research. The committee generally comments on strict liability offences as they depart from the common law principle that the mental element of an offence is relevant to the imposition of liability. However, the committee notes that strict liability offences are not uncommon in regulatory contexts to encourage compliance, and therefore made no further comment. That concludes my remarks on the forty-fourth digest for this Parliament. I thank my fellow committee members for their contributions to the digest and the secretariat for its work and support. I commend the digest to the House.

Report noted.

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

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The SPEAKER: I welcome Mr Thiaga Rajan, the finance and human resources Minister of the Indian State of Tamil Nadu, who is in the gallery for question time today. I also welcome members of the Queensland Parliament's Community Support and Services Committee who are in the Speaker's gallery: Chair Corinne McMillan, MP; Deputy Chair Stephen Bennett, MP; Michael Berkman, MP; Cynthia Lui, MP; Mark Robinson, MP; Robert Skelton, MP; and Committee Secretary Lynda Pretty. I welcome them to New South Wales. It is lovely to have them all here from Queensland. They are in New South Wales as part of the committee's social housing study tour, not for State of Origin.

I warmly welcome students and staff from Lake Macquarie High School, who are guests of the member for Lake Macquarie. I also welcome to the Chamber guests of the member for Mulgoa: school students and teachers from Al-Faisal College, Liverpool campus; Cecil Hills High School; Glenmore Park High School; Irfan College; Mamre Anglican School; Penrith Anglican College; St Clair High School; and Thomas Hassell Anglican College. I also welcome the many attendees of the Legislative Assembly public sector seminar

Introduction to the New South Wales Legislative Assembly, who are watching question time from the public gallery.

Announcements

QUESTION TIME CLOCK

The SPEAKER: I remind members that in accordance with the resolution of the House that was adopted earlier today, if I ask the Clerk to stop the clock during a member's answer in question time, that will stop only the member's clock. The overall question time clock will continue to run.

Members

REPRESENTATION OF MINISTERS ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: On behalf of Mr Dominic Perrottet: I inform the House that the Minister for Health will be absent from question time for the remainder of the week. The Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government will answer questions on his behalf.

Question Time

ENERGY PRICES

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (14:21): My question is directed to the Treasurer. In July last year the Treasurer started negotiations with Origin concerning the closure of Eraring Power Station. The closure of the plant will mean higher prices. Yet in November the Treasurer was telling consumers that they could expect to see price drops of between \$130 and \$430 a year. Why did the Treasurer tell the public that prices were about to drop when he knew that they were far more likely to increase rapidly?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (14:21): That was a surprise attack from the Leader of the Opposition. He should have taken time to read the policy that he voted on, which was the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, which will transform our electricity system. It will drive down power prices, keep the lights on and deliver some of the cleanest energy anywhere in the world. The Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap was supported by not only all members of the Liberal Party and The Nationals but also all members of the Labor Party. They know that the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap will put downward pressure on electricity prices—on bills—by \$130 per annum.

In order for that to happen, we need to deliver the road map: the infrastructure, the new generation, new transmission, new firming and new storage required to put downward pressure on electricity prices. The NSW Consumer Trustee is running the reverse auction process. By the end of this year we hope to have the first auction underway to underwrite the build of that new capacity that will deliver that downward pressure on electricity prices.

Mr Chris Minns: Point of order: My point of order goes to relevance. I asked specifically why the Treasurer was promising price drops of \$130 a year when he knew that prices would in fact go up as a result of the closure of the Eraring Power Station.

The SPEAKER: I will hear further from the Treasurer. The statements in the question and the question itself were quite wideranging. So I will allow the Minister a reasonably wide range within the scope of the topic.

Mr MATT KEAN: For the benefit of those in the gallery, the Leader of the Opposition is being completely dishonest, because he knows that the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, which he voted on, is the thing that will deliver downward pressure on electricity prices. In fact, he knows that the Eraring Power Station closure was proposed after the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap was legislated with the support of the Leader of the Opposition. This is the Leader of the Opposition who cannot be honest with the public, who cannot even be honest with himself. This is the Leader of the Opposition who once promised to design the tolling system that he is now vehemently opposing across New South Wales. This is the Leader of the Opposition who said that he did not want unions—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order: The Treasurer is not being directly relevant to the question.

The SPEAKER: I have already ruled on that point of order. Given the scope of the question, the Treasurer is being directly relevant.

Mr MATT KEAN: This is the Leader of the Opposition who hates tolls, but he was the architect of the toll regime that he is complaining about. This is The Leader of the Opposition who said he did not want unions dominating the Labor Party. Now he sucks up to them and lets them tickle his tummy.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I place the member for Keira on two calls to order. Has the Treasurer concluded his answer?

Mr MATT KEAN: I am happy to keep going if they want to give me an extension.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer's time has expired.

COST OF LIVING

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (14:25): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on how the Liberals and Nationals are working to boost the budgets of families and small businesses?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:25): I will. I thank the member for Seven Hills for his question. I begin by welcoming the Queensland Parliament's Community Support and Services Committee here today. Just before question time I got an update from Treasury. The hotel quarantine bill Queensland owes us is \$117 million. I have contacted the sheriffs. They are not on strike; they are back. The committee is not going home without paying the bill. It is \$117.46 million, to be precise. We will round it up after tonight.

The Queenslanders know that New South Wales is building a brighter future for the people of our great State. That is why they are here. Why would they want to be in Queensland when they can be in New South Wales? I do not see us going up to Queensland on committee trips. They come to us to see how it is done because they know, like everyone else around the country, that there is no government in this country that has more cost-of-living programs than the Government in New South Wales. Today I was out with the Treasurer, who I note has announced more policies in the past hour than the Labor Party has announced in 12 months. The Bill Buster program, just another in our tranche of programs, will provide savings of up to \$600 per year to up to one million eligible households so that they can invest in solar or, if they are in an apartment, invest in energy-efficient appliances. That is right?

Mr Matt Kean: Yes, that is right.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Very good. That is up to \$600 every year. That is the equivalent of 10 years' worth of rebates as an up-front program. It is also providing downward pressure on electricity prices, as the great Treasurer and energy Minister knows all too well. That is in addition to yesterday's announcement with the Treasurer and the roads Minister, who were out with the great member for Parramatta and corrections Minister, Geoff Lee, as we announced our toll rebate scheme, the most generous in the history of the State—a 40 per cent rebate on tolls for anybody who spends more than \$375, to a maximum rebate of \$750. [*Extension of time*]

There is a long way to go. Three hundred thousand extra people across the State will benefit from that scheme. There are more than 70 cost-of-living programs across government. I ask people across the State today to go to the Service NSW savings finder. It is by far the—

[*An Opposition member interjected.*]

It is crashing because everyone loves it. We will put more of Service NSW up. Members opposite are all checking in late at night. They are all logging in because they love it so much. The member for Summer Hill knows that public transport increased 60 per cent under Labor.

The SPEAKER: The member for Wollongong will come to order. The member for Hornsby will come to order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Under the Liberals and The Nationals, public transport cost is down 12 per cent in real terms. It is literally cheaper to catch public transport today in New South Wales than it was 10 years ago under Labor. That is also with the Opal—

Ms Jo Haylen: It takes twice as long to get anywhere.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The member should send that information out and start promoting the truth. There was a 60 per cent increase under Labor and a 12 per cent decrease in real terms under the Liberals and The Nationals. There are vouchers everywhere putting downward pressure on family budgets right across the State. As that great article said yesterday, New South Wales is leading the country when it comes to cost-of-living measures. As Victor knows, Service NSW slaps and we lead the country.

The SPEAKER: Before I call the Leader of the Opposition, I also acknowledge those in the gallery who are participating in the RDA Illawarra leadership program and welcome them.

SOLAR BATTERY SYSTEMS ROLLOUT

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (14:30): My question is directed to the Treasurer. In the 2019 election he promised to roll out 300,000 solar battery systems over 10 years, including 20,000 this year. Yet he has managed to deliver only 535 so far. Is this yet another reason why power prices are about to go through the roof?

The SPEAKER: The member for Macquarie Fields will come to order.

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (14:31): Let me tell members where there is some low energy. It is the Leader of the Opposition. Today on Twitter he outsourced writing questions for question time to the Twitterati. He cannot even be bothered writing questions for question time. He took the top job—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat. I call the member for Canterbury to order for the first time. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Ron Hoenig: The Treasurer should be directly relevant to the specific question that was asked of him. He was not asked about the Twitterati or anything else.

The SPEAKER: It was less than 20 seconds into the answer, so I will hear further from the Treasurer.

Mr MATT KEAN: We were talking about low energy. There is no energy coming out of the Leader of the Opposition when he cannot even write questions for question time. He has to outsource it to people on Twitter. He went to his Labor caucus colleagues 12 months ago and said—

The SPEAKER: I ask the Treasurer to come more directly to the question. He may continue.

Mr MATT KEAN: We on this side of the House believe in lowering household energy bills. That brings me to why we released our Energy Bill Buster policy today. I appreciate the opportunity the Leader of the Opposition has given me to remind people how we are driving down household power bills. Our Energy Bill Buster today will see people who are eligible for low-income grants—the gas rebate, the seniors energy rebate—be able to apply that to get a solar system in New South Wales. The benefit of that is that it will lower average household bills for those who have a solar system by \$600. But they can also use these grants to permanently slash household energy bills by upgrading to energy-efficient appliances. Those appliances, which are valued at around \$4,000, will help lower household energy bills by up to \$400.

We are focused on things that will permanently slash household electricity bills because that is what the Coalition Government is all about. It is a bit rich taking a lecture on energy policy from the Leader of the Opposition because it has now been 370 days since the Leader of the Opposition said that he would announce a policy and we have not yet seen one. The Leader of the Opposition comes in here and he has not got a single policy, whether it be on energy, tolls or wages. There are no policies and no ideas from the Leader of the Opposition.

COST OF LIVING

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (14:34): My question is addressed to the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy. Will the Treasurer update the House on the Government's policies to help New South Wales families with their energy bills and household budgets?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (14:34): I certainly will, but somehow our tactics gave the question on Twitter to the Leader of the Opposition. I note that yesterday the Leader of the Opposition was out celebrating 12 months since he took the top job, since he knifed that fearless corruption fighter Jodi McKay.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat.

Mr Ryan Park: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. Even you can see, from your impartial position, Mr Speaker, that the answer is irrelevant.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. If a member is only about 15 to 20 seconds into giving an answer, a bit of leeway is extended in terms of Standing Order 129. I ask the Treasurer to come directly to the question now that he has made some introductory comments.

Mr MATT KEAN: I was talking about low energy, and I was talking about the fact that at least Jodi McKay could write her own questions for question time. The Leader of the Opposition took her out.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat.

Mr Ron Hoenig: The Treasurer is ignoring your ruling, Mr Speaker. I ask that you call for the next question.

The SPEAKER: I ask the Treasurer to speak directly to the question or I will sit him down.

Mr MATT KEAN: We on this side of the House are focused on driving down energy bills for the families and businesses of New South Wales. That is why we introduced our Energy Bill Buster today, which means that up to one million people eligible to receive energy rebates will now be able to use them to upgrade to solar cells. The Minister for Transport loves solar cells. In fact, his whole street has solar cells. He is the green Minister for Transport. We will not tell Alex Hawke that. Jamie Parker wants to recruit him—he is so green. For those people who use their energy rebate, which will save up to about \$285, they can now trade it in for a solar cell, which will save their household power bills on average \$600 yearly.

But the fun does not stop there. Through this policy, people also will be able to use their energy rebates to upgrade to energy efficient appliances. I know that the member for Parramatta has a new baby and needs a new dryer. For example, this is something that could be used to upgrade to new dryers, air conditioners, heat pumps, fridges and other appliances to the value of \$4,000.

Mr Dominic Perrottet: The dryer is great.

Mr MATT KEAN: The dryer is great. The Premier endorses the heat pump dryer, which not only will lower bills but also is better for the environment. These energy-efficient products reduce demand on the entire system, so everyone can benefit. Those who upgrade to energy-efficient appliances can save about \$400 per annum as a result of this scheme. It is a material saving, taking pressure off the electricity system and also protecting our environment. It is a good thing. That is what we on this side of the House are all about—driving down household bills and delivering good outcomes for the environment. This is great policy. Don't just take my word for it. [*Extension of time*]

The SPEAKER: I ask that the Treasurer be directly relevant.

Mr MATT KEAN: I am very directly relevant. In fact, I am so directly relevant that I want to quote all those people who were out there backing in our policy today. The only one who was not was the negative Labor Party, led by the most negative leader they have ever had—not Chris Minns, but Chris Minus. That is how negative he is. If those opposite want to see an endorsement for our policy, they should look at the endorsement of Craig Memery, one of the fiercest consumer advocates in the country. Craig Memery of the Public Interest Advocacy Centre called the program practical and timely and one that would deliver much-needed help for people to reduce their energy costs. The Smart Energy Council said that this policy showed leadership. Now that is something those opposite have not seen since Jodi McKay. At least she had policy.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

Mr MATT KEAN: Chris Minns took out Jodi McKay, promising a grand vision for the State and its people, and what have we seen?

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat.

[*Interruption*]

I call the Treasurer to order for the first time. I call the member for Rockdale to order for the first time. I call the member for Campbelltown to order for the first time.

Mr Ron Hoenig: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Treasurer is not only not being directly relevant but also continually defying your ruling, Mr Speaker. I would not hear from him any further.

The SPEAKER: I ask the Treasurer to come directly to the question.

Mr MATT KEAN: I just have so much to talk about when it comes to energy policy, our policies to drive down household bills, our energy policies to modernise our electricity system, and to do it in a way that will drive investment in the State, lower household bills and underwrite a brighter future for industry. That is what Coalition governments are about, unlike those opposite.

COST OF LIVING

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (14:40): My question is directed to the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy in reference to his last answer. Given only a quarter of seniors are receiving the Government's Seniors Energy Rebate and only one in 10 of eligible families are receiving the Government's Family Energy Rebate, why is the Government making it so hard for cost-of-living relief to go to those who need it most?

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

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (14:40): It is great to get a question from the member for Maitland, a very hardworking member of Parliament and a great and tireless advocate for her community. I acknowledge that the new Leader of the Opposition has not allowed her to ask a question since Jodi McKay was knifed. She has not been allowed to ask a question. She has been gagged because she was a loyal Jodi McKay supporter.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat.

Mr Michael Daley: My point of order is on relevance under Standing Order 129. Families are going out the back door—

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough.

Mr Michael Daley: —to political points and bad humour. That is all we are getting from the Treasurer. I cannot wait for his budget!

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Maroubra to order for the first time. The Treasurer will come directly to the question.

Mr MATT KEAN: I will address the question, but I acknowledge the loyalty of the member for Maitland to the former Leader of the Opposition, who was the overwhelming popular choice by the membership of the Labor Party—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

Mr MATT KEAN: —who was taken out in the dead of night by the new Leader of the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat.

Mr Ron Hoenig: My point of order is on relevance under Standing Order 129. The Treasurer is not even remotely close to answering the question.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The Treasurer will be directly relevant to the question.

Mr MATT KEAN: The member for Heffron is up and down so much he is sweating like Rudy Giuliani.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Treasurer defies your ruling, Mr Speaker. You should put him on a call and warn him that he will be excluded from the House.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. I do not need instructions from the member for Heffron. The Treasurer will be directly relevant.

Mr MATT KEAN: I thank the member for Maitland for her question and acknowledge the outstanding work she does on behalf of her community. She is an outstanding member of the Parliament, and I note her loyalty to the previous Leader of the Opposition, Jodi McKay. I am just trying to get to the answer.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. I asked the question on behalf of the 75 per cent of seniors and the 90 per cent of eligible families who are not getting these rebates. Will the Treasurer please give us an answer? I ask him to please respect our communities.

The SPEAKER: I give the Treasurer one last chance to be directly relevant or I will sit him down.

Mr MATT KEAN: Today the Government announced an energy policy to support lower income households by using their rebates to upgrade their appliances to energy-efficient ones. That measure will permanently save households around \$400 a year. Those who receive a Senior Energy Rebate will also, if they live in their own home, be able to upgrade to a solar system, saving them permanently \$600 per annum. Just last week the Government announced a change to the Energy Accounts Payment Assistance service— [*Time expired.*]

VIVID SYDNEY

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (14:44): My question is addressed to the Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney. Will the Minister update the House on how Vivid Sydney is leading the recovery of the New South Wales tourism and hospitality industry?

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

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney) (14:44): I thank the member for Vaucluse for her question. We can talk about something everyone can get behind: the New South Wales State of Origin team tonight—minus the member for Tamworth, who should exclude himself for the rest of question time or join the visiting Queensland dignitaries up in the bleachers. But we can all—even the member for Tamworth—get behind Vivid. Vivid has provided an extraordinary boost to the New South Wales economy. Recently I was able to launch—

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

Mr STUART AYRES: Together with the Premier, I launched Vivid at the First Light ceremony. We had the largest—

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

Mr STUART AYRES: —opening weekend in Vivid history: 435,000 people—

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

Mr STUART AYRES: —came through the city. This is a massive boost to our local tourism industry. For the first time in two years, occupancy rates across the city have gone above 80 per cent. Hotels and restaurants are starting to fill again. Since Vivid commenced, there have been over 280,000 diners in the city. That represents an 18 per cent increase on 2019. There is absolutely no doubt that Vivid is what has revived the tourism sector, and people are voting with their feet. It is important to recognise how confident the public is. The public is out engaging in our city, walking around the city seeing all of the wonderful light exhibitions in numbers that have not been seen in years.

We have had the biggest numbers of visitors to open Vivid ever, with the single largest night on Saturday night for more than 12 years. This is a community that is confident about its future and believes that we have been through the worst of the pandemic. The community is voting with its feet, staying in our hotels and eating in our restaurants. We are making sure that we keep our hospitality venues open longer to ensure more dollars are put through the small and medium businesses. One of my favourite statistics—we have people with digital counters at 110 different locations across the city—is that we have had 32,000 prams through the city during the course of Vivid. That shows that Vivid—

Mrs Melinda Pavey: The Perrottets went out.

Mr STUART AYRES: Yes, the Perrottet family has been out in force. That shows that Vivid is for everyone. It creates many opportunities for families to get out and enjoy this excellent, wonderful city. We have done it tough for two years but the community senses it is time to move forward with confidence. We are offering a brighter future, and there is nothing brighter at the moment than Vivid.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE HELPLINE FUNDING

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (14:47): My question is directed to the Premier. Given that the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline has not received a funding boost in over a decade, despite a massive increase in demand, and that this shortfall results in one in three calls going unanswered, will the Premier commit to increase funding in this budget to ensure that every survivor of sexual assault who calls the support line gets their call answered when they ring?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:48): I thank the member for Newtown for her question and her interest in this matter. I share her views, as I am sure everyone in the House does, that sexual assault is a serious and devastating crime and as much as governments can do to invest and prevent, we should do. Without wanting to pre-empt the budget process, the member knows all too well the support programs that are in place and the enhancements that we have made. Since the last budget, as we came out of the second wave of the pandemic through the economic recovery work, the New South Wales Government provided further support, including funding of \$22 million to the NSW Health Sexual Assault Services. It provides specialist sexual assault services in every local health district across New South Wales, operating 24 hours a day, seven days a

week. In addition to the base funding, since the 2017-18 budget the Government has allocated \$10 million a year for the NSW Health Violence Abuse and Neglect Redesign Program. This program provides 24-hour specialist integrated psychological, medical and forensic response to sexual assault.

In addition to that, the Government has a longstanding funding arrangement with Full Stop Australia, which delivers an online counselling service to anyone in New South Wales who has experienced sexual assault. The Government has funded Full Stop Australia for nearly 50 years and provides over \$1½ million annually to support that helpline. In addition to that, through New South Wales support, Full Stop Australia provides in-person counselling services to adult women who have experienced sexual abuse in childhood. NSW Health has provided a funding increase of more than 75 per cent to NGO grant program recipients over the last 30 years.

In addition, as the member knows, we have also partnered with the Commonwealth Government on a range of other agreements, including the National Partnership on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence. The second round of the National Partnership Agreement recipients is expected to be announced shortly. That package forms part of the additional \$140 million funding boost over two years from the New South Wales and Commonwealth governments. In relation to the work that we did in the economic recovery, we allocated—

Ms Jenny Leong: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, direct relevance. I appreciate that the Premier is outlining a range of measures, which are strong and good, but at the moment one in three calls is going unanswered. If someone hears today about our new consent laws and they call the helpline, one in three will get an answering machine and may never call back.

The SPEAKER: The Premier may continue his answer.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: In response to the point of order, I accept those concerns and I am more than happy to take them on board and look into them. [*Extension of time*]

We want to make sure that all counselling services that are funded by the New South Wales Government ensure that people who need that support and help are given it. I am happy to formally look into that specific area. In addition to that, the Government continues to invest record amounts. Recently I spoke to the Minister for Women about an update on the program that the Attorney General, the Treasurer and I announced in the economic recovery of half a billion dollars for additional accommodation and specialist support services to support women and children leaving domestic and family violence. My understanding is that that program and infrastructure investment is rolling out well. Where we can do more, we should.

The member will know that we invested \$687 million over four years, which includes \$80 million in Commonwealth funding, to improve victim safety and reduce family violence and reoffending. This is an important program for the Government. No woman should feel unsafe or suffer from these horrific crimes. Where we can do more to provide that support, we will. In respect to the specific question on the helpline and how further support could be provided, I am happy to take it up with the member and see what we can do.

NORTHERN RIVERS FLOOD DAMAGE REMEDIATION

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (14:52): My question is addressed to the Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing. Will the Minister update the House on what the Government is doing to assist Northern Rivers councils to remediate water infrastructure damaged in the floods?

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing) (14:52): I thank the member for Tweed for his question and for all the work that he has done across the Northern Rivers over a long period, along with the member for Lismore, the member for Clarence, and the member for Ballina. To date, over \$3 billion has been committed to the flood recovery effort, not just to clean up but also to rebuild and reconstruct over the long term, led by Minister Cooke, who is doing an amazing job.

Last week I joined the member for Tweed and the member for Lismore, as well as the mayors from Ballina and Clarence councils, to announce \$145 million to help with the clean-up, repair and upgrade of critical water sewerage infrastructure that has been damaged across the Northern Rivers. The work will include permanent repairs to water and sewerage systems that were damaged in the floods, as well as upgrades that will help futureproof this critical infrastructure. Right at the start when the floods hit with such a devastating impact, Water Infrastructure NSW and WaterNSW sent engineers to the Northern Rivers to work with the eight significant councils that were severely impacted to help them start that work to get back on their feet. The \$145 million in funds that we have announced will go to the hardest hit communities of Ballina, Byron, Lismore, Kyogle, Richmond Valley, Tweed Shire and Clarence Valley, as well as Rous County Council.

Last week I heard firsthand from Lismore council about the interim works and the processes it established with the assistance of the New South Wales Government. Lismore council took me on a tour of its water sewerage treatment plant, and you could see where the water levels had got to and the damage caused. Urgent work was

done to bring the plant back online through temporary generators and other equipment. Its engineers, along with the Public Works Advisory, have done a brilliant job in restoring limited services to Lismore and the surrounds. Through the New South Wales Government's \$145 million investment, we will be able to bring services like those in Lismore and the surrounds back to full capacity.

Most importantly, the investment in the local Northern Rivers communities will ensure that the water infrastructure across Northern Rivers and northern New South Wales is not just repaired but built back to a more resilient standard to help withstand future natural disasters. I congratulate the member for Lismore, the member for Clarence, the member for Ballina as well as the member for Tweed on their extraordinary work over the past few months. I assure them that, through major investments, the Perrottet-Toole Government is committed to helping rebuild the Northern Rivers region, ensuring that we secure a brighter future for those local communities.

COST OF LIVING

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (14:55): My question is directed to the Treasurer. Given that next month power prices will rise by up to 18 per cent for families and by up to 19 per cent for businesses, does the Treasurer regret promising in November 2020 that his plan would reduce the cost of electricity bills for consumers and would save an average of around \$130 per year for households and around \$430 per year for small businesses?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (14:56): I thank the member for Granville for her question. I note that today must have been the day in tactics when the Opposition decided to bring the all the Jodi supporters off the bench and out of hibernation. They have been gagged for the past 12 months. I can see tactics this morning: "We will not burn any of the Chris Minns supporters. We will put up the Jodi supporters."

Mr Paul Scully: Point of order: There is no standing order about bad humour but there is one about relevance: Standing Order 129. The Treasurer is flouting your ruling.

The SPEAKER: I have not made a ruling yet. I will do so now. The Treasurer will be directly relevant.

Mr MATT KEAN: The member for Granville knows exactly the situation at the moment. The reality is that there is a war in the Ukraine. It is pushing up commodity prices, particularly the price of gas. Every time gas is used in the system, it sets the price of electricity, because it is the most expensive form of electricity. We need to ensure that we get our coal-fired power stations online during this winter period so that gas is not setting the price. That is the key thing that we can do in the short term, in addition to providing immediate support for families and businesses. We have announced a number of measures to lower household bills for families and businesses. Many people in the Granville electorate will be eligible for the EAPA scheme, which is the Energy Accounts Payment Assistance scheme. We have just upped that by \$400. Now people can claim up to \$1,600 to help with their energy bills.

Our Government is taking a responsible approach to this issue. We are helping people in the short term and we are investing in the upgrade of our electricity system for the long term. The modelling on electricity prices was specifically done with regard to the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, which was supported by almost all members of this House, including the Opposition. I was just reminded that the now Federal Labor Government recognises the policy that we put in place with regard to the closure of Eraring. In fact, when Eraring closed, the now energy Minister, Chris Bowen, said:

Labor welcomes the NSW Government's commitments to build a big battery to ensure reliability, and to bring forward new generation capacity to ensure affordability.

The Leader of the Opposition has been out for lunch again. He has no energy policy. Do you know why, Mr Speaker? Because it is not about the people of New South Wales or the loyal members of the Labor Party; it is always all about Chris. Taking the top job was always all about Chris. Knifing Jodi McKay was always all about Chris. The Opposition has no policies and no ideas because it is only ever about Chris.

ERARING POWER STATION

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (14:59): My question is directed to the Treasurer. In 2013 the Government privatised the Eraring Power Station for \$657 million. How much did the Treasurer offer to pay its owner, Origin Energy, during his secret negotiations to keep it open longer?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (15:00): I thank the member for Lakemba for his question. On the topic of privatisations, who remembers who sold the Gentraders in the dead of night? It was those opposite. In fact, they prorogued the Parliament to flog off those assets in the dead of night.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order: The Treasurer's answer is nowhere near generally relevant to the specific question that was asked.

The SPEAKER: I do not accept that. The Treasurer may continue.

Mr MATT KEAN: We were talking about privatisations. We all know who led the charge when it came to the privatisation of electricity assets in this State. It was the Labor Party. No-one loved privatising electricity assets more than the Labor Party.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

Mr MATT KEAN: Labor members were such enthusiastic supporters of privatisation, they prorogued the Parliament to flog off the State's assets.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Heffron rises on a point of order. The Treasurer will resume his seat.

Mr Ron Hoenig: The Treasurer was asked specifically about his negotiations with regard to Eraring. He has been speaking for more than a minute—more than a third of his answer time—and he has not come close to the question specifically asked of him.

The SPEAKER: I remind members of something I have said before. When a statement is made that is followed by a question, I will allow the answer to relate to both because it is directly relevant to both. The question was specifically about privatisation, so I will hear further from the Treasurer. I am mindful of the whole question and of the fact that the Treasurer has not been as relevant to it as he should have been. The Treasurer may continue his answer.

Mr MATT KEAN: The member for Lakemba asked about negotiations with Origin Energy and about the Eraring coal-fired power station. The policy that the New South Wales Coalition Government put in place was enthusiastically backed in by the now Federal energy Minister, Chris Bowen.

Mr Chris Minns: Point of order: My point of order relates to relevance. The Government privatised the power station in 2013. We suspect that the Treasurer offered extra money to Origin Energy in return for keeping it open. We would like an answer.

Mr Alister Henskens: To the point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Alister Henskens: The Leader of the Opposition and other Opposition members keep making debating points rather than taking a point of order. The Opposition leader just did that. We have had continual interruptions to answers in breach of Standing Order 131 (9) and then long statements made from the despatch box—

Ms Jo Haylen: Matt Kean has been irrelevant!

Mr Alister Henskens: And here we have somebody screaming across the Chamber so I cannot take my point of order.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have heard enough.

Mr Jihad Dib: To the point of order—

The SPEAKER: I am happy to hear from the member for Lakemba, who is conducting himself in an orderly fashion.

Mr Jihad Dib: The question I asked is very specific: How much was the offer to keep it open longer? The point of order is about the relevance to that specific question.

The SPEAKER: As I said, if a statement is made and the Minister chooses to focus on the statement rather than the question, the answer can still be directly relevant. I made that very clear in my statement when we introduced the standing order about direct relevance. I do not accept the comments of the member for Ku-ring-gai. The Leader of the Opposition took a valid point of order, albeit I do not rule in his favour because of my earlier ruling. I remind the Treasurer that the question also referred to alleged secret negotiations, so he may wish to refer to that in addition to the statement that was made before the question was asked.

Mr MATT KEAN: We announced a plan to respond to the closure of the Eraring coal-fired power station, and that was to build the Waratah Super Battery. That plan was enthusiastically supported by the Federal Labor Government and by Chris Bowen—in fact, the mentor and friend of the Leader of the Opposition. If the Leader of the Opposition was spending less time taking dodgy donations from Chinese property developers—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat.

[*Interruption*]

I call the Treasurer to order for the second time. I have warned the Treasurer that when I ask him to sit down, I mean it.

Mr Ron Hoenig: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129 and Standing Order 73. The Treasurer is imputing improper motives and making personal reflections on the Leader of the Opposition, in breach of Standing Order 73.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order under Standing Order 73. The Treasurer will refrain from making comments that would contravene Standing Order 73.

Mr MATT KEAN: The Opposition can give me throwdowns all afternoon; I am quite happy with it. It is clear that the Leader of the Opposition does not understand energy policy. When he tweeted the other day about wholesale prices going up because of the privatisation of poles and wires, he does not understand they are two separate things. [*Time expired.*]

WORKPLACE SAFETY

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (15:07): My question is addressed to the Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading. Will the Minister update the House on Government investments and initiatives that are boosting workplace safety across the great State of New South Wales?

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

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading) (15:07): I start by acknowledging the outstanding member for Oxley and thanking her for her question. On this side of the House, we are building a brighter future for workers by making sure that safety conscientiousness is embedded in the way that we do business across this State. Those opposite clearly have no interest in safety, let alone women's safety, as I am about to talk about. The Opposition leader only knows about knifing women in regional New South Wales and not about safety considerations. But that is fine, because on this side of the House, our aim—

Mr David Harris: Point of order: I ask that the Minister withdraw that comment. That is absolutely offensive.

The SPEAKER: The Minister has been asked to withdraw. It is up to her.

Ms ELENI PETINOS: It is categorically correct that the previous Leader of the Opposition was female and that she was knifed by the existing leader.

The SPEAKER: The Minister has declined to withdraw.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Does the member for Campbelltown have a different point of order? What is the member's point of order? He should go straight to the point of order.

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 59. Given that the Minister will not withdraw that grotesque, disgusting and inaccurate statement, I ask you to execute Standing Order 59.

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

Ms ELENI PETINOS: Hopefully we can talk about the important issue that is women in agriculture and the safety initiatives that have been conducted in this State. Between 1 June and 15 July this year, this series will shine a light on safety for farming families. Those events will target women working on farms and will cover issues such as working near electricity, emergency preparedness and response and safety around farming vehicles. Tragically, farming accounts for one in every five worker deaths. That is why these events are so important for women at the centre of farming families, given that they provide essential safety resources and encourage safe farming practices. By supporting women in agriculture, Government members are securing a brighter future for families operating on the land. In addition to that, we are boosting safety and supporting small businesses with our \$1,000 SafeWork small business rebate, which allows small business owners to purchase safety items that improve workplace health and safety.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Maroubra will resume his seat.

Ms ELENI PETINOS: The rebate can be claimed against purchases such as hygiene products, forklift safety items and machinery protection measures. Again, members on this side of the Chamber are able to provide the strong economic management that means that we are able to double this rebate from \$500 to \$1,000 per application. It is really disappointing that those opposite have no interest in safety across this State, let alone safety for women in this State.

ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (15:11): My question is addressed to the Minister for Environment and Heritage. Will the Minister update the House on what the Government is doing to ensure the families of New South Wales can enjoy a clean environment for future generations?

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly—Minister for Environment and Heritage) (15:11): Good afternoon to everybody except the Maroons. I thank the member for East Hills, and I am delighted to have the opportunity to speak on the important work that the Government is doing to protect our environment for future generations. Today is World Oceans Day, and our coastline in New South Wales is one of the best in the world. People from right across the State enjoy spending time with their families—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. The Minister is giving a serious answer to a serious question and he will be heard in silence.

Ms Jenny Leong: Point of order: Mr Speaker, I request that you review your instruction to quieten down the Chamber when the Minister is speaking. When the previous Minister was speaking, you did not quieten down the Chamber. I reflect on whose voices get heard in this Chamber.

The SPEAKER: I refer the member for Newtown to the last time the previous Minister spoke. I did exactly that on two occasions. The Minister has the call.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN: Noting that today is World Oceans Day, one of the biggest challenges that we face is the issue of plastic, particularly in our oceans and waterways. Almost every piece of plastic that has ever been made is still with us, and it may take a thousand years to break down. We are facing a global plastic pollution crisis that demands a wideranging and bold response. Last week on 1 June, much to the surprise of the member for Rockdale, we banned the supply of lightweight plastic bags.

Mr Stephen Kamper: Not my surprise, mate.

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

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN: He should not yell. He does not need to get angry; he just gets excited. The member for Rockdale should put this in his diary: From 1 November the Government will be banning and phasing out single-use plastic cutlery, straws, stirrers, plates, bowls, cotton buds, expanded polystyrene foodware—

Mr Dominic Perrottet: What about the straws?

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN: Straws are going, Premier, and plastic microbeads in personal care products. Here is why: Banning those items is expected to prevent nearly 2.7 billion pieces of plastic entering our environment as litter over the next 20 years. The single-use plastic bans delivered on this Government's commitment under its NSW Plastic Actions Plan. This Government is committed to bold action in tackling waste problems throughout the environment. It is investing \$356 million over the next five years, which includes \$24 million to support the waste and circular economy infrastructure, \$65 million to support the rollout of new organics collection services, \$16 million in new procurement facilities to help local governments procure waste services and \$10 million to design out or replace carbon emissions-intensive plastic with lower carbon intensity recycled materials.

The Government is leading the way and has already reduced litter in New South Wales by 43 per cent, exceeding the previous Premier's Priority target. It has now set itself a more ambitious target to reduce overall litter by 60 per cent by 2030 and plastic litter by 30 per cent by 2025. More than 80 per cent of the plastic in our waterways and oceans comes from land, which has a shocking impact on our environment and marine life. If nothing is done, there could be more plastic in the ocean than fish, by volume, by 2050. For that reason, the Government is taking bold action and reform.

RUSSIAN ASSETS

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (15:15): My question is directed to the Treasurer. Today the Treasurer said that he wanted to send "Putin's power prices packing". Isn't it the case that the only thing he has sent packing is \$30 million belonging to the people of New South Wales to Putin's Russia? These are funds the Treasurer now admits he cannot get back.

Mr Matt Kean: What is the question?

The SPEAKER: Could I have the question, please?

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK: My question is directed to the Treasurer. Today the Treasurer said that he wanted to send "Putin's power prices packing". Isn't it the case that the only thing he has sent packing is \$30 million belonging to the people of New South Wales to Putin's Russia? These are funds the Treasurer now admits he cannot get back.

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (15:17): I thank the member for Bankstown for her question. I wish her all the best in finding a seat. There is only eight months to go. We are barracking for her. We hope she gets a seat. The member for Rockdale was sent in to promise your seat, but let us hope we can cash that cheque.

Mr Dominic Perrottet: Fowler has put a spanner in the works.

Mr MATT KEAN: Yes, Fowler has thrown a little spanner in the works. I note the member's question and note that the New South Wales Coalition Government was one of the first governments in the world to divest from its Russian assets. It led the way and encourages all businesses to divest from their exposure to Russian assets. It is interesting to note that the Leader of the Opposition is concerned about businesses holding Russian assets. I wonder if he has picked up the phone to AustralianSuper, which is controlled by the Australian Council of Trade Unions [ACTU]. I wonder if he has picked up the phone to people like Philippa Kelly, who is a director from the ACTU, or Michele O'Neil from the ACTU, which owns a lot of Russian assets.

It is not just the ACTU that is helping fund Putin's war on the Ukraine but also the Australian Retirement Trust, which was created through Sunsuper and QSuper. That has got notable union people like Beth Mohle investing in Russian assets. She is the secretary of the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union. I wonder if the Leader of the Opposition has picked up the phone to his mates in the union movement and asked them to divest their Russian assets to stop supporting Putin's war on the Ukraine. It does not stop there. The member for Bankstown is not concerned about Cbus Super, which is controlled by the ACTU, the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union, the Australian Workers' Union, the Communications, Electrical and Plumbing Union and the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union—and the Master Builders Association, but we will airbrush that. Cbus Super has got an independent director who has overseen the investment in Russian assets, led by Wayne Swan. [*Time expired.*]

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Rockdale and the member for Macquarie Fields that they are on three calls to order.

CORRECTIVE SERVICES AND FLOOD RECOVERY

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (15:20): My question is addressed to the Minister for Corrections. Will the Minister update the House on how Corrective Services NSW is contributing to flood recovery?

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Corrections) (15:20): Firstly, I acknowledge the great member for Clarence. He is a passionate supporter of and champion for his area. I thank him for his sensible question. It is great to see that we are returning to a sensible question after the last silly question. The member for Clarence surely remembers the one-in-1,000-year flood that affected his area and many other northern New South Wales areas. I also acknowledge and thank Minister Cooke. She called me within days to ask what Corrective Services NSW could do for the people of the Northern Rivers who lost their homes. I update the House with the great news that Corrective Services Industries is designing, building and delivering temporary accommodation for the people who have lost their homes. It was a privilege to go to the Cessnock Correctional Centre. I saw them designing and building that temporary accommodation, and they were built at other locations. They are refurbished classrooms. They strip the classrooms, repaint them, give them new walls, new roofs, new kitchens, new drop-in bathrooms and new laundries.

Mr Dominic Perrottet: Who is doing it?

Dr GEOFF LEE: Corrective Services Industries. The inmates actually do it. The Premier is right to ask who does it. The inmates get hands-on work experience so that when they get out they can join industries and become productive members of society, like the construction industry needs. The story gets even better. We have already delivered the first 10, and there are 90 more to come. I thank Resilience NSW, which has put in another order for 50 emergency studio accommodation buildings that will be delivered in the next few months. It is great news. It provides the inmates with training. When I was speaking to the inmates who are doing the hands-on work, they were proud that they could deliver something to those devastated communities.

I finish by thanking the correctional staff, especially during COVID. They keep the community safe and are an essential service. Not only do they keep the community safe during work hours, but I have just been informed of some fantastic work. I acknowledge Micheal Williams, Sean Delarue, Ross Cobby and Andrew Fileman. They were off to Broken Hill from Dubbo when a child had a life-threatening emergency. As I understand it, the child stopped breathing. They provided essential resuscitation services and saved that child's life. A text that was forwarded to the commissioner states:

Good morning Michael, Andrew, Sean, Ross, I am Lily from the Def Chef. We are back to shop now. Lina is ok now. Much appreciated for today. Thank you very very much to saving my daughter life today. We dont know what to say, thank you thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Lake Macquarie, I have been asked by a member of the Government to acknowledge that Rob Perina and Glenorie Bakery staff, guests of the member for Hawkesbury, are in the gallery. They brought the Pie of Origin to Parliament House today, and I thank them. I have made one acknowledgement for the Government and one for the Opposition today. In future, I will make an acknowledgement only if it has been provided in writing prior to question time.

SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (15:24): My question is directed to the Minister for Planning, and Minister for Homes—don't be so surprised, Anthony. Given the dire housing crisis in New South Wales, what is the Government doing to meet the critical demand for social and affordable housing, particularly in areas such as Lake Macquarie, the Central Coast and the Lower Hunter?

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

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Planning, and Minister for Homes) (15:25): I apologise for the tie. So as not to wake the kids, I got dressed this morning in the dark. I am not sure whether it is worse waking a 12-year-old or a baby. The tie looked blue at 5.30, so I am there in spirit. I thank the member for Lake Macquarie for his question and his strong advocacy on social and affordable housing. It is a strong belief of this Government that everyone should have a safe place to call home. This Government is getting keys in doors and roofs over heads. Through the NSW Land and Housing Corporation, the Coalition Government is working hard to provide more social and affordable housing including, importantly, in regional areas of this great State. But the Government cannot do it alone. We need to create genuine partnerships with local government, community housing providers and NGOs to keep pace with the growing need for social and affordable housing.

I am pleased to inform the House that the Aboriginal Housing Office recently completed six new homes at Toronto and an additional home at Argenton, putting roofs over the heads of some of the State's most vulnerable people. Construction has also begun on two five-bedroom homes at Bolton Point, because providing homes for our Aboriginal communities is a key priority for this Government—and this is just the beginning. I am pleased to inform the member that the Government has invested \$2.4 million so far to fund repairs to 390 properties in the Lake Macquarie local government area. This Government is innovative and looking to the future. For instance, last year a landmark memorandum of understanding was signed between the New South Wales Government and the City of Newcastle—the first of its kind. The historic agreement is set to increase social housing in the Newcastle local government area and support more than 100 jobs. It is just another example of this side of the House delivering, because this Government cares about outcomes.

The NSW Land and Housing Corporation has over 4,300 homes in Newcastle. That number will grow through a combined investment in the region of \$12 million over three years, working closely with that great city. This is true partnership based on an aligned vision for the future; it is not one-way traffic. The Government would welcome an approach from any council that is committed to growing social and affordable housing in its local government area. I invite Lake Macquarie City Council to join with the member for Lake Macquarie—and there have been discussions about this—to work with the Government to ensure that it delivers what is required in the Lake Macquarie area. We need a collaborative approach in response to housing across the State. Only yesterday, I spoke with the new Federal Minister for Housing about how we can work together to deliver a greater supply pipeline and more social and affordable housing for the people of this great State, particularly in the regions.

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

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: This challenge is too important for us not to work together to deliver real change for our communities. While our job is never done, the Coalition Government is continuing to work hard to secure a brighter future for all of New South Wales.

SENIORS COST-OF-LIVING RELIEF

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (15:28): My question is addressed to the Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors. Will the Minister update the House on how the Liberal-Nationals Government is delivering cost-of-living relief to seniors across this State?

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors) (15:29): I thank the member for Heathcote for his question. He is someone who fights—day in, day out—for his electorate. He is, of course, the Karate Kid of Heathcote—"Wax on, wax off". I have always wanted to put that in *Hansard*. We on this side of the House understand the pressure that the cost of living can put on people, especially our seniors. This Government is taking action to build a brighter future for older people in New South Wales so they can live their lives without the stress of needing to watch their bank balances. This side of the House can take action because of our strong economic management.

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

Mr MARK COURE: Only this Government is able to provide over 80 rebates, available through Service NSW, which particularly help seniors to ease their cost of living. The Government's priority is to ensure that the seniors of New South Wales are safe and have access to the best possible services. On the Service NSW website, seniors receiving a pension may be eligible for up to 67 rebates. Seniors classified as self-funded retirees can access over 37 rebates. I recommend that every senior book a Savings Finder appointment through a Service NSW centre. Rebate savings for pensioners include free driving tests, the pensioner concession on vehicle registration, free New South Wales driver licence renewal and the pensioner water rebate.

But wait, there's more. How good is the pensioner concession Opal card? There is also the Pensioner Travel Voucher, the regional seniors travel card and more. I was with the member for Heathcote at a forum to hear the story of a senior who went to the Service NSW centre at Engadine for a Savings Finder appointment and was able to get a saving of over \$1,800 on their cost of living. This made a world of difference to them. They were able to take a family holiday—something that they had not been able to do before. Not only is there a huge list of rebates available for seniors, but also Service NSW centres are able to provide seniors with advice on retirement and e-toll concessions. Only this side of the House can ease the cost-of-living pressures to build a brighter future for seniors across New South Wales, as a result of this Government's strong economic management.

Commemorations

STOLEN GENERATIONS APOLOGY TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (15:33): I acknowledge that we are meeting on the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. As the member for Terrigal and Parliamentary Secretary, I acknowledge that I represent the people of the Darkinjung nation and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging. From the outset, I thank members on both sides of the House for this bipartisan commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology to the Stolen Generations. What we heard in this Chamber yesterday could not but touch our hearts. The speeches we heard from Uncle James, Aunty Lorraine and Uncle Richard went to the core of why we are in this place.

I was proud to sit in the Chamber yesterday and listen to those three people. Listening to Uncle Widdy's emotional and passionate description of his experience of being one of the victims of the Stolen Generations could not but move all of us. I acknowledge the amazing Aboriginal people of the Central Coast and the Darkinjung people. There are some incredible people on the Central Coast who are brave leaders themselves—people like Danielle Captain-Webb, the former chair of Darkinjung Aboriginal Land Council, and my good friend Barry "BJ" Duncan. I only found out recently that BJ and I share a birthday, so 16 May is a significant day for both of us. I am pleased that I am younger than BJ. I also acknowledge Brendan Moyle, the CEO of Darkinjung Aboriginal Land Council.

During yesterday's commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology to the Stolen Generations, the intent of this Parliament to work across all borders was very clear. I acknowledge the great speech made by the Premier. He articulated how all of us felt when he talked about the speech by Aunty Nancy de Vries, in which she told her very confronting story of a life that she described herself as incomprehensible. She was taken from her mother at the very tender age of 14 months. As she said in her speech, she grew up alone, isolated and different from everyone else around her. She was never treated as an equal and never had an understanding of why. She saw her people being belittled and denigrated and made victims of racism in their own land.

Last week we acknowledged National Reconciliation Week on the Central Coast. I was proud to take part in the smoking ceremony at Gosford Leagues Club Park, held by the outstanding organisation Coast Shelter.

I acknowledge the great work that organisation does. It was a chance for our community to come together and acknowledge the healing process. You cannot have more than 90 people at a gathering on the Central Coast unless you have council approval, so there were only 90 people. There were not 200 people who attended that, because it was a gathering of all of us who felt so passionately about that. To all those council people counting heads, I say that there were only 90.

It was great to see the other 90-odd people attend, to acknowledge the systemic change that we need. Those acknowledgements of being brave and making a change are so important. It also gave us a chance to acknowledge the Stolen Generations and pay our respects to those we have lost. I give special recognition to all of those survivors whose stories exist in that deeper understanding of the past. That could not have been made any clearer yesterday than by the passionate, emotional and heartfelt story that Uncle Widdy told. Listening to his story, we could only begin to imagine what he and so many others has gone through. To be described as a number is, in itself, hard enough for us to understand.

I am very proud to be part of a Parliament that led the way 25 years ago. The Premier acknowledged former Premier Carr and former Opposition leader Peter Collins, and their steadfastness to do the right thing and acknowledge the Stolen Generations. It was very fitting considering that last week was National Reconciliation Week, when our communities came together across the State and across the nation to acknowledge so many people and the 65,000-year legacy and custodianship of this country. Again, I acknowledge those Stolen Generations, pay my respect to those we have lost and give special recognition to all of those survivors.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (15:38): Like so many other members, I contribute to this important discussion. I am standing on Gadigal land, and I acknowledge that whatever lands we come from are really important and really significant. It is incredibly important to acknowledge the traditional lands on which we represent our communities. It has been 25 years since the apology, and yesterday in Parliament was a very special day. It was what the Parliament can be when it is at its best, when there is a complete approach across the entire Parliament of all the parties and all the individuals working together for one thing. There was a lovely moment where former Premier Carr was acknowledged and, in the next breath, former Opposition leader Peter Collins was acknowledged. That is the time when Parliament can be at its best. It is something that maybe we do not do often enough, but it makes an enormous difference.

Reflecting back on 25 years and that special moment, it is significant to think about the leadership and courage that it took. I am especially heartened by the fact that former Opposition leader Peter Collins showed leadership and joined with the Premier in making the apology; I know that would have been a bit more difficult for him. This thing is bigger than politics. It is above politics. Our history is a storied one. It is a 60,000-year history that then takes on the past couple of hundred years, in which history has changed a great deal. We cannot run away from our history. We accept our history, and we have to acknowledge what happened in history. That is part of what we call truth-telling. We know that people have made mistakes over time, but how do we rectify that? How do we make the changes that are required?

It is very clear that the treatment of First Nations people was not something to be proud of from the outset, from European settlement right through to this point. There is so much more that we can do. Dispossession, segregation and isolation are not practices that we should be proud of. As a former teacher, I used to talk about Aboriginal soldiers who fought in World War I. They went to fight for Australia, but they were not even considered citizens of Australia. I remember the story of Uncle Harry from the Lakemba RSL, a great man and a great friend of mine, who was telling me that he could not even go into the bar with his fellow soldiers because of his skin colour. His fellow soldiers would buy him drinks and take them outside because they believed in the spirit of camaraderie and mateship.

Those are the realities. We saw some big changes, particularly with the referendum. It is more than a symbol. I agree with the Premier that symbols play an important role. It is much more than something tokenistic, because it is a change. The 1967 referendum was a change, and from that moment we saw more and more First Nations people rise into positions of leadership and prominence. Why is that important? It is important because every Indigenous kid who would see that successful person in a high position would know that there is an opportunity for them, that they can achieve it, and that ceilings made of glass are there to be broken.

One of the most shameful elements of our recent history has been the practice of removing children, of taking them away from their families. We hear heartbreaking stories; we heard them yesterday. Every time we speak to anybody we might know whose family is related to that practice, we hear about the sheer horror of taking children away from their mums, away from their families and away from a sense of community. We have heard about not only the effect that had on the decimation of families and communities but also the impact that it had on individuals, who never felt like they belonged, who were effectively used for completely different purposes and who never had a chance to have a childhood.

I know there is a long way to go. We all learn something, and my understanding of connection to family really came into being when I did a trip with the member for Wyong through the Far West of New South Wales. We started in Moree and headed all the way to Broken Hill, where I learned so much more about connection to family, understanding and kinship, the importance of that, and the impact of removing people from their families, their sense of history, their traditions and their culture. I am amazed that we have to talk about it in the Parliament, because all members know this to be the case. I am saddened that it was one of the practices that this Parliament endorsed. To that end, like everybody in this place, I wholeheartedly apologise for those practices. We need to ensure that we do more than just apologise. We have to start addressing the big gaps and make these apologies tangible. How do we improve health outcomes, educational outcomes, incarceration rates and leadership so that, when we talk about closing the gap, we actually close the gap? Our best Australia is an Australia where every single person contributes, belongs and is valued.

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government) (15:43): I support the Premier's motion to acknowledge the twenty-fifth anniversary of the apology to the Stolen Generations. I acknowledge that I stand on the Gadigal country of the Eora nation, and I pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging. Like other members, I was in the Chamber yesterday for the moving speeches given by Uncle Michael, Uncle Richard and Aunty Lorraine. Listening to the trauma that they have gone through, we start to understand the intergenerational nature of what took place all those years ago and how difficult it is to make amends. The reality is that we cannot make amends for what took place. No apology and no amount of money will ever return their lives to them. It was horrendous to hear what those poor people went through. They represent only the tip of the iceberg of all those who experienced that trauma. The definition of "stolen" is "taken away without permission". Those powerful stories that reverberated throughout this Chamber spoke to that Stolen Generation. But it was not only the generation that was stolen. It was something far more pervasive: culture and language.

I was Minister for Aboriginal Affairs from 2011 to 2015. The reality is that governments of all political persuasions were not doing a good enough job in addressing the Closing the Gap initiatives. From the outset, I was required to listen to the community so that we could work together towards solving some of the problems. I will never forget a moment when I spoke to a beautiful aunty in remote New South Wales. She said to me that the most important thing government could do to help make amends is work with the community to restore language. I was surprised by that because I thought there would be all sorts of other things relating to health and jobs and the like. But overwhelmingly the predominant theme that came through those consultations was language. Aunty said to me, "Government took our language away from us." When kids were taken away from their families, in addition to the horrendous trauma of that dislocation from loved ones, they also lost their language and their connection to culture, which was soul destroying.

I will never forget the way in which Aunty said that to me. It was almost stoic. There were no tears; it was almost matter of fact. The trauma that she had gone through was scar tissue talking. We spent a lot of time consulting with the Aboriginal community. We consulted over 2,700 people. We listened to their stories about the priorities we had to have. That resulted in an initiative called OCHRE, which stands for Opportunity, Choice, Healing, Responsibility and Empowerment. Out of that initiative came a number of ideas that the Aboriginal community brought forward. As another former Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Madam Deputy Speaker, you would know that one of those ideas was the first ever Aboriginal Ombudsman, to oversee existing and future government initiatives. That oversight is critical. Without oversight, things get lost. Opportunity hubs were created, and they still exist.

There is a number of other initiatives. In particular, I draw members' attention to the Aboriginal Language and Culture Nests. I remember returning to remote New South Wales and seeing that aunty again for the opening of the language and culture nest, which she was part of. I said to her, "We are here today because you told us back then that you would like language to be restored." She started crying. I said, "Aunty, you didn't cry last time. Why are you crying this time? Didn't we do it right? What's wrong?" I will never forget what she said to me. She said, "I never thought I'd be living to see this day. Government took away our language, and now we are working with government to try to bring it back." She just could not believe she was alive to see that day. Having said that, I acknowledge that there is so much more to do. I am sorry. I am part of the Government, but I am equally sorry for all the trauma that was caused.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (15:49): I acknowledge that we are on the Gadigal land of the Eora nation. I also acknowledge that every day I am privileged to work and live on Darkinjung and Guringai land. In my electorate we have the beautiful Deerubbun River in the south, Awaba in the north and magnificent Mount Yengo to the west, where Biimi stepped down from the sky. We live in a place of strong Aboriginal spiritual energy. I acknowledge the visitors and families from the Stolen Generation who joined us yesterday in the Parliament. I acknowledge their spirits, the harm and pain that we have caused and the journey of trauma that they have lived since they were taken away as children under government policy. They really are survivors.

I acknowledge the pain caused by the forcible removal of Aboriginal people. It has had such an impact on connection to family, community and culture. We have broken connections to ancestors, dance, songs, songlines, artefacts, identity, aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters, knowledge, totems, bloodlines and country. We have broken the deep connection to country. We have destroyed and interrupted the law and the holistic sense of self that Aboriginal people have—the spirit within them. The stories of Uncle Michael, Aunty Lorraine and Uncle Richard were profound, and their sharings were beautiful. It was important they took us on the journey so that members of this Parliament could feel the pain. It was also important to have Bob Carr in the Parliament. He made a brave move in making the apology.

I also acknowledge the Leader of the Opposition for sharing the truth. Part of the journey is the truth-telling that must occur. To put it bluntly, it was a Labor government that put the policy in place through the Aborigines Protection Amending Act 1915. That Act gave permission to the Aborigines Protection Board to forcibly separate Aboriginal children from their families in the interests of "the moral and physical wellbeing" of such children. It is real and raw, and we are responsible. Being part of the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration stopped my breath. Last night I went home emotionally fatigued not only because of the harm that we have caused but also because of the journey that we are on with Aboriginal people.

Yesterday Aboriginal people stood on the verandah of Parliament House. We saw the smoking ceremony and fantastic dance. We enjoyed deep Aboriginal culture. It comes with such a generous, inclusive and almost forgiving way of being, without a grudge being held against us. We are working hard to move forward. Vincent Lingiari at Wave Hill exemplified the patience that Aboriginal people show towards us white colonists in the journey to healing and reparation. We might be 25 years on, but we still have a long way to go. As the member for Terrigal said last week, anything we can do, as members of Parliament and as communities, to teach and reconcile is so important. I thank Coast Shelter. I also thank the boys from The Glen, which is a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre in our community. So much of what goes on at The Glen is caused by government policy and the resulting Stolen Generation. I am so glad that we can support The Glen and celebrate Aboriginal culture in our community. The guys out there are sharing brilliantly.

I also acknowledge the amazing job that Mingaletta Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corp does in our community. The aunts and Elders involved in our Mingaletta Aboriginal community give generously of their culture. The kids who learn to dance through Mingaletta give generously to the community and allow many more people in my community to celebrate Aboriginal culture. Yesterday Uncle Michael said that everywhere we walk in Australia there was a black foot before us. It is a really important message. I remember sitting on the sand with Aboriginal kids, listening to Archie Roach singing *Took the Children Away* at the dreaming festival. I commit to continuing to sit with Aboriginal people and to listening carefully. It is beautiful that we now have fantastic Gordon Reid—a Wiradjuri man—representing our region in the Federal Parliament. Led by Albo and Linda Burney, we will be putting in place the Uluru Statement from the Heart. It is a nice time to be a member of Parliament, considering the harm that Parliament has caused in the past.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (15:54): I acknowledge the traditional custodians, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, of the land on which we meet here. I pay respect to the sacred land of the Dharug people, where I live, work, play and raise my family. I have been taught by my friend Jie Pittman that acknowledgement is not only the words but that also you must express your intentions. My intention in this Parliament is to commit to building relations, respect and opportunities with Aboriginal people.

Yesterday was a day of mixed emotions, from sadness and regret for all our disgraceful treatment of Aboriginal people, through to a sense of hope, because of the resilience and pride of a great culture, that there will be ways to improve things. Uncle James Michael Widdy Welsh, Aunty Lorraine Peeters and Uncle Richard Dawes spoke of their tragedies and emotional affliction and their resilience in dealing with and overcoming them, and of how they provide a beacon of hope for their families, for people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander heritage and for us all.

Bob Carr was the first Australian leader to make the apology and begin the process of righting the wrongs. The motion from the Premier, supported by NSW Labor leader Chris Minns, reaffirms the resolution of this House almost 25 years ago to apologise to the Aboriginal people of Australia for the separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families, communities and country. I, along with every member of this Parliament, unreservedly apologise to all Aboriginal people for the systematic injustices of separating Aboriginal children and the continuing pain and suffering that have created deep-seated intergenerational trauma and agony. I, together with all other parliamentarians, commit to doing whatever we can to implement policies and programs to end the trauma and provide opportunity for all.

I now turn to some of the wonderful Elders and emerging Elders of the Blacktown City community. They are doing wonderful things. Uncle Greg Simms is an Elder I have known for over two decades and a wonderful friend. He is a traditional wood carver, a storyteller, an educator in Aboriginal culture and an activist for

reconciliation. Uncle Greg always talks about harmony and has a saying: "Remember that the music always sounds better when you play both the black and white keys." Uncle Wes Marne has been a resident of Mount Druitt for 45 years and originally came from Bigambul country. Uncle Wes recently turned 100 years of age and has just published a book of his poetry, *Through Old Eyes*, reflecting on history, colonisation, family and Aboriginal dreaming. Uncle Wes has lived through much adversity, but his resilience is an inspiration to us all. If we truly are committed to truth-telling, Uncle Wes Marne's book ought to be immediately ordered by the education Minister and distributed to all schools.

Aunty Edna Watson, a Dharug Elder, is an artist and storyteller who has made significant contributions to preserving the Dharug language and to the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the areas of nursing and midwifery. She has developed a curriculum for New South Wales schools in western Sydney to revitalise the Dharug language. Jie Pittman has a mixed lineage of both Aboriginal and colonial heritage. Jie is a very knowledgeable person, but he would be one of the first to say that there is much to learn from the Elders. Jie provides courses in our schools and for corporate and community organisations through his business, Liven Truth Productions. Jie is challenging the way we think and transforming how we do things so that there is real meaning in our reconciliation process.

Julie Clarke-Jones is a proud Dharug woman who works as an advocate, educator, consultant, artist, dancer and mentor to many people and supports various organisations. Julie has also made contributions to many parliamentary committees' investigations and advocates for cultural awareness, equity, access and self-determination. Blacktown City has many more Aboriginal role models and organisations who strive to make a difference. Unfortunately, money is a major hurdle in dealing with the challenges, hence the importance of self-determination. Only building a strong network of Aboriginal voices who can make a difference in the local area will lead to making a real difference in our society.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (15:59): I am delighted to make a contribution to this important debate. I begin by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet, the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. I pay my respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. I acknowledge also the traditional owners in my own home town of Campbelltown, the Dharawal people. In Campbelltown we live on land that always was and always will be Aboriginal land. I acknowledge also all of my colleagues and all of the traditional owners across this great State and the important role they play in our society as people of the oldest living human cultures on earth. I particularly highlight the Yuin people, from whom my own Aboriginal history comes, through my late grandmother. I pay my respects to all of them. Later on I will talk a little more about the Yuin people and my family heritage, as much as I understand.

Twenty-five years ago, this Parliament took the step of formally apologising to the Aboriginal people of Australia and New South Wales for the systematic and forced removal of Aboriginal children from their parents, families, communities and country, and acknowledged the continued pain and suffering experienced by Aboriginal people across New South Wales and Australia. I acknowledge the significant role of former Labor Premier Bob Carr in leading this discussion and taking the appropriate steps to ensure that we as a State formally apologised to the Stolen Generations. I acknowledge also the then Opposition leader, Peter Collins, who very rightly provided bipartisan support.

Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition referred to some comments from people who were averse at that time to that suggestion of an apology. I did my own research and was disappointed to read some of the statements. In my view, the rhetorical speeches of the conservatives did nothing but divide and instil fear at a time when we wanted to bring hope, encouragement and healing. We now know that this Parliament does not have that. I acknowledge all my colleagues in this place, who unanimously support this motion. This is not a matter of politics; this is a matter of the right thing to do. We are all taught from a very young age that, when we do something wrong, we simply say sorry. That is how I have always viewed reconciliation, simply saying sorry when wrong has been done, and there has been wrong done to Aboriginal people in this State and this nation since colonisation, particularly when it comes to the Stolen Generations.

I acknowledge also and thank the Aboriginal Elders who were here—Uncle Richard, Aunty Lorraine and Uncle Michael—for sharing their very moving stories with us yesterday in this House. I could not begin to imagine how difficult that may have been for those three Elders. I pay my respects to them and thank them for their advocacy and for coming and telling their stories in Australia's oldest Parliament. With everyone who has spoken on behalf of the Parliament, and as the opposition Leader stated, I personally reaffirm the commitment to and importance of the path of reconciliation and unreservedly say sorry for the intergenerational trauma and deep-seated agony those policies and laws have inflicted on many generations of Aboriginal people in this State.

The apology was a vital step in the process of healing for Aboriginal people. However, we know that the process of reconciliation must continue, and it is up to us to ensure that past injustices are made right and that the mistakes of the past are never repeated. The process of healing and reconciliation is not an easy journey, but it

must be met with action and not just words. This includes action in closing the gap and addressing the poor and unacceptable statistics that see a huge discrepancy in the basic living standards of our First Nations people. As it currently stands, Indigenous people, as stated yesterday, have a life expectancy of 8.2 years less than the general population, a 25 per cent gap in year 12 completion and a nearly 30-year gap in tertiary education attainment. Those are just some of the startling figures. These are real and pressing issues, and we must be willing to work together to address the appalling statistics.

We in this place know that best outcomes are always achieved by working together. There is nothing more important than working together to close the gap and provide our First Nations people with the policies and support that they not only need but also deserve.

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (16:05): I acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which the Auburn electorate stands, who are the Wangal and Watergoro people. The Wangal lands cover the southern banks of the Parramatta River, from Me-Mel Island to the now Parramatta CBD. The Watergoro peoples called the lands around Duck River their country. Of course, the Wangal and Watergoro people were the first dispossessed of their lands, as the tract of the land from the colony in Sydney to Parramatta along the south side of the river was handed over as agricultural land from the beginning of the colony. It is a great tragedy for the people of the Auburn area that so much of the Aboriginal community there was completely decimated. While we are marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of saying sorry and the fact that the New South Wales Parliament was the first to do that, it is a terrible thing that it is only 25 years ago that any parliament chose to say sorry for what happened to the Aboriginal people. Many of those people were forced off their traditional lands and away from their homes, with their children taken, no likelihood of a livelihood and nowhere to live.

In the Parliament we heard powerful stories from those who were taken away from their families and sent to boys and girls homes, in particular to places such as Kinchela Boys Home in Kempsey. For me this is particularly poignant because boys from St Clair Aboriginal Mission were sent to Kinchela Boys Home when the mission closed. My grandfather and all his brothers and sisters were also on St Clair Aboriginal Mission. It is hard to know why they were there. My grandmother was Aboriginal. They came off farmland in Walka. My grandmother was born at Glennies Creek Station, which is where St Clair Aboriginal Mission was located. When my great-grandfather went off to the First World War, the 1915 Act of this Parliament stated that children could be taken away. If children had a white father and an Aboriginal mother and their father was not around—he was off in the war—it would have represented a great risk to them and they were, obviously, taken and left at St Clair Aboriginal Mission. It is fortunate that my grandfather and his brothers, Ernie, Eric and Uncle Keith, were all old enough to be off the mission before it closed and the boys were sent to Kinchela in Kempsey. They had a very tough life but nothing like what the boys experienced at the Kinchela mission.

It is a tragedy that those who were removed from their parents often saw their own children and grandchildren removed later on. In my family, my cousin as a child was removed from her mother in the Northern Territory and raised by a non-Aboriginal family in Sydney. She now has two children who have both had children removed. One of my best mates at school whose mother was part of the Stolen Generations and who was taken away from her mother under these Acts had her children removed under the most tragic circumstances. Sorry is not enough for the impacts of colonialism on Aboriginal people. The effects have been far reaching and are impacting generations and will continue to impact generations.

It is not enough for us to come here and say sorry and talk about the Closing the Gap report. There needs to be an attitudinal shift within this community to make sure that the lot of people is better and the cycle does not go on. I cannot tell members how many police officers have said to me that, more often than not, there will be a group of Aboriginal kids down the road and they will get a call, not necessarily because the kids are doing something wrong but because people are working on the assumption that they are doing something wrong. They are bound to respond to those calls. It does not matter which way one puts it; people in Australia are making assumptions and it is having a direct impact on Aboriginal people. People who do need help from health and government services quite often are being passed over because of their socio-economic standing. Numerous friends have said to me, "I don't know why they have come around to my house. There is no possible reason other than that I am Aboriginal." That is not necessarily coming from the government agencies and departments; it is coming from calls within the community. People just have to take a step back. They have to realise the havoc that colonialism has wreaked on structures, cultures and families and the way that they were built.

Another point that I think deserves some kind of recognition is what it has done for Aboriginal women along the way. I hear talk about Uncle Harry—I know him well; he is a good mate of mine and he lives at Chester Hill—and about them bringing alcohol out to him so he could have a beer at the pub. There is no way women were allowed in the pub. Women were mainly in domestic service, and Aboriginal people were excluded from the union movement and awards. Anyone who has ever been near the town of Wee Waa will know of the cotton chippers who had to go on strike in 1973—not a long time ago. I was at school. I was probably in about fourth

grade at the time. They were getting about a dollar an hour to do some of the most horrendous work, 10 hours a day—no smokos—and they were not allowed to be compensated under any award, unlike the people on the missions who were barely paid anything and required to work 32 hours a week.

To a large extent, women have been written out of the history of Aboriginal contact with early colonists. One of the important things is that colonialism did not just destroy lives, culture, language and families; it also destroyed the matrilineal power structures that were part of Aboriginal communities. Coastal New South Wales was home to powerful cultures and communities that were run by powerful women. Work by local historians has revealed truths that seem at odds without an understanding of Aboriginal society. One of the first people to write to the Governor of the colony of New South Wales to secure native title rights for the property they shared with their brothers was an Aboriginal woman. When colonial elections took place in Sydney, Aboriginal people, both men and women, travelled to the city to lobby candidates about Aboriginal welfare programs and policies. On the shores of the nation where we stand, that of the Gadigal people, women would take all their children out fishing in their canoes. They would then gut and clean their catch, light a fire on the canoe and feed themselves and all their children out on the water. Whatever was left was brought ashore for the men, if the women felt like it. From passing on culture and language to holding the power for social change, it was with women.

While the colonists came, of course, they communicated and negotiated with the men. They brought them food and, in some cases, social rank. They could not possibly imagine that the women were actually in charge. An interesting case is Bennelong. Most people think Bennelong was the original translator for the Aboriginal people with the colony, which is not true. In 1879 a smallpox plague introduced by the colonists swept through the Aboriginal people and wreaked havoc. Boorong, a young girl and another young boy were brought into the household of Reverend Johnson in Sydney Cove in 1790 after contracting smallpox and considered orphaned. Boorong was the first Aborigine to understand the English language. These language skills meant she was often the go-between between the colonists and the Aboriginal people. She made several visits to Bennelong in the spring of 1790. In October 1790 Boorong returned to her bushlands. An image of Boorong is held by the National History Museum in London.

Interestingly, Boorong was Bennelong's third wife and is buried beside him on Wallumedegal country on the north side of Parramatta River. It is probably the case that the suburb of Birrong is named after Boorong, which would make it the first place in Australia ever to be named after an Aboriginal woman. It is hard to know; it is history unrecognised. Aboriginal women are completely written out of the history of the colony. If we want to start with the truth, let us start with getting women back into the history books where they should be.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:15): I contribute to debate on the motion marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the New South Wales Parliament's apology to the Stolen Generation. I acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation on whose land the Parliament meets and pay my respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. The Labor Premier of the day, the Hon. Bob Carr, was in only his first year of office when he determined in this hallowed place to put forward an apology on behalf of the people of New South Wales for the forcible removal and separation of First Nations children from their families. At the time, Australia was a very different place. The year 1997 marked only five years since the famous *Mabo v Queensland* decision, where, for the first time, the High Court rejected the notion of terra nullius and overnight gave recognition to the rich and wonderful cultures that have existed on these ancient lands for tens of thousands of years prior to the arrival of European settlers.

In 1997 I was a barrister working from time to time in the criminal court circuit, travelling to regional New South Wales, where I saw firsthand the systemic injustices suffered by First Nations Australians in their relationship with the law. The legal system that once suppressed their peoples, tore them from their lands and was the mechanism by which colonialism attempted to erase their population, continues to do so but in a different form. Since the days of early settlement, under various government policies the mistreatment of our First Nations people has evolved but never fully ceased. Early interactions between Europeans and Australia's ancient peoples were characterised by dispossession, physical ill-treatment, social disruption, population decline, economic exploitation, codified discrimination and cultural devastation.

The twentieth century then saw an insidious attempt by governments to justify further misdeeds, using a paternalistic pseudo-philosophy. The Healing Foundation estimates that as many as one in three First Nations children were taken from their families between 1910 and the 1970s. Generations of children were torn not just from the care and love of their own families but also from their cultural heritage. Their rich and nuanced birthright was replaced by the cold of group home institutions, foster homes or adopted families that did not understand them and forced them to submit to new lives, physically and psychologically stripping them from their old lives.

The actions of previous governments have created a huge amount of both personal and cultural trauma for the Stolen Generation of First Nations people. The grief of losing not only one's family but also one's own self through the loss of identity, land, language and culture continues today. As much as there are many concrete and

specific actions that current and future governments need to take to make reparations and truly place First Nations people on an even playing field with newer Australians, the healing could not begin without first acknowledging that historic governments were wrong, their ideas were wrong and they used them to do wrong.

The apology was and remains so much more than just a gesture or tokenistic public relations exercise. To the thousands of people who as children were ripped from their families and brought up to think that all the hurt and isolation they felt growing up as Indigenous people was their own fault, it is so much more. To the generations of women mourning the loss of their children and grandchildren, being systematically told it was their fault and that they were unfit mothers, it is so much more. The apology was a long-awaited statement of recognition that it was never their fault. The incredible trauma that was inflicted by colonialism on generation after generation of First Nations people over centuries will take generations to truly address. In New South Wales that process of reconciliation truly started 25 years ago with a Labor Government, with the support of a Coalition Opposition, having the courage to acknowledge that the misdeeds were made.

For that deep and widespread harm inflicted upon our First Nations people I and the rest of this Parliament to this day are truly sorry as we move towards reconciliation and ultimately a treaty with those who are the original owners of this land.

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (16:21): This week we mark a significant milestone in this House with the twenty-fifth anniversary of Bob Carr's apology to the Stolen Generation. I commend the motion as we remember what is a very historic occasion, not only for the Parliament but also for the public of New South Wales. The New South Wales apology was historic. It was the first apology from any Parliament in Australia. Our nation will never go forward if we are unable to recognise our history in all its aspects. Our people will never heal if the wounds of the treatment of our Indigenous Australians are never attended to. It is important that the Parliament made this historic apology to our Indigenous Australians, because it allows us to stimulate the debate that is required and also causes us as a people to reflect on our history. We can never have a better future if we are unable to recognise the impact and the pain that some of our historical events have caused to a section of our community.

Whilst an apology is a first step in the healing process, we still have much work to do. Between 1910 and the 1970s many Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families as a result of various government policies. The generations of children removed under these policies became known as the Stolen Generation. Taking children away from their parents, their families and communities that surround them, taking their identity away and commodifying them like items on a shop shelf where they can be bought and transferred to any place that one wants is a very dehumanising aspect of the very essence of what it is to be human, to be loved and cared for and linked to one's community of family and friends. This chapter in our history is something we recognise and is something we need to attend to going forward.

The shameful policies of the removal of children left a legacy of trauma and loss that continues to affect our Indigenous communities and their families today and indeed our nation's psyche. There is no great pleasure in defending a policy which inflicted so much emotion and psychological hurt. Children taken from their parents were taught to reject the very essence of who they were, their community and identity, a culture that had tens of thousands of years behind it. Children were forbidden to speak their own language or engage with their culture and identity. Some children were adopted by white families, but many children were also placed in institutions where abuse and neglect were common. First Nations people who were removed were left with lifelong trauma and were never treated as equal to non-Indigenous Australians.

I acknowledge the enduring pain, immense suffering and gross injustices those policies caused for our Indigenous Australians. The hurt cannot be undone. Nevertheless, we need to move forward as a nation, and we can start by ensuring that there is a recognition of the historical past, truth-telling, a path to healing and, of course, a path towards reconciliation. We can never be comfortable as a country and as a community when a section of our people, Indigenous Australians, are so over-represented in categories such as lower life expectancy, lower educational attainment, higher incarceration and higher smoking rates. It is uncomfortable for our national psyche to see so many of our fellow Australians left so far behind and not achieving their true potential and their aspirations, not only for themselves but for our nation. There is still much work to be done. The Closing the Gap report continues to say that there is such a wide gap, but it is one that I think we can close with dedication, commitment and recognition of the historical facts.

Life expectancy for our Indigenous Australians is 8.2 years lower than it is for non-Indigenous Australians. The national rate of imprisonment is 15 times higher. There is a 25 per cent gap in educational attainment. This is not good enough for us as a nation. I know all of us should be and are committed to closing that gap. I know that New South Wales is committed to ensuring a continuing dialogue with our Indigenous Australians to develop a process to improve outcomes across all communities. The newly elected Federal Labor Government and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese will progress a referendum to constitutionally enshrine a voice to Parliament and, of

course, the Uluru Statement from the Heart to genuinely move things forward. Reconciliation is so important to our nation's future and prosperity. We can never go forward as a people and as a nation if we are unable to address the shortcomings and the gaps between Australians and Indigenous Australians.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (16:26): I first acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. I also acknowledge the Dharawal people, on whose land I am lucky to live and lucky to represent. They are part of the oldest continuous culture around the world. Yesterday we said sorry again. Twenty-five years ago this Parliament, in a bipartisan way, made a momentous decision to say sorry to our Indigenous brothers and sisters, particularly those from the Stolen Generation—all of those individuals and their families who were so terribly impacted by the policies of governments of all political persuasions all those years ago. Having been in this place for 11 years, I do not think I have heard a set of heartfelt speeches like those we heard yesterday from survivors. The respect that they were given from both sides of the House was truly special.

I do not think we can ever feel their pain—I certainly cannot—but to hear their pain is important. It was important to have the former Premier and former Leader of the Opposition—the Hon. Bob Carr and the Hon. Peter Collins—back in the Chamber again. It was important to have survivors speaking on the floor of this Chamber, like they did 25 years ago. As legislators, all of us in this place have to do better. Some of the healthcare statistics have been touched on already. The Indigenous incarceration rate is 15 times higher. Life expectancy is eight to nine years lower. Indigenous people have poorer health outcomes when it comes to physical, social and mental wellbeing. This is, obviously, the result of colonisation. The long-term effects of being colonised have caused these inequalities in Indigenous health status and health care.

That is just one area. Obviously, education and incarceration are two other areas that our Indigenous brothers and sisters are over-represented in. Today both sides of Parliament are committed to not only saying sorry again but also making sure that the policies, commitments and legislations that are brought to this House will, hopefully, reduce some of those inequalities and close that gap that the member for Macquarie Fields talked about. I do have hope because I am someone who firmly believes that each Parliament has to be better than the last one. That is how our society develops. We are a better Parliament today than the one all those years ago and certainly the ones that administered those draconian policies. But we also have to make sure that we do not rest on our laurels, because we still have a long way to go.

Truth-telling is important. All of the speakers said that yesterday. Aboriginal Elders have spoken to me about that. It is really important. But I also think we should make sure our children have a deep understanding of our Aboriginal culture. I am very pleased that I have advocated for the rollout of signage, storyboards and information across key Indigenous sites in the Illawarra that tell the story of our Indigenous brothers and sisters and what that land was and always will be to them. Those are very important issues as well. I thank the House, but I also say to all of us, myself included, that we all have a responsibility to do better and to make sure that the Parliament in 25 years reflects on this Parliament and says, "Not only did they say sorry again, but they committed to doing better. And all of them did better." That will be a lasting legacy that survivors can look back on—that we really were able to make a lasting difference.

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

Motion agreed to.

Announcements

INDEPENDENT COMPLAINTS OFFICER

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I report a message from the Legislative Council advising of amendments to the resolution of the Legislative Council of 22 March 2022 establishing an Independent Complaints Officer. The details of the message will be printed in the *Votes and Proceedings*.

Community Recognition Statements

MULGOA SENIOR SCHOOL CAPTAINS LEADERSHIP FORUM

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (16:32): I acknowledge the schools that attended my Mulgoa Senior School Captains Leadership Forum today. Student leaders and teachers from the Liverpool campus of Al-Faisal College, Irphan College, St Clair High School, Mamre Anglican School, Cecil Hills High School, Glenmore Park High School, Thomas Hassall Anglican College and Penrith Anglican College were all present at the leadership forum. Feedback from the students indicated that they felt immensely privileged and honoured to be in this place. They especially appreciated the contributions of my guest speakers, which were Ministers the Hon. Natasha Maclaren Jones, the Hon. Bronnie Taylor and the Hon. Damien Tudehope from the other place. There was also a special surprise visit to Minister Anthony Roberts. I acknowledge all my parliamentary colleagues in this place

who assisted in the facilitation of this event and congratulate all students on their aspirations and desires to be leaders not only in their school but in their life post-school.

MOBILITY HIRE & SALES WOY WOY

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:33): It fills my heart with joy to be able to share a story of true community spirit from a local business located in Woy Woy. Last month a vulnerable member of our community called the office with an urgent need for a mobility scooter to enable him to leave his home after he was released from prison. He had been calling everywhere, looking for assistance to help pay for the hire of a scooter, as he could not afford it himself. Being right across the road from Mobility Hire & Sales, my great team thought we could ask if it knew of any charities that might be able to assist. To our amazement, the manager of Mobility Hire & Sales Woy Woy, David Turner, offered to lend one of its second-hand mobility scooters to the person, whom he had never met before, for free. Unfortunately, the gentleman failed to return the scooter when he was sectioned a little afterwards, and Dave and the team "re-collected" their goods, apparently undamaged. I thank Dave and the fabulous team at Mobility Hire & Sales for showing us the true meaning of community spirit. It makes me proud to be the representative of a community of such generous people.

COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION QUEANBEYAN EVENING BRANCH

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro) (16:34): As we celebrate 100 years of the Country Women's Association in Australia, I recognise three women from the Queanbeyan Evening Branch for their dedication to the CWA and their local community, each having contributed 25 years of service. Fern MacLachlan has held many office-bearer positions since joining the branch, including president, secretary and treasurer. She also represented the branch as a group councillor at Southern Tablelands Group meetings and is a mentor to all about the branch's history. Bev Hamilton has represented the branch at both the Southern Tablelands Group and State level Land Cookery competitions, where she has won the odd first prize. Following in the footsteps of her mother and grandmother, Christine Tarlinton joined the Tumut branch at a young age. Chris moved to Queanbeyan in 1996, transferring to that branch. She has held the office-bearer positions of Land Cookery in the day branch and treasurer in the evening branch. I congratulate all three women and wholeheartedly thank them for their commitment and contribution to the Country Women's Association and all that it stands for and achieves.

MYALL MASTERS SWIMMING CLUB PARTICIPANT CHRIS LOCK

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (16:35): Where others may see retirement as a time to relax and take on a slower-paced lifestyle, Chris Lock from my electorate of Port Stephens saw it as a challenge. Chris is 80 years young and has been an active member of the Myall Masters Swimming Club for nine years. He was also a founding member of the Warringah Masters swimming club before he moved to Port Stephens. Chris recently represented his Myall club at the Masters Swimming Australia National Championship, and he came away with an impressive haul of five gold medals and four silver medals. On top of his medal results, he also broke two State records. Chris broke the record for the 25 metres backstroke as well as breaking his own State record for the 100 metres backstroke, taking two seconds off his time. Chris is a dedicated community member, involved in volunteering for a number of groups across his community including Myall Coast Radio. I was so impressed by Chris' recent medal haul that I just had to share his successes with the House. I congratulate Chris, who is an inspiring and young-at-heart man.

MINI-MOS COMMUNITY FUN RUN

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:36): This year my community is celebrating a 40-year milestone—not my own birthday but the anniversary of Australia's longest-running consecutively held volunteer fun run, the Mini-Mos. This event began back in 1982 when a small team of Mosman Public School committee members and dedicated parents wanted to do something a little different to raise funds for the school. This year the Mini-Mos will take place on 19 June and is expected to attract up to 10,000 people as runners, spectators, fairgoers, supporters and organisers. I will be among them. I acknowledge the members of the Mini-Mos team: Mandy Scammell, Mosman principal Steve Connelly, Manny Petros, Carlo Giacco, Tom Cahill, William Cornelius, Tara Boris, Nick Adkins, Laura Kahar, Ronel Engelbrecht, Jodie Mulligan, Marc Dodd, Emily Bird, Penny Cadzow, Catriona Engelbrecht, Nicki L'Green, Lucy Walker, Elizabeth May and Tova Gordon. All the money raised through race registrations, sponsors and the fair goes directly to helping fund additional teaching resources, technology and improvements. They are also supporting the Be Centre Foundation, which is Australia's leading play therapy organisation for children who have experienced trauma.

VINNIES NSW RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN LAUNCH

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (16:37): On Tuesday 24 May 2022 I had the pleasure of attending the Vinnies NSW Reconciliation Action Plan launch, along with my colleagues Anne Stanley, MP, Federal member for Werriwa, and Nick Lalich, MP, member for Cabramatta. On display was an array of colourful Aboriginal

artworks donated to local stores, and a very special plaque was unveiled to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, the Cabrogal people of the Dharug nation. I was also fortunate to speak with Rob, a Wiradjuri man and a Vinnies Indigenous engagement partner, who discussed the importance of listening to local voices and preserving the oldest surviving culture. I commend Vinnies for developing a map to ensure progress is made towards reconciliation with Australia's First Nations people, and I thank the society for inviting me to the launch.

NARROMINE FIRE AND RESCUE STATION

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales) (16:38): The bond between father and daughter is a really special one. I am lucky to have two daughters, and I am constantly proud of both of them. I was delighted when I heard that Skye Jones has become the Narromine Fire and Rescue Station's newest retained firefighter, because in doing so she and her dad, station commander Captain Ewen Jones, are making history as the station's first father-daughter duo. Skye brings heaps of experience to her newest role. She is an enrolled nurse and has been a volunteer with the Rural Fire Service since she was 15 years old. Family bonds run deep at the Narromine station, where four generations of the Hawkins family have served. Arthur and Cyril Hawkins were members of the original volunteer crew back in 1929, Robert Hawkins served from 1969 until 2009 and his grandson Lucas Walsh is still an active retained firey. There are also father-son duos Chris T. and Chris J. Woolfe, Bob and Peter Treseder, and Gavin and James Purvis. That is the nature of communities like Narromine: Everyone pitches in. I congratulate Skye and Ewen, who should both be very proud.

FAMILY LAWYER JULIA PUNTORIERO

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (16:39): Today I acknowledge the immense contribution of family lawyer Julia Puntoriero to the Griffith community. Julia has dedicated her career to helping some of the most vulnerable families in Griffith navigate matters such as child support, child custody and divorce. Julia has recognised the detrimental impact that court-ordered separation of parents and children can have on the mental health of the young people involved. Recognising the challenges many families face, Julia presented both the State and Federal governments with a proposal to open a children's contact centre in Griffith. At present, Griffith's closest children's contact centre is located in Wagga Wagga, which currently has an 18-month waiting list. Julia has given up her time to continue to lobby for a contact centre in Griffith. She hopes her recent submission of a business plan receives the funding and attention necessary to get it going. I wish Julia all the best and hope she is successful in establishing a children's contact centre in Griffith.

HEATHCOTE ELECTORATE MUSICIANS

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (16:40): I am delighted to acknowledge the incredible achievements of six young Heathcote musicians, as they have been successful in achieving a place in the Sydney Youth Orchestra 2022 program: Abigail Nicholson, Abigail Ryan, Alicia Wang, Elijah Ryan, Lucas Yang and Belinda Rafferty. Those six young Heathcote musicians are talented and driven, and they will join the Sydney Youth Orchestra 2022 program along with 500 of the finest young musicians across New South Wales. They were selected in a rigorous selection process that included 859 individual auditions. I take this opportunity to congratulate them on their success and wish them all the best as they embark on the Sydney Youth Orchestra 2022 program.

BAYSIDE COUNCIL SENIORS HIGH TEA

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:41): I congratulate Bayside Council along with its mayor, Dr Christina Curry, and councillors on staging the Seniors High Tea honouring the contribution of local seniors. This was by far the most outstanding Bayside Council event I have had the privilege of attending. The mayor and councillors should be proud of the manner in which the council organised and staged the high tea, which respectfully placed our local seniors front and centre for the occasion. From the arrival of guests to the high tea service and entertainment, every detail of the event was well thought out and considered to ensure that each of the local seniors who attended enjoyed the occasion. I congratulate the Mayor of Bayside, Dr Christina Curry, who seems to be making inroads in ensuring that residents are the focus of council services and direction.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading) (16:42): I acknowledge the wonderful Sutherland Shire Historical Society. Founded in 1966, the Sutherland Shire Historical Society has a proud tradition stretching back more than half a century. Over the years the society has taken on the responsibility of recording and preserving our history so that local residents can learn more about our past. Its members tell the story of our heritage through many and various ways, including collecting artefacts for display in the museum, and researching and publishing histories as well as work to help preserve our natural and built heritage. Of course, behind every organisation is a committed and dedicated team who volunteer so much of their time. I recognise Pauline Curby, Elizabeth Craig, Graham Burton, John Doherty, Creo Moore,

Carol MacDonald, Deb Burton, Peter Moore, Dawn Emerson, Bruce Watt, Greg Jackson, Christine Edney, Mary Small, Anne Steward, Kate Doherty, Floriana Camper and Michael Solari. I thank the Sutherland Shire Historical Society for its work to preserve our local history.

ELARA PLAYKIDDIES PLAYGROUP

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (16:43): I recognise the Elara Playkiddies playgroup, which runs in Marsden Park in my electorate. This wonderful playgroup brings together young families in Marsden Park and Melonba—of which there are many—to enjoy activities at the Elara Community Hub. Under the stewardship of Elara powerhouse and local mum Mariam Latifi, the group has continued to grow as the local area has grown and so many new families have moved in. Last week I was so proud to join the group for Elara's Biggest Morning Tea, which raised hundreds of dollars for the Cancer Council. Dr Niveditha Manokaran kindly spoke at the morning tea about the importance of cervical cancer screening, and the event was also supported by many generous local businesses. Groups like Elara Playkiddies bring together families from all walks of life and help to build a wonderful community spirit in north-west Sydney. I congratulate this wonderful group of parents.

VAUCLUSE ELECTORATE EMERGENCY SERVICES VOLUNTEERS

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (16:44): On 18 May 2022 I celebrated Wear Orange Wednesday at New South Wales Parliament in recognition of our committed SES volunteers. I was pleased to have members of my local Waverley Woollahra SES join me, and I thank them firsthand for their efforts. Held during National Volunteer Week, it is a chance to thank the important people who help us at a moment's notice with our calls for help. On 12 May the Woollahra Waverley unit also held its member recognition night. I congratulate the evening's awardees, including long service members Judith Indyk for 10 years, Robi Reiner for 20 years and Maryanne Kelly for an amazing 45 years of volunteering. Local resident Michael Horn was awarded the Paul McQueen Excellence in Leadership Award, Jason Levine was awarded the Spirit of Waverley Woollahra Award, Josh McCluskey was awarded the Training Award and Simon Efron was awarded the Battered Beacon Award. I thank unit commander Jimmy Burnett and all of the volunteers for their enduring support across New South Wales.

POLICE ASSOCIATION OF NEW SOUTH WALES CONFERENCE

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (16:45): On Tuesday 24 May I was pleased to attend the Police Association of New South Wales Conference 2022 in Wollongong. It was a productive conference where New South Wales Police Force officers met to discuss policing in our State. The topics discussed at the conference included strategies for law enforcement to combat the rising threat of organised crime, improved deployment of police resources and ways that the New South Wales Government can support our police officers to increase their capacity for keeping our communities safe. We heard from keynote speakers including newly elected President Kevin Morton, Commissioner Karen Webb and NSW Labor Opposition leader Chris Minns. Some of my fellow NSW Labor parliamentary colleagues were also in attendance, including the Hon. Walt Secord, the shadow Minister for Police; Mr Ryan Park, the shadow Minister for Health; and Mr Paul Scully, the shadow Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. I congratulate the Police Association of New South Wales on a successful conference and congratulate the new leadership team. I look forward to working with them in the future.

RICHMOND FIRE STATION

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (16:46): I am pleased to note the official handover of a new \$530,000 fire truck to Richmond Fire Station. I was joined by Fire and Rescue NSW Deputy Commissioner Jeremy Fewtrell as I officially presented the keys to Captain Brad Spaulding. Capable of holding 3,500 litres of water and equipped with a state-of-the-art compressed foam system, this tanker will be a welcome addition to Hawkesbury's emergency response capabilities. It will also assist firefighters responding to structural fires and call-outs in difficult terrains. The tanker comes as part of a \$460 million investment in new and upgraded firefighting equipment, technology and trucks across the State in response to the NSW Bushfire Inquiry's recommendations following the devastating 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires, particularly in the Hawkesbury. About 40 vehicles are replaced each year by Fire and Rescue NSW as part of a \$17 million New South Wales Government-funded program. I welcome the Government's investment in our firefighters, which in turn protects our communities.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR DR SADAHARU MURAMATSU

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (16:47): Today I recognise Dr Sadaharu Muramatsu, who is celebrating 10 years as artistic director of the Strathfield Symphony Orchestra. Under Sada's direction, the orchestra has gone from strength to strength, attracting wonderful musicians from across Sydney and progressively improving artistic standards. Sada nurtures aspiring young musicians across the Strathfield area. He does this through conducting our public schools orchestra, Symphonia Jubilate, and the Sydney Youth Orchestra. Through Sada's leadership, our young musicians have an opportunity to rehearse, learn and perform quality music with a highly accomplished

conductor and the more experienced members of the Strathfield Symphony Orchestra. Sada also generously donates his time to the Strathfield community, including conducting the annual Seniors Week concert, Christmas carols in the park, the Strathfield Spring Festival and other local events. We are fortunate to have Sada's enormous musical talent in our local area. His broader accomplishments include a Japanese Foreign Minister's commendation and a Consul General of Japan commendation. I sincerely congratulate and thank Sada for his enormous contribution to music in the Strathfield electorate over the past decade.

TOUR DE CURE FUNDRAISER DR ELLY WARREN

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:48): I extend my congratulations to Dr Elly Warren, who is a GP based out of Erina in my electorate. Dr Elly is a keen cyclist, who participates in the Tour de Cure to raise vital funds to support cancer research, surgeons and clinicians. In November 2021 Elly won the Tour de Central Coast challenge course. The Tour de Central Coast was originally initiated to keep cyclists motivated throughout the cooler winter months and also serves as a social group, which is incredibly important following lockdowns. In January this year Elly and fellow cyclist Bec Hoschke led a team of 20 female endurance cyclists in the Alpine Everesting Roam Challenge, which entails riding over 400 kilometres to a height of 10,000 metres in just 36 hours. The challenge has only been completed by a handful of women and is a testament to Dr Elly. They have raised over \$90,000 for cancer research, support, prevention and awareness about cancer inequalities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on the Central Coast. I thank Dr Elly for partnering with the Yerin Eleanor Duncan Aboriginal Health Services and Tour de Cure to fundraise for such a worthy cause.

OAK FLATS PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (16:49): Oak Flats Public School celebrated its seventieth anniversary on Friday 26 May. This significant milestone celebration was marked by a full day of exciting events attended by past principals, teachers and students, as well as local dignitaries. A flame tree was planted on the school grounds on the day, and students put together a time capsule to be opened on the school's 100th anniversary. The day culminated in a "walk down memory lane" event, featuring an exhibition celebrating the history of Oak Flats Public School, complete with relevant memorabilia and photographs. All who took part in the day's festivities were gifted a seventieth anniversary medallion. Betty Cross was a special guest on the day. She was enrolled in the first year 6 class when the school opened, in 1952. At the time, there were only 156 students enrolled under Principal John Caldwell. Today there are 518 students enrolled at Oak Flats Public School. I acknowledge the outstanding achievements and contributions that this school has made to our local community over the past 70 years, and I trust there is much more to come. I congratulate Oak Flats Public School on this wonderful milestone.

HARMAN FOUNDATION VOLUNTEER BISHAMBER KAUR

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (16:50): I acknowledge Bishamber Kaur, an eight-year-old girl who has been volunteering through the Harman Foundation, which provides support to residents in crisis in and around the Riverstone electorate. Bishamber is a year 4 student at Norwest Christian College who has been helping the Harman Foundation distribute groceries to the homeless over the past three years. I am told that, when she was asked what she gets out of it, she replied, "Giving makes me feel happy, giving is good for health, giving helps me connect and giving is contagious." I commend her for her community spirit, and I have no doubt that she will do great things in the future. Bishamber was one of the Harman Foundation volunteers who was presented with the Community Hero Award by the Minister for Families and Communities, the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones, when she visited Riverstone recently. I congratulate Bishamber Kaur and all of the other award winners, and I thank them for what they do.

PENPAL GIANTS PROGRAM

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (16:51): On Thursday 2 June I was privileged to attend the Penpal Giants program at the Featherdale Wildlife Park with St Peter Chanel Catholic Primary School, from my electorate, and Liverpool Public School. The Penpal Giants program aims to increase literacy in primary school-aged children through letter writing, storytelling and quarterly meet-ups. This meet-up was held at the Featherdale Wildlife Park, where the school children got to do exciting things, including patting a cute koala named Dawn and a not so cute snake, which I still patted. The children seemed thrilled to see it. I congratulate everyone at the Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre and the teachers from St Peter Chanel Catholic Primary School and Liverpool Public School. I particularly thank Featherdale Wildlife Park, which looks after so many schools every year.

RETURN AND EARN SCHEME

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (16:52): I congratulate the people of the East Hills electorate for their support of Return and Earn. East Hills residents are enthusiastic recyclers, having returned more than 240 million drink containers for recycling through Return and Earn. These strong results have helped New South

Wales reach seven billion drink containers returned through the scheme's network's 620 return points across the State. The Return and Earn network has achieved a 52 per cent reduction in the volume of drink container litter in New South Wales and delivered over 672,000 tonnes in materials recycled, which has kept a lot of rubbish and waste out of the beautiful Georges River in my electorate. Return and Earn has become a part of community fundraising activities, with many of our schools, community groups, charities and sporting clubs using Return and Earn as part of their fundraising. This includes Revesby Public School and BaptistCare in Bankstown.

FORMER MEMBER FOR NORTH SYDNEY TRENT ZIMMERMAN

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:53): I acknowledge the decades of public service of my friend and former Federal member for North Sydney Trent Zimmerman. Trent has been a fiercely supportive friend, advocate and mentor in what can too often be a hostile political environment, particularly for women. He has been a strong voice in the Federal Parliament for the constituents that we share, advocating on their behalf—often against me—and fighting for the issues that matter most. Trent was a stalwart of the North Sydney community for a long time, starting with his tenure on council, and has strongly advocated on many issues that we and our community care about, such as climate change, renewable energy and standing up for the rights of young LGBTQIA+ people. His legacy will be each local individual that he has helped. I have worked collaboratively with him on a range of matters, and I thank him for his support. I acknowledge the significant work that Trent has achieved since he was first elected in 2015. He will be sorely missed by many of us, and I wish him all the best as he embarks on the next stage of his journey, with Carlos and Simba by his side.

SYLVANIA BOWLING CLUB

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading) (16:54): I acknowledge the Sylvania Bowling Club, which is the successful recipient of \$6,500 from the New South Wales Government's 2022 Local Sport Grant Program. From its humble beginnings in 1955 as a simple strip of grass used as a bowling rink, the Sylvania Bowling Club now provides modern facilities for lawn bowlers and our wider community to enjoy. The grant funding will enable the club to replace 16 existing sun-shade shelters, allowing it to better cater for its members, particularly during the warmer months, to ensure the greens are enjoyed all year round. Of course, none of this would be possible without the incredible executive committee, including Andrew Jones, David Watt, Keith Howell, Don Crotty, Rod Green, Reg Harris and Robyn McKenzie, who also serves on the Sylvania Women's Bowling Club executive committee with Kay Makin, Mary Kaft, Margaret Kent and Margaret Collins. I thank the members of the Sylvania Bowling Club for bringing the importance of this project to my attention, and I look forward to visiting them soon.

STATE OF ORIGIN

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (16:55): I pass on my congratulations to the New South Wales State of Origin team. Game one of the series will be held tonight in my electorate of Auburn, at the Sydney Olympic Park stadium. I thank all the hardworking staff across the hospitality and tourism industry who have had such a hard time over the past two years during COVID, some of whom will be there tonight looking after the capacity crowd of 80,000. I congratulate New South Wales Rugby League [NSWRL], which is based at Sydney Olympic Park in the Auburn electorate, and the New South Wales Origin team coach, Brad Fittler, who was born at Auburn Hospital. I acknowledge the hard work that the New South Wales team has put in at the NSWRL Centre of Excellence at Sydney Olympic Park and wish the Blues all the best for the Origin series.

SPACE CAMP PROGRAM

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (16:56): I congratulate the Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District on winning a 2021 NSW Health Award for its Space Camp program. The program was recognised for its valuable contribution to supporting the mental health of young children and providing tailored services. The Space Camp program targets children aged five to nine years old who are struggling with behavioural, social or emotional challenges, and operates across nine weeks as a school-based clinical intervention. As an early intervention program informed by neuroscientific evidence, Space Camp is supporting families and school staff to meet each child's ranging developmental needs. The Child and Youth Mental Health clinicians from the Space Camp team won the Excellence in the Provision of Mental Health Services category in the twenty-third annual NSW Health Awards. Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District should be very proud of its achievement—as I am. I congratulate those involved on their excellent contribution to children's wellbeing and to New South Wales health care more broadly.

ST FLORIAN'S DAY AWARD WINNER GLEN HOWE

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:57): I recently had the pleasure of representing Minister Cooke at the NSW Rural Fire Service Central Coast District Volunteer Appreciation Day. One recipient of the St Florian's Day Award, Commissioner's Commendation for Service was Glen Howe, a member of the Kariang brigade and

Gosford Fire Control Centre brigade, and group captain. Glen joined the Kariong brigade in 1978, holding the positions of deputy captain, senior deputy captain and captain. He was elected as group captain in 1993. Glen has demonstrated exceptional leadership skills in a range of areas including operations, brigade management, training and mentoring. Glen was an integral member of the Central Coast Rural Fire Service's response during the 2019-20 bushfire season, specifically the response to the Three Mile Fire. The local knowledge that Glen was able to provide helped to protect local communities in the west of the Central Coast from the threat of the Gaspers Mountain fire. Glen has also led and participated in out-of-area deployments responding to a range of natural disasters. Glen is a very worthy recipient of this commendation for his 42 years of service. I thank him and wish him the best of luck for the future.

HUMPTY DUMPTY BALMORAL BURN

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:58): On Sunday 29 May my local community in North Shore came together for the running of the twentieth Humpty Dumpty Balmoral Burn. Postponed for two years, this year the weather was perfect with the sun shining and, as always, Balmoral put on quite a show. For those in this place who do not know, the Balmoral Burn is an annual community fun run up one of Sydney's steepest streets—Awaba Street. Mosman local Phil Kearns, AM, came up with the idea of running up Awaba Street as a thankyou to the Royal North Shore Hospital after his son Finn received emergency care there. Finn is now old enough to speak at the Balmoral Burn event himself. Participants can conquer the hill in various age category races, kids and family races, or even run with the family pet or in a relay as part of a corporate team. This year the community raised \$1.4 million for the Humpty Dumpty Foundation, which will provide 45 essential pieces of medical equipment to 21 hospitals and health services across Australia. A very special thankyou goes to the team at the Humpty Dumpty Foundation and everyone who was involved in the running of the event on the day. I thank all those who participated, because the funds raised will go to helping and saving the lives of sick and injured children.

Business interrupted.

Public Interest Debate

ENERGY PRICES

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (17:00): I move:

That this House notes the Minister for Energy promised in November 2020 that electricity prices would be \$130 lower for households and \$430 lower for small business, yet electricity prices are set to rise by up to 18 per cent next month.

The public interest debate today focuses on the issue of energy prices. After spending question time and this morning's press conference congratulating itself, the Government is telling us how it is tackling the cost-of-living crisis. This debate is an opportunity to bring the Government back to reality. The cold, hard reality is that this State is in a cost-of-living crisis that represents a broken promise on the part of the Government.

In November 2020 the energy Minister promised the people of New South Wales that electricity prices would be \$130 lower, and \$430 lower for business. I do not need to point out that this is a broken promise—every family in New South Wales knows that. The cost-of-living crisis and the cost of energy is a key part of that. The newspapers are splashed with percentages and statistics about what the energy crisis looks like, but we know what the crisis looks like through the conversations that we have with our communities. Just this afternoon a lady came into my electorate office at Punchbowl, complaining of an increase of \$500 in her power bill. She is already struggling. She had reached out to community groups, seeking support. Those groups are already exhausted because of the support that they are offering to many others like her. As any good local member would, I am trying to help her to get her hands on an Energy Accounts Payment Assistance voucher.

One of my electorate officers relayed to me a story about their elderly parents and what price rises mean for them, especially in terms of energy. We are hearing about people who, during this blisteringly cold winter, are now having to think twice about whether they turn on their heaters. We live in a First World country. We should not have to make a choice between staying warm and using power. We hear from people who are doing it tough; at the same time, we are hearing from a government that is out of touch. After 11 years, the Government has now decided to address the cost-of-living issue. What this Government does not have is a plan. It has a piecemeal approach—a couple of announcements here and there in the lead-up to the budget. The Government has been quick to blame everyone but itself.

The facts are that this morning the energy Minister stood up and talked about an Energy Bill Buster package. He used alliteration—here I draw on my former English teacher skills. He said it's about sending "Putin's power prices packing"—good alliteration. But whilst these are really cute lines—and I hope the Minister thanks his spin doctors for them—they shift the responsibility away from him as the Minister for Energy. The energy price crisis was emerging before the issue in Ukraine. Prices for Australian thermal coal have gone through the

roof. The spot coal price at the moment is US\$330 per tonne. Coal and gas prices have been driven up not only by the war in Ukraine but also by outages in Australian coal-fired power stations and the impact of the pandemic on supply chains. In June the average wholesale price in New South Wales hit an eye-watering \$470 per kilowatt hour. That is up nearly 50 per cent from May, which was already the highest and was skyrocketing at that point.

We have to remember that we are in the Chamber, talking about the impact that price increases have on households. At the household level, New South Wales power bills are going to rise anywhere between 8½ per cent and 15 per cent. If the average bill is about \$1,400 a year, that equates to an increase of up to \$200. This is due to a number of things. It is due to over-reliance on high gas prices because of the outages from the coal-fired stations. We know that coal output has fallen. Furthermore, we know that the energy Minister has been in discussions about Eraring Power Station. During budget estimates, he guaranteed that prices would be \$130 lower for households. He cannot say one thing but not back it up and then look to blame somebody else. It is all about having a plan and having a way to deal with it. I know the impact that has on workers and so forth, as does the member for Lake Macquarie.

The Opposition does not expect the Government to predict everything that is going to happen. It is geopolitical and not necessarily in our hands. But it does expect an anticipation of what could happen. What is the war-gaming that is going on? What is the way to anticipate what could potentially go wrong? As I said at the outset, the energy crisis is linked directly to the cost-of-living crisis. We can see that right now, whether it is the fact that fuel is, unbelievably, up around the \$2 mark per litre or whether it is the price hikes in food. Who would have thought we would be paying \$5.50 for a lettuce this week? Interest rates had their single biggest hike in over two decades. Opposition members understand, and we would support relief. We support any situation that supports communities, families and individuals.

Today in question time Government members spoke about the Bill Buster concession and how it compares with other States. Our biggest problem is that these rebates are not being taken up. People do not know about them. A question was asked about seniors; 75 per cent of seniors do not even qualify. The Minister joked about it with colleagues, talking about what they would qualify for. Under today's proposal, they actually do not qualify. The Solar for Low Income Households scheme was meant to have 3,000 people; it has 1,267. This whole "Putin's bill buster" thing is a way of rebadging what already existed. It is a way of robbing Peter to pay Paul. If it is an expansion, it does not cover it. It is only going to cover part of the up-front cost.

If you apply for this scheme and then your experience is worsening financial hardship over a 10-year period, you are on your own. If you apply for this scheme and then move house, you are on your own. If you struggle to finance the gap between the rebate and the up-front cost, you are on your own. If your personal financial conditions change, you are on your own. If you are part of the 75 per cent of seniors who are not eligible for this, you are on your own. The final point is critical. We have to make sure that everybody is supported. We have to make sure that, when there is an announcement, it is actually backed up because, over and over again, we have seen that the Government is very good on announcements, very good on spin and terrible on delivery.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (17:07): I recognise that the member for Lakemba and I are on the same page—as is everybody in this House—about our concern for families, households and small businesses across our State. There is a lot of uncertainty. There is a lot of fear. There are questions about how people will afford their power bills and the rising cost of petrol. The challenges that people are facing with cost-of-living pressures across New South Wales are a genuine concern for this Government, and it is working to act on that, as it has for a very long time. But cost-of-living prices are rising due to global instability. Inflation, which is much higher in many other countries around the globe, means that the cost of everyday necessities like petrol is rising, and the recent rises in interest rates will continue to put pressure upon household mortgages. It puts household budgets under strain and causes a lot of anxiety in our community. We hear that, and we feel that.

I acknowledge the stress this puts on families, but I do not like the political game being played by those opposite. I thought the member for Lakemba was better than that. It is completely inappropriate to play that game, and I do not think it is appropriate for the member for Coogee to scoff at the concerns that people have about being able to pay for their electricity bills. When it comes to household energy bills, regardless of the rhetoric of the member for Lakemba, the current price rise is a direct result of geopolitical instability. Whether you like or dislike alliteration and the rhetorical flourish of the Treasurer and Minister for Energy, this is a direct result of Vladimir Putin and the Government of the Russian Federation. It was a lesson given to the member for Lakemba and everyone opposite today to try to understand how gas prices influence electricity prices, but it is obviously a lesson that they did not learn before today or from the many successive questions they put to the Minister in question time.

The instability in eastern Europe has placed significant pressure upon international gas prices, and that in turn puts pressure on domestic coal and gas prices. As we speak, the Minister for Energy is joining with energy Ministers from the Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, alongside Federal Minister Bowen, to

discuss and work through solutions to the serious issues facing our energy network and households in our State and nation. They are working together in a bipartisan way to solve this issue because that is what governments that care about outcomes for the community do. They do not play political point-scoring, like those opposite are doing with this motion.

This Government is delivering much-needed energy bill relief to the households that need it most, including through today's announcement of the Energy Bill Buster package. In his contribution, the member for Lakemba belittled and denigrated every single cost-of-living scheme that the Government has out there to support people, and then he said that we have not been focused on the cost of living. I note the irony of those two conflicting statements, noting the fact that the Government has consistently had a series of cost-of-living initiatives to try to help households for many years. We recognise that Service NSW has the best programs to help people reduce their cost of living.

It is disappointing that those opposite continue to play politics, but let us be abundantly clear: The motion before the House today refers to the electricity bill impacts of the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap. The road map was legislated in 2020. I note that those opposite supported us in our policy because they do not have their own. The road map is the Government's plan to transform our electricity sector to be cheaper, cleaner and more reliable, and it will directly support the development of new electricity infrastructure in New South Wales. It is going to unlock up to \$32 billion in private investment. Assistant Speaker Piper would know just how excited people are about the renewable energy zones. They are oversubscribed for interest. The road map is vital to ensuring that the State's electricity system is reliable and affordable, particularly as our power stations retire and need to be replaced.

The reference that the member made to the savings that would be generated—of around \$130 a year on the average household electricity bill and \$430 a year on the average small business electricity bill between 2023 and 2040, noting that it is not yet 2023—was compared with the situation if the road map was not implemented. That is the furphy of the political game that is, disappointingly, being pushed by the member for Lakemba. He is usually better than that. But the key part of this is the implementation of the road map, and I am happy to inform the House that the first tender for the independent consumer trustee, AEMO Services, is commencing in quarter four of this year. Without the road map, there would be significant rises in wholesale electricity prices, but New South Wales has been shown to have the highest level of investor confidence in Australia according to the Clean Energy Council's latest confidence index report, which will lead to those outcomes. The Government is building the electricity generation required to secure our energy for the future and to lower power prices in the long run. The Opposition opposes renewable energy, investment, jobs and lower power prices.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (17:12): I thank the member for Lakemba for bringing this public interest debate to the House, noting that in November 2020 the energy Minister promised that electricity prices would be \$130 lower for households and \$430 lower for small businesses. When the Minister proposed that, he was making a promise to the people of this State to address the cost of living. It is not just about electricity. The reality is that New South Wales is in an absolute cost-of-living crisis.

Mr Gurmesh Singh: Thanks, Albo.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: "Thanks, Albo"? Thank your Coalition for the past decade. Like everything this Government does, they are empty promises. The Government is out of touch. It is dishonest to people because the reality is that the price of everything is going up. In the last quarter, wholesale electricity prices shot up by 141 per cent. There was an 18 per cent increase in prices after the Minister promised a reduction. Increases of \$250 a year are about to come into effect. Small business customers will also be affected by the changes. The first major increase in electricity prices came when this Government privatised electricity. We on this side of the House know that, every time things are privatised, profits come before people and shareholders come before communities. This Government is out of touch. The reality is that we are in a cost-of-living crisis—absolutely everything is increasing. Inflation is at its highest level since the introduction of the GST. Electricity prices are increasing, but so too are gas and petrol prices. Petrol costs over \$2 a litre. The cost of fuel has risen by 9.6 per cent. The cost of vegetables has increased by over 14 per cent in the past year.

Mr Jihad Dib: Lettuce is pricey!

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: KFC is now using cabbage instead of lettuce. This Government and the Minister are completely out of touch. In relation to cost of living, the reality is that the Government can control some things and not others. This Government could be doing many things to assist people in Sydney and New South Wales with the cost of living. But it is choosing not to do them. That is the reality. New South Wales is now the highest taxed and tolled State in Australia. The Government has its hands on those levers, but it is choosing not to use them. Instead, it taxes and tolls everyone. Over the past year, local taxes and charges have increased by 10 per cent. Gas prices are going up. It wants to blame Russia, but it has control.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Government members will come to order.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: Another clear thing that the Government can do to address the cost of living is address real wages. Today another group of people took industrial action. Our public sector workers, teachers, nurses and all of our essential workers were out there. The cost of living is up. If you want to make people's lives easier, address wages. That is one of the clear things that you could be doing.

Ms Felicity Wilson: Point of order: I ask that the member address her comments through the Chair.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. But I understand what was happening.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: I am simply saying that, if this Government would like to address the cost of living, one of the clear things that it could be doing is addressing real wages.

Ms Eleni Petinos: We are, repeatedly.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: Let me quote what the unions have said regarding your approach. They call it "a smoke and mirrors affair".

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The member for Terrigal will come to order.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: I am a proud trade unionist, and I stand side by side with the tens of thousands of public sector workers. I am a proud trade unionist, and I will say it every single day. Smoke and mirrors! Today one trade unionist told me that they are not going to be bought by your "shitty bribe". This is the reality: the hypocrisy of this Government and this Minister.

Ms Felicity Wilson: Point of order—

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL: But do you know what? The hypocrisy of this Government is being called out.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The member's time has expired. There is no point of order.

Ms Felicity Wilson: You have not allowed me to take my point of order.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: There is no reason for the member to take a point of order, as the contribution has concluded.

Ms Felicity Wilson: Mr Assistant Speaker, the standing orders permit a member to take a point of order at any time. I ask that you or the Speaker address the matter of unparliamentary language used by the member for Coogee.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I will deal with it at the end of the debate.

Ms Felicity Wilson: I thank you for your indulgence.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (17:18): On behalf of the Government, I oppose the motion. I thank the member for Lakemba for raising the important topic of energy because we understand how important energy is for strong economies. Rising energy bills will cause a lot of stress to economies in the Hunter Valley, where I come from, and across New South Wales, Australia and indeed the world. I am glad that we are discussing energy. I represent a region that is an industrial powerhouse. The Hunter Valley produces a lot of power through the Bayswater and Liddell power stations. It is important that this topic is brought to the fore because challenges are being felt throughout the world. Across the world there is huge demand for our coal. In some regards the Hunter Valley is glad to see that massive demand. We can ship out our coal and make good money for the people in the region who are working hard every day and paying for all the services that we need in our economy.

Prices are rising in accordance with international pressures. The terrible war in Ukraine is putting a lot of pressure on gas prices. We need to decide what to do to help families going forward. Today the Government announced the \$128 million Energy Bill Buster package as part of the 2022-23 budget, which will help thousands of families by boosting their household budgets by providing free solar systems or home appliance upgrades. Home owners who receive the Low Income Household Rebate will soon be eligible to choose a fully installed solar system, which will save them up to \$600 a year, compared with the annual \$285 rebate. We know how popular those solar systems are. They are certainly the way forward in the provision of cheap power to households. But we will always need the grid in some way to provide essential power. We will continue working to make sure that we have that base load power.

I do not think any State or economy is doing more work than this State is doing through its renewables road map to ensure that we have that base load power going forward. Let me tell members more about what we are doing to help families. We are helping seniors with the gas rebate. People who receive the Low Income

Household Rebate and who rent or live in apartments—for whom a solar system is, therefore, unsuitable—will be eligible to receive energy-efficient fridges, dryers and air conditioners to the value of \$4,000. One million New South Wales households that currently receive an energy rebate will be eligible for the package, which allows them to receive the equivalent of up to 10 years' worth of rebates in an up-front, lump sum contribution towards free solar or home appliances.

The purpose of those upgrades is to introduce more energy efficiency into our homes, reduce energy usage and lower energy bills for households that can least afford them. The package has been endorsed by the energy consumer champion Craig Memery from the Public Interest Advocacy Centre, who has said that it is practical and timely action. He well and truly endorses this action by the New South Wales Government. It is much-needed help for people to reduce their energy costs. Rewiring Australia has also come on board and welcomed the announcement, along with the Smart Energy Council, which has said, "This is leadership." Perhaps members opposite should pay more attention to a real energy policy and solutions, instead of playing cheap, nasty political games.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order. The member for Upper Hunter does not require any assistance.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL: The Energy Bill Buster package is just one of the ways that this Government is taking cost-of-living pressure off families and small business, leaving more money in pockets at the end of the week.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:23): I thank the member for Lakemba for bringing this important motion to the House. It is all well and good to give out these prizes of taxpayers' money to the people. But the investment is 10 years too late. The Government has not made the investment, knowing full well that power stations are closing down over the next 15 years—10 years too late. As we all know, Mr Matt Kean is great at telling us how good his supposed achievements are in his portfolio areas but he is very quick to run from his past statements as energy Minister. In 2020 he promised a \$130 reduction for individuals and a \$430 reduction for small businesses. That is a fail from Mr Matt Kean. He said that the Government's policy on energy would aim to avoid price rises and maintain a reliable system. That is another fail. He claimed that the Government would keep the lights on. That is another fail. The state of energy in New South Wales is another gift of more than a decade of Liberal-Nationals power at the State and Federal levels by governments who failed to tackle the hard cost-of-living challenges facing our communities.

In 2014 the deregulation of the electricity market by the Liberal-Nationals Government paved the way for suppliers to charge exactly what they want. Now we are seeing suppliers offloading their customers to others because they know they cannot keep up with the prices they had promised. The suppliers of energy will get bigger and bigger, with more and more power over the people who are paying for their energy and governments having to subsidise their way out. Now, thanks to the Federal Liberal-Nationals Government, we have been left with what Chris Bowen describes as a bin fire of problems inherited from nine years of the Liberal-Morrison Government in action. The Morrison Government talked about a gas-led recovery and had 22 different energy policies, but it failed to deliver one during its nine years in power. As a result, on the east coast of Australia we are left with no gas for our domestic market and ridiculous, increasing prices for our electricity. And we in New South Wales must pick up the pieces, which makes the New South Wales energy Minister look like an absolute fool. In reality, electricity prices might double by 1 July and will go up by at least 18 per cent.

This is not the only cost-of-living crisis facing the people of New South Wales, who have been neglected by the Perrottet Government. In March the Domain rental report revealed that rents across New South Wales are higher than ever, particularly in regional areas such as mine. The member for Terrigal knows that the Central Coast has been smashed by rental price increases. Woy Woy is up by 12 per cent. Umina is up by 13 per cent. North Gosford is up by 15 per cent. Those increases are higher than rental price increases across most other areas of Australia. Recently my office was approached by a social worker who was concerned for a family of five, a dad and his four children, who were forced to seek accommodation in a factory workshop because houses have become too dear. This is a direct result of the New South Wales Government's inability to fund maintenance and build the amount of public housing we need to keep people off the streets and to get people back on their feet.

These are not the only cost-of-living crises, as we see electricity prices go through the roof. On 1 April this year tolls went up, for the Cross City Tunnel by 5.3 per cent, for the M7 by 5.5 per cent, for the M5 Southwest by 4.8 per cent, and the for NorthConnex by 5.7 per cent—all above the rate of inflation. These increases are piled on top of the hundreds of dollars commuters already pay directly into Premier Perrottet's coffers. In regions like mine, for people who travel to and from Sydney to work, these increases make a huge difference to the amount of food on the kitchen table and budgets that are already stretched by the cost of groceries, rent and electricity. This Government is toll obsessed. It was sprung by the Opposition last year when the transport department let slip that

it planned to put a two-way toll on the Sydney Harbour Bridge, slugging coasties not only on the way to work but also on the way home.

Mr Jihad Dib: Double slug.

Ms LIESL TESCH: Double slug, and on top of electricity prices. Commuters know that, every time that beep goes off, Dominic Perrottet is reaching into their bank accounts and taking away more of their hard-earned money. It is a double whammy because Central Coast residents have been slugged by additional council rates and water rates for another 10 years, thanks to the failed merger imposed by the New South Wales Government. That is another bill on the coasties' doorsteps, thanks to Premier Perrottet and his out-of-touch Government. After more than a decade of letting the cost of living spiral into crisis, the Government wants to get out the chequebook and provide some pocket money to paper over the cracks of a decade of inaction.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:28): At the outset, I state that the Government does not support this motion, obviously. Unfortunately, I have only five minutes to speak to it. I could have responded more fully to the member for Gosford's claims about council costs going up. I would remind the member that the Labor-led council racked up half a billion dollars' worth of debt. Every time someone opens a rate notice, they can be reminded at least of Councillor Matthew's incompetence. In addition—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Opposition members will come to order. The member for Gosford will come to order. The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Gosford began interjecting as she re-entered the Chamber and before she had reached her seat. I have spoken to the member for North Shore about her earlier activity, and I have previously removed the member for Hawkesbury for interjecting. If the member for Gosford continues to interject, she will be removed from the Chamber under Standing Order 249A. The member will please desist.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: We listened to their rubbish in silence, so I would expect the Opposition to do the same. This is nothing more than a cheap stunt, as we saw during question time. It is disappointing that the member for Lakemba said that there is no cost-of-living support from this Government. I say to him that there are 70 different cost-of-living support measures provided by Service NSW. Service NSW was opposed by those opposite, who wanted to keep the Roads and Traffic Authority [RTA]. That was their vision for the future. The member for Coogee cannot even get through a speech without using unparliamentary language. She could not get through a whole five minutes without a swear word. Families, households and small businesses are doing it tough. We see what is going on across the globe. Unfortunately, those opposite do not understand basic economics, as was shown by the member for Coogee. It is breathtaking that they come in here and lecture us about cost-of-living support. Their vision for the future was to keep the RTA. The member for Lakemba is better than this.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The member for Coogee will come to order.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: He brings out the B team to argue the case. It is interesting. Those opposite supported our renewable energy zones because they had no energy policy of their own. They had to come into this place with their tails between their legs and say, "The Government's got a great policy. We better jump in and support it." The legislation for the renewable energy zones, which include the Central Coast, is a fantastic piece of legislation. I would be pleased if the member for Coogee interjected without swearing for the next two minutes. If she can get through that, she is doing a good job. I say to the member for Gosford that this Government is providing families with support, including toll relief. We did not create a situation where people did not have choices about using toll roads, unlike those opposite. I remind the member for Coogee of the word "gentraders". Her disgusting Government prorogued this place when it flogged off the generators, with no public consultation. So we will not be lectured by any of you about how to run an electrical grid—

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: Point of order: Will the member—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The member for Coogee will not come to the lectern until I call her. The member rises on a point of order.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: Will the member for Terrigal please direct his comments through the Chair?

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: Today it became crystal clear that the Labor Party opposes renewable energy, which means opposing jobs, opposing investment and opposing lower power prices. We on this side of the Chamber are working to the future. The Government implemented renewable energy zones. We came into this place with that policy. Those opposite come into this place with nothing. What we have seen this afternoon is a cheap political stunt. I thought the member for Lakemba to be better than that. I hold him in high regard, though not so much the rest of the B team who backed him up today. We do feel for him. I bet that during question time he was thinking, "Oh dear, I've been lumbered with this public interest debate and I've got nowhere to go now",

because during question time today we saw a perfect example of how to be schooled in world economics. It is interesting that those opposite talk about support, though they implemented nothing during their time in government. This Government has provided all the cost-of-living supports for people. Those opposite sold off the gentraders. They are the ones who did all the murky deals behind the scenes. They prorogued Parliament because they did not want to show the State what they were doing.

Mr Kevin Conolly: No accountability.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: It was a government with no accountability, as the member for Riverstone said, and that is why it got shown the door. The great thing is that we look forward to assisting communities across not just the Central Coast but also New South Wales with cost-of-living support.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I remind the member for North Shore that this is a debate, not a conversation. There are rules of debate and one of those rules is that there shall be no interjections or communication across the table.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (17:34): In reply: I tell you what, they live in la-la land and are very delusional.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: Delusional.

Mr JIHAD DIB: Delusional. Ironically, Government members accused us of playing political games and yet spent their time saying a whole range of things. I suppose it is incumbent on me to thank everybody who contributed to the debate, so I thank members for their contributions. The nice thing is that everybody who spoke was passionate, which is important. One of the best contributions I heard came from the member for Terrigal, who repeated his Young Liberals stump speech during this debate. It was a straight-out stump speech from the Young Liberals, and I thought it was fantastic. I had to listen and I thank those opposite for giving me—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The member for Lakemba will be heard in relative silence at least. I draw members' attention to the fact that Hansard needs to hear the debate.

Mr JIHAD DIB: It is a delaying tactic. Obviously, they do not want me to speak, because they know that we are going to tear them to shreds. Government members talk about political games and pointscoreing. The fact of the matter is one particular member claimed that I said we opposed cost-of-living measures. That is simply untrue. If she had listened to my speech, she would know that I said such things are really important. My criticism was that we have a Minister and a government that looks to blame what is happening overseas. I did say we cannot blame everything on geopolitics but, gee, we can be a lot better at planning—gee, we can just do a lot better. Why didn't we see the writing on the wall when things were privatised? Why didn't we see the writing on the wall when prices started going up?

We talked about renewable energy. We know that is part of the mix. We heard about the road map. Get the road map moving. I keep hearing all sorts of claims from the member for North Shore. I look forward to our net zero legislation, which is based on renewable energy and reducing carbon emissions, coming up for debate because I want to see whether the member for North Shore and the member for Terrigal will vote for it. Otherwise, everything they have said today is hollow. The fact is that under this Government the cost of living has skyrocketed. Those opposite are looking to blame other people. They are looking to blame everybody except themselves. They have no idea. They have no plan, and what they end up doing is throwing away more and more money. Their response is that we have no policy. The fact is there is \$265 million in rebates that are not claimed.

Ministers and members opposite can say whatever they want, but the reason they interrupt is they know that we are on the side of right. Families are struggling. Families cannot afford the cost of living under this Minister, who said that the energy rates were going to go down. They have actually gone up. Those opposite have got nothing. They are very good at spin but have given us nothing. There is no real plan. What we have is more spin and alliteration. We deserve better. The people of New South Wales deserve better. They deserve honesty.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (17:38): Order! Before I put the question, I will address a matter that was raised by the member for North Shore. She took offence at a word that was used and took a point of order that it was unparliamentary. I did not hear the word—I was actually reading the standing orders at the time. I asked the member for Coogee what was said. I now understand what was said and I will rule on the point of order. Without repeating it, the word that the member referred to is—and I am interested whether anyone wants to argue about this—very much in the common vernacular. It is commonly heard in corridors and offices. It is not in the most offensive order of vulgar terminology. It was also a direct quote, I understand, from a person who used the word to mean something that was extremely bad or offensive and something they did not agree with. The word has multiple meanings, I understand that, but it is not typically considered to be offensive. Using an alternative word

in that circumstance would not necessarily have been appropriate either. I do not believe the word was so offensive that it should be struck down as being unparliamentary.

Ms Felicity Wilson: So you won't say it but you don't think it's offensive?

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I do not wish to further excite members on the Government benches. I rule that the use of the term in that context was not unparliamentary. We shall now proceed.

Ms Felicity Wilson: Mr Assistant Speaker, may I ask a question?

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I will not entertain debate on this matter.

Mr Kevin Conolly: That's inconsistent with previous rulings.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The matter can be taken up with the Speaker.

Ms Felicity Wilson: I want to ask a question, if that is okay. For my understanding, does this come from a previous ruling? Does it reflect a previous Speaker's ruling?

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: It is a new ruling, but I understand that there have been rulings on this matter previously. I am sure the member for North Shore will appreciate there is some subjectivity in this. I have made a ruling today. It may be contested and challenged at a later time.

Ms Felicity Wilson: I was just asking for clarification, thank you.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I will now put the question. The question is that the motion be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes36
Noes41
Majority.....5

AYES

Aitchison, J	Dib, J	Mihailuk, T
Atalla, E	Doyle, T	O'Neill, M
Bali, S	Harris, D	Park, R
Barr, C	Harrison, J	Parker, J
Butler, R	Haylen, J	Scully, P
Car, P	Hoenig, R	Smith, T
Catley, Y	Holland, M	Tesch, L
Chanthivong, A	Kamper, S	Voltz, L
Cotsis, S	Leong, J	Warren, G
Crakanthorp, T	Li, J	Washington, K
Daley, M	Lynch, P	Watson, A (teller)
Dalton, H	Mehan, D (teller)	Zangari, G

NOES

Anderson, K	Henskens, A	Roberts, A
Clancy, J	James, T	Saunders, D
Conolly, K	Layzell, D	Singh, G (teller)
Cooke, S	Lee, G	Smith, N (teller)
Coure, M	Lindsay, W	Speakman, M
Crouch, A	Marshall, A	Stokes, R
Davies, T	McGirr, J	Taylor, M
Dominello, V	O'Dea, J	Toole, P
Elliott, D	Overall, N	Tuckerman, W
Evans, L	Pavey, M	Upton, G
Gibbons, M	Perrottet, D	Williams, L
Greenwich, A	Petinos, E	Williams, R
Griffin, J	Preston, R	Wilson, F
Gulaptis, C	Provest, G	

PAIRS

Finn, J
 Hornery, S
 Lalich, N
 McDermott, H
 Minns, C
 Saffin, J

Ayres, S
 Hazzard, B
 Bromhead, S
 Sidgreaves, P
 Kean, M
 Hancock, S

Motion negatived.

Community Recognition Statements

SYLVANIA HEIGHTS NETBALL CLUB

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading) (17:52): I acknowledge the Sylvania Heights Netball Club, which is the successful recipient of \$5,000 from the New South Wales Government 2022 Local Sport Grant Program. Established in 1960, the Sylvania Heights Netball Club is a foundation member of the Sutherland Shire Netball Association and has developed a reputation as a family-friendly environment that promotes the values of teamwork, respect and reward. The grant will facilitate the redesign of the club's uniform in line with the recommendations of Netball Australia's State of the Game review and allow the club to subsidise the cost of the new uniforms, ensuring that sport remains accessible to everyone. Of course, none of this would be possible without the hardworking team behind the Sylvania Heights Netball Club. I acknowledge the outstanding executive committee, including Jane Horan, David Bourke, Cara Newman, Kathryn Rahn, Nicole Knox, Bec Pires, Kirsty Ettrick, Ryan Yates, Cathy Duncan and Margie Faint. I commend the Sylvania Heights Netball Club for bringing the importance of this project to my attention.

UPPER HUNTER LIQUOR ACCORD SCHOOLS ROAD SAFETY SEMINAR

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (17:53): I commend the participants in the Upper Hunter Liquor Accord schools road safety seminar held last Thursday in Muswellbrook. Over 350 year 11 and year 12 students from Muswellbrook and Scone high schools, Merriwa Central School, Scone Grammar School and St Joseph's High School, Aberdeen, attended this important road safety education session. The liquor accord, representing hotel, club and hospitality licensees, was joined by NSW Police, NSW Fire and Rescue, NSW Ambulance and the Muswellbrook Community Drug Action Team to discuss preventable road crashes. Learner and provisional drivers plus the students yet to become road users received guidance on the importance of making responsible decisions when driving and of having the courage to speak up when needed. After learning about vehicle crash theory, students watched local emergency services demonstrate their response to a mock car crash. On behalf of the Upper Hunter community, I offer our hope that this invaluable road safety lesson, which has been held for over 10 years, continues to keep our young drivers safe.

Private Members' Statements

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors) (17:54): Climate change is arguably one of the greatest issues that our State, our country and our planet faces. Achieving net zero emissions by 2050 and cutting emissions in half by 2030 is no easy task, but I am confident the New South Wales Government has the right plan to achieve this goal. Our part of the globe has some of the widest varieties of animals, plants, climates and biomes in the world. From the tropics and the Great Barrier Reef in Queensland and the sandy beaches up and down New South Wales—including those in my electorate—to the deserts of outback Australia, our country is vast, beautiful and precious. Its natural beauty makes it all the more important to address climate change and drastically reduce our carbon emissions to a sustainable level. This will save our planet, protect our animals and safeguard our kids' future.

That is why I support the New South Wales Government's announcement of its ambitious, nation-leading goal of reducing emissions by 50 per cent come the year 2030. This first-class plan will aim to attract over \$37 billion worth of investment in clean energy production across New South Wales. The new target will mean more jobs, more economic growth and reduced energy costs in my electorate of Oatley and across the State. It is estimated that the Government's plan will, on average, save energy consumers around \$130 a year. It will not only improve our environment but also turn New South Wales into a renewable energy superpower. Wind farms, solar farms, hydropower and many other renewable energy sources will be the way of the future for our State.

The Government's Net Zero Plan is set to boost the number of jobs within our State, helping people get back on their feet after the struggles that the Delta outbreak caused. It will help lower unemployment by providing

over 9,000 high-quality and well-paid jobs. This boost in jobs figures will contribute to making New South Wales the first trillion-dollar State by 2030, further cementing our status as the best State in the country. The plan will include a number of industry programs that will be targeted to ensure that every sector of the economy has concrete solutions to help them reduce emissions. These include agricultural initiatives that will reduce livestock methane through selective breeding and feed technologies, limit nitrous oxide emissions from soils, and enhance vegetation across the State.

The Government's plan will limit fugitive emissions from the New South Wales coalmining sector, helping to both save jobs and ensure that mining has a viable future in our green new world. The Government's plan to heavily invest in renewable energy sources couples with its nation-leading plan to invest \$490 million to support the rollout of new electric vehicles across New South Wales—and I have seen many of them in my electorate of Oatley. Modelling of the Government's plan shows that emissions in New South Wales are projected to fall by between 47 per cent and 52 per cent by 2030. Such a drop in emissions gives our planet some breathing room, which will allow ecosystems to recover and prevent the irreversible damage that a global temperature rise of over 1.5 degrees Celsius will cause.

The impacts of the plan can be seen directly within my electorate. I have had the pleasure of riding on one of the many new electric buses that are set to become part of the new public transport green corridor from Hurstville to Oatley. These new buses mean that people can rest easy, knowing that there are less carbon emissions in the air and less noise pollution on their local streets. I also note the establishment in New South Wales of Australia's first ever renewable energy zone, a nation-leading program that will droughtproof traditional farming communities and provide new income streams for landholders that host electricity infrastructure.

By cutting emissions in half by 2030, the New South Wales Government is putting in place a holistic plan that will combat climate change at the source. The plan will ensure that our State is equipped now and into the future to meet the needs of our economy as we transition to a more environmentally friendly economic model of operation. Safeguarding our environment is an important job for any government across the globe; our future depends on developing and maintaining plans that will support our economy and our environment. It is important that our plans are considerate of our diverse economy, which will ensure that nobody is left behind as the world transitions to a greener future. I commend the Government's forward-thinking plan to halve emissions by 2030 and cut emissions to zero by 2050. It will help our State now and into the future.

SCHOOLTEACHERS

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (17:59): The Strathfield electorate is a centre of educational excellence, with world-class public and private schools and, importantly, families and parents who genuinely value education and understand its transformative power. Our local schools are feeling the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in increased workloads, staff shortages, student absences and many students who continue to require ongoing support. Teachers have been a source of great strength and resilience through the pandemic and its aftermath. We know that keeping our children engaged and connected to their school communities will have positive long-term impacts on their mental health and their learning.

Sadly, though, I have heard of teachers leaving the profession they love because they just cannot take the stress anymore. I have heard of a principal providing another school with a teacher so it could open that day. I have heard of staff shortages and educational standards slipping in an environment where our once world-leading educational quality is already falling further behind. The crisis has been boiling away for years. Teacher shortages driven by stagnant pay, unsustainable workloads and then the pandemic have pushed the sector to its limits. Over 10,000 New South Wales teachers left the profession in 2021. Teachers are covering classes they were not trained to teach. Staff shortages—up to 10 teachers on some days—mean that teachers cannot do what they do best and that our kids are missing out. Teachers are struggling, frustrated and leaving schools in droves.

We cannot continue to rely on the goodwill of frontline workers to push themselves beyond breaking point. They deserve better and so do our kids. Increasing the number of new teachers, keeping teachers in schools and the best educators in classrooms, and giving them meaningful career paths that reflect their strengths and passions must be a priority. Teachers are dedicated to their students. They do not want to strike. Industrial action reflects a desperate sector fed up with poor conditions and a teaching profession considering moving to other employment with higher pay and better conditions. Rather than being frustrated by teachers' actions, parents in fact recognise that the lack of support for teachers has flow-on impacts on their kids. The Burwood Girls High School P&C, for example, recently voted unanimously in favour of a motion supporting teachers' industrial action. Parents know that a well-remunerated and supported teaching workforce is better for their kids. The P&C supports its teachers' demands for wage increases, increased preparation time and more school counsellors.

Schools are centres of educational, social and mental wellbeing that cannot optimally function with harried, exhausted teachers. They play a vital role in our society. The NSW Teachers Federation released the Gallop

inquiry, which uncovered the key to dealing with the mass exodus of teachers and shortages across the system: We must increase teachers' pay to match their experience and expertise as they advance through their careers, as well as meet the cost of living. The Government's wage cap means real wages continue to fall. Real wage cuts will mean the exodus from the teaching profession will continue and prospective teachers will look for work elsewhere. I urge the Government to consider and recognise the importance of teachers and build properly remunerated career paths that can attract and retain world-class educators. Australian and New South Wales kids deserve nothing less.

JUNEE SHIRE TOURISM

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery) (18:03): Chocoholics, paranormal adventurers and train lovers—one place brings all of these people together, and that is Junee. A large region with a century and a half of history, Junee Shire is a vibrant and diverse area, with its town centre and outlying villages having lots to offer. The main town of Junee is a thriving regional tourist spot. It is notorious for being the location of the most haunted homestead in Australia, Monte Cristo. Meanwhile, sweets lovers delight at the prospect of a visit to the Junee Licorice & Chocolate Factory. Outside the main town, for the lovers of history, there is the Hero of Wantabadgery statue dedicated to Senior Constable Edward Webb-Bowen, who was killed by Captain Moonlite's gang. Grain silos, still in use, stand tall in the quiet village of Illabo and remind visitors of the rich farming landscape.

Train watchers are delighted by the heritage-listed rail spiral near Bethungra. Eurongilly, tiny in size, is known for 34 locals serving during World War II, which would have been more than 10 per cent of the local population at the time. Harefield, Old Junee, Junee Reefs and Dirnaseer—all those beautiful localities make up the Junee shire. I am incredibly proud of the New South Wales Government's commitment to delivery of investment in Junee shire. One of the most important investments by the New South Wales Government into the Junee shire was the replacement of the aging Junee Sewage Treatment Plant. The New South Wales Government contributed \$5 million to the project, which has ensured a state-of-the-art facility that will cater to the community and enable its growth for decades to come.

I also note the successful projects for the Junee shire under the Stronger Country Communities Fund round four. The shire received \$787,682 spread across four projects, including for Illabo Public School to construct a covered outdoor learning area for students and the wider Illabo community; \$228,020 to build a ramp into the 50-metre swimming pool facility to improve its accessibility; \$346,000 to provide a dedicated female change room at Loftus Oval for the Junee Junior Rugby League Club; and \$153,000 for sporting and social facility refurbishments in Old Junee, including a community garden and landscape features. Those successful projects brought the total investment by the New South Wales Government through the Stronger Country Communities Fund into the Junee shire to just over \$3.9 million across 20 projects.

If the town of Junee is the beating heart of the shire, the roads are the arteries that connect it to all the incredible villages in the region. Ensuring those roads are properly maintained and as safe as possible has been a key objective of the Fixing Local Roads fund, which has injected \$4.7 million so far into the repair, rehabilitation and improvement of roads in the Junee shire. Since round one commenced in 2020, \$2½ million has gone to sealing the roads that connect us; \$417,000 has rehabilitated Pattersons Road; and \$1.7 million has assisted with drainage, erosion repairs and rehabilitation at Wantabadgery Road. Having good roads to drive on is important to the daily lives of those who choose to live in places like Junee, Bethungra, Dirnaseer and Harefield, but it also means tourists have an easier and more pleasant experience when visiting the region.

One particular promise I made and was able to successfully deliver to the residents and families of Cooina Court was to secure its future, with the New South Wales Government transferring the property. It provides 22 residential aged-care beds and is managed by a not-for-profit community-based board. Policing in Junee is another commitment I have worked hard to guarantee. Through funding such as \$140,000 towards Junee Shire Council's Project 180, an initiative to prevent future crime, the New South Wales Government has solidified its ongoing commitment to provide adequate and appropriate policing services to the Junee shire. At the end of the day, the community of Junee and the villages that make up the shire are truly what make it special. Whether it is the ladies from the Junee Rotary who set up on cold winter mornings to sell raffle tickets or the army of volunteers who work at the local museums, incredible people work hard to maintain the history and unique character of the Junee shire. I will always be proud to represent them.

CRONULLA JAZZ AND BLUES FESTIVAL

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (18:08): I was delighted over the weekend to attend the second Cronulla Jazz and Blues Festival, which ran from Thursday 2 June through to Sunday 5 June. It offered over 100 free live music performances across 13 venues, and I acknowledge the talent and contributions of the many artists and groups who helped make the event possible. The festival was organised by Shire Events

Live, which is a new partnership between the owners of Brass Monkey and Code One, namely Geoff Trio and Jad Nakhle, and Robyn Adamski from Events by Robyn. Shire Events Live partnered with the Cronulla Chamber of Commerce to engage the local business community and promote Cronulla as an events destination.

I acknowledge platinum sponsors Ray White Commercial, Cronulla RSL and the New South Wales Government, as well as gold sponsors Hoyts Cronulla, CC Babcoq and Rydges. I thank Cronulla Chamber of Commerce executive members Mark Aprilovic, Patch Clunes, Brad Lord, Darnelle O'Brien, Annette Tasker and Kal Glanznig for their contribution. I thank Geoff Trio, Jad Nakhle, Robyn Adamski, Councillor Carol Provan, Ross Howie, Michael Forshaw, Jenny Leonard, Peter Hatfield, Matt Callaghan and Don Elford for their contributions to the event's organisation and operation on the day. The event saw locals and visitors from across New South Wales enjoy not only the music but also pop-up record fairs, a film festival screening and an array of stalls and shops. There was a great display of support for local and small businesses and the arts. It was great to see the live music industry and the arts being thoroughly supported after a very difficult couple of years with COVID.

I commend the performing artists of the event, including Jeff Martin of The Tea Party, Emma Pask, Ray Beadle, The Strides, Lloyd Spiegel, the Foreday Riders, Pacey King & Doley, The Detonators, Murray Cook's Soul Movers, Spurs For Jesus, Dom Turner's Backsliders, Rural Blues Project, Martinez Akustica, Clayton Doley's Bayou Billabong, Daniel March, Steve Edmonds Plays Hendrix, Jo Fabro, Fripps & Fripps, Blues Power featuring Darren Jack and Simon Kinny-Lewis, Unlocking The Doors, Professor Groove and the Booty Affair, Adam Pringle and Friends, The Guitar Organ Drums Trio of Ray Beadle, Clayton Doley and Andrew Dickeson, Tim Rollinson Trio, the Blues Preachers, The Don Hopkins Three, "Continental" Robert Susz's JukeJoint Three, Frank Sultana, Darren Jack, Glenn Whitehall, the Big Daddy Roy Payne Band, Andrew Dickeson's Blue Rhythm Band, Magic Machine, Bonnie Kay and the Bonafides, Big Daddy's Creole Blues Party, Coconut Ruffs and The Flashy Dashbacks.

I also commend Bridie King's Creole Three, The Marvellous Hearts, The Cookers, George Washingmachine and Jim Pennell, Leanne Paris, Bones Atlas, McDermott and North, Katie Brianna, James Van Cooper, Sons of Atticus, Ben Leece, Tommy Gun, Dave Favours & The Roadside Ashes, Jordan Kenny, Zoe K, Sam Shinazzi, Looch Lewis & the Press Gangsters, The Abby Constable Trio, Big Wheels, Steve Hunter Trio, The Pocket Trio, The New South Trio, Chloe Kay and The Crusade, Abby, Andrew and also Arty, Alex Gibson, Triplex, Peta Caswell, Harvey Russell, Jessica and Aidan, Dancing Fingers Guitar Trio, Lawson Doyle, Ellen Soffe, Rochelle Natoli, 5 Blues Drive, Hoochie Mama, Jade Steg Band, Richard Calabro Trio, Sammy and Jimmy, Matt Charleston Band, Kim Girdlestone, Todd Kem, Julia and Noah, Emma Greenfield, School of Rock, Amber Lawrence Kids Gone Country, the Kirrawee High School jazz orchestra and Sydney Youth Jazz Orchestra.

Each of those artists and groups deserves recognition for their great talent and work, which certainly enriched the event. I commend the organisers for partnering with Plastic Free Cronulla. That partnership ensured that the event was sustainable and maintained a focus on ensuring our beaches, waterways and environment are safe, clean and healthy. That was also encouraged by having all stallholders minimise their usage of plastic items, a move that demonstrates Cronulla's commitment to sustainability and environmentalism. I hope to see the event continue for many years to come. It was a great contribution to business, tourism and the arts in the heart of Cronulla.

PORT STEPHENS OYSTER FARMING

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (18:12): I take this opportunity to inform the House about a very serious issue playing out in my electorate of Port Stephens, which has a long and proud history of oyster farming. In fact, we produce some of the highest quality and most sought-after oysters in Australia. Some families in Port Stephens have worked in the industry for generations. Oyster farming underpins the entire economy in towns like Karuah, attracting visitors and providing local jobs. But, if members were to visit an oyster farm in Port Stephens today, they would be confronted by devastation. On the Tilligerry Peninsula, near Lemon Tree Passage, one can turn onto Oyster Farm Road. As the road turns to dirt, the oyster farms stretch out in front, alongside Tilligerry Creek. There is not usually a lot to see around the oyster farms, because most of the action on an oyster farm is underwater.

But, when I visited last weekend, thousands upon thousands of oyster racks were stacked everywhere along the road. At the very end of the road there were massive, stinking piles of thousands of oyster shells, dead and empty. That is what an industry struggling to survive looks like—oyster racks out of the water and mountains of dead oysters going to waste. Sadly, the devastating QX disease has hit our oyster industry in Port Stephens. QX does not have any impact on human health but is deadly to Sydney rock oysters, which are grown across our estuaries. The disease was first detected in August last year, but since then it has spread much quicker and further than anticipated. The mortality rate has been much worse than predicted. Lingering water quality issues after years of drought, successive floods and copious rainfall have not helped. In some areas 100 per cent of the oyster stock

has died. This is a crushing blow to our local oyster farmers, their families, their workers and their communities. Many of them simply have no oysters left to sell and no income to pay their workers or their mortgages and bills.

Sydney rock oysters take two to three years to mature, so this event will have long-lasting impacts. Without support from the Government, most oyster farmers simply will not survive. With no stock to grow and sell next year, or for years after that, fifth-generation farmers are now considering walking away from the only industry they have ever known. Workers are being laid off, off-farm income is becoming necessary for survival and stress and heartache is high. As their local member of Parliament, I am fighting for these farmers and their workers. We must ensure that our local oyster industry survives. Its significant contribution to the local economy and the State economy cannot be lost. In the past two weeks, I have met with a number of local oyster farmers across Port Stephens and seen firsthand the devastation they are living through. I have heard their heartache.

One of the first things I did was contact the Minister for Agriculture, Dugald Saunders, who I note is in the Chamber tonight. I thank him for being here. I have had a number of productive meetings with his office over the past fortnight. It was important to ensure that the Minister was well aware of the dire situation facing our local industry. I am grateful to the Minister and his staff for their responsiveness so far. I am also grateful to the department and to DPI Fisheries for their close and supportive relationship with local oyster farmers over recent years. It is clear to everyone that this industry must be supported in order to survive this shocking disease. There are a number of agricultural grants and subsidies that I hope will be made available to oyster farmers. As the local member of Parliament, I will be fighting to ensure that every single oyster farmer receives every last dollar they are entitled to as soon as possible, but those grants alone will not be enough. Oyster farmers are asking the State Government for fee waivers while they have no income. That is a reasonable request and one that I hope is acted upon as soon as possible.

The farmers are also being proactive. With the assistance of Business Connect, local oyster farmers are putting together a plan and a business case to pivot to Pacific oysters, which are not susceptible to the QX disease and can be grown more quickly than Sydney rock oysters. That would provide local growers with the opportunity to earn income again sooner to survive the current threat and lay the foundations for an industry capable of returning to the production of the world-famous Sydney rock oysters it is renowned for. That plan will necessarily require further government support, and I trust that the Minister will be on deck to help us on that front. I feel for my local oyster farmers, their families and their workers. As their local member of Parliament, I will continue to fight for them to ensure that this important industry has a future in Port Stephens.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales) (18:17): I thank the member for Port Stephens for her private member's statement and recognise the dire impact that this is having in Port Stephens at the moment. She mentioned a few things that are worth noting. There are grants available through disaster recovery, there are low-interest loans and there are other things are being looked at. Hopefully, as the member for Port Stephens said, that can be progressed fairly quickly. I also ask any growers that are impacted not to self-assess. They should get help from a rural financial counsellor or a Department of Primary Industries flood recovery officer and talk to their local financial person, whether it is their accountant or business operator. The Government wants to get money out the door as quickly as possible to support as many people as possible. Moving to disease-resistant varieties like Pacific oysters is certainly part of the answer. I am confident that with the ongoing support of DPI Fisheries we can get the industry back to where it needs to be long-term. I thank the member for raising this issue.

BATHURST ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (18:18): I speak about a couple of exciting investments that the Government is making in my electorate that will grow tourism and invest in health and facilities needed within the local area. First, I mention the Jenolan Caves Rural Fire Brigade Station, which has been rebuilt after the fires in 2019-20. The Jenolan Caves Fire Brigade was fighting the fires surrounding Jenolan Caves House and worked tirelessly over many weeks to ensure that it is still standing today. Unfortunately, when they were fighting the Green Wattle Creek bushfire, their fire station was burnt down. The New South Wales Government has provided \$830,000, and the Jenolan Caves Fire Brigade is up and running again with a new shed, which has three bays, amenities, spaces and a meeting room. It is an improved facility for the members of the fire brigade and supports the 32 active members who are part of that brigade.

It is worth highlighting some of the special items that have been included in the station, such as a stained-glass window depicting the brigade's logo and a toy car collection with a number of heritage fire vehicles that are going to be stored in a cabinet. I thank those who were in attendance for the opening, including Jenolan Caves Fire Brigade Captain Charles Degotardi, Oberon Mayor Mark Kellam, Chifley Zone Rural Fire Service Captain Barry Richard and Deputy Commissioner Field Operations at NSW Rural Fire Service Peter McKechnie. I also thank Mick Holland for his work in ensuring that the facility has been rebuilt in the local area.

I also mention health services in my electorate. The New South Wales Government is investing over \$4 million in Lithgow and over \$5 million in Bathurst to bring MRI services to the Bathurst and Lithgow hospitals and ensure that residents of both of those communities will not have to travel out of town to receive important diagnostic tests. There is the \$4 million state-of-the-art MRI facility in Lithgow. This week the construction contract was awarded to Interior Construction Group following a tender process. Interior Construction Group has been on site and will have its site shed up by the middle of this month. Construction will be completed by the end of October. By the end of the year, the MRI machine will be up and running for that community. It has been designed in consultation with the health staff. There is also a new staff station, patient waiting area, and changerooms and bathrooms, which are being constructed at the southern end of the hospital to maximise space. There will also be an MRI machine up and running in Bathurst by the end of the year, which is another important investment and service for the area.

I also mention the Zig Zag Railway upgrade. The New South Wales Government is investing over \$4 million to restore and reopen the historic Zig Zag Railway. The fires in 2013 saw the closure of the Zig Zag Railway. Since then, there have been more fires, floods and COVID, which impacted rebuilding efforts, but the Zig Zag Railway is looking to be reopened towards the end of the year. That is important because it is a historic tourist attraction. When it was in operation in 2013 and in the years before that, it saw around 60,000 visitors each year, which helped drive the local economy and promote and showcase regional New South Wales. I was able to get on the 218 steam locomotive, which is functioning again. There are seven passenger carriages now in operation. I thank Ben Lawrence and all of the volunteers who are working on the Zig Zag Railway project because it is going to be an enormous boost to the local area. Their efforts have been second to none as they have worked tirelessly through this process.

EASTERN SUBURBS HOUSING DENSITY TARGETS

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (18:23): I raise my grave concerns about Randwick City Council's Comprehensive Planning Proposal, which is currently on exhibition. It includes five housing investigation areas [HIAs] where zoning, density and building heights are to be changed. The council is being compelled to increase population densities in these HIAs, which include Kensington and Kingsford in my electorate, despite its objections. I want to make this point perfectly clear to the House: Randwick City Council has met more than its obligations in increasing population density. It has received letters of congratulation from the Department of Planning and Environment for meeting the department's housing supply targets.

Several years ago, Randwick City Council, in its Kensington to Kingsford Planning Strategy and Proposal, provided for an additional 5,000 dwellings along the light rail corridor. That was not sufficient for the Department of Planning and Environment; it asked for additional dwellings, and a total of 5,600 dwellings were provided in the Kensington-Kingsford area. Even though the transport corridor might be able to cater for this population increase, certainly other infrastructure does not. The council has done its heavy lifting. There is no more capacity within the Randwick City Council local government area, and certainly not in my electorate, for any further increased density—enough is enough.

However, when I compare the demands of the Department of Planning for the Randwick City Council local government area with those placed on other LGAs, there is somewhat of a difference. While Randwick City Council is required to meet a minimum housing target supply of 4,300 over five years, Mosman is only required to meet a minimum target of 300. The minimum target for Hunters Hill is 150 and for Woollahra is 500. It is about time some of these Tory areas did their own heavy lifting. I would support some high-rise public housing at Vaucluse, Double Bay, Rose Bay or Edgecliff, because those areas actually have quite good transport links and could certainly deal with additional density. I was recently at Darling Point and observed that there could be far taller buildings and increased density accommodated there.

I am often accused of referring to class in this House, but it is clear when the minimum housing supply targets set out in the Department of Planning and Environment's own documents are compared—being 4,300 for Randwick and 500 for Woollahra—that something is not fair. Added to the fact that in the past two years Randwick City Council has provided 5,600 new dwellings in Kensington and Kingsford alone, I think it has done its fair share. The council has objected to these overall housing targets. The council has indicated that the targets are unfair and that it is being compelled by the department down this course and to put a planning proposal on exhibition.

The department cannot congratulate the Randwick City Council for meeting housing targets in the past and at the same time treat the residents of the area, particularly those of Kensington and Kingsford, unfairly by demanding that additional dwellings be built. It is time for the Department of Planning and Environment to understand that enough is enough in my electorate. The people are struggling with cancelled bus services and inadequate light rail. Kensington Public School is full and turning local children away. It is time for the Department of Planning and Environment to stop putting housing targets on my electorate.

GUNDARY SOLAR FARM

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government) (18:28): Today I speak against the proposed Gundry Solar Farm project, which would be located a mere 9.6 kilometres south-west of the Goulburn town centre. My electorate of Goulburn is already saturated with renewable energy projects—the Gullen Range, Cullerin Range, Gunning, Crookwell, Jupiter and Biala wind farms, to name a few. Furthermore, a waste-to-energy incinerator is proposed to burn Sydney's rubbish in villages in my electorate, which will directly impact not only those communities but the viability of the surrounding agricultural land. In addition, the TransGrid HumeLink project—one of New South Wales' largest infrastructure ventures—which will connect these renewable energy projects, will affect 20 landowners in my electorate alone in its first stage, not to mention many more in its corridor.

I am sure many people will assume that this is a good news story, but the reality is that the national push for renewable energy is coming at a cost to my regional electorate—a cost to agriculture production, impacting the productive prime agricultural land that supplies our nation's tables, and causing emotional distress to the residents impacted by these foreign-owned businesses and the uncertainty of a planning process which has no clear guidelines. As Australia's first inland city, Goulburn has some of the most magnificent accounts of pastoral and pioneering history, equal to anywhere in Australia. Today the region is home to some of the leading agricultural experts, researchers and practitioners—in their literal fields. Whether it is producing the finest wool and best beef or the array of crops grown to feed us, agriculture is what the electorate of Goulburn is known for.

On 1 April this year I found out that yet another renewable energy project would be popping up on our prime agricultural land—an enormous solar farm in Gundry was being proposed. Goulburn is not known for its sunshine and brightness or cloudless days. In fact, the Australian Bureau of Meteorology lists Goulburn's annual sunshine duration, daily solar exposure and UV exposure all well below the national average. I am advised that the Bureau of Meteorology listed only 60 per cent of Goulburn's days as sunny, which makes a proposed solar farm on the Gundry Plains as against other sites somewhat perplexing. The Goulburn-Gundry area is not part of a State Government Renewable Energy Zone. There are renewable energy zones planned and operational in New South Wales—zones that welcome these projects. Goulburn and Gundry are not included in this plan.

The proposed location for the Gundry Solar Farm is prime agricultural land, class 3 and rated as RU1. It is land which is currently growing quality cattle, Merino sheep and lambs. The adjoining farmers run fat lambs, cattle and goats for the food market, stud sheep and Merino sheep. The land grows food crops such as oats, canola and lucerne. This is precious fertile land, which is contributing to Australia's and the world's food security. However, now the land faces a proposal for 1,500 acres to be covered in a 400-megawatt solar facility that has over 1.2 million panels, batteries, DC/AC converters and a 300-kilovolt substation, with an operational life of 35 years and a dismal two to four jobs created after the initial build. Recently I met with some of the adjoining landholders, those who have put in many years of hard work and sacrifice to their property and community. These residents are facing a situation poised to severely disrupt their entire livelihood and personal health. Their homes presently overlook a magnificent landscape of green valleys and foothills. However, if this proposal is to go ahead, there will be 180 degrees of glinting and glaring glass from the solar farm impacting their panorama.

Furthermore, the Gundry Plains form part of the Sydney Drinking Water Catchment, and residents are keenly aware of the regular flooding and potential impact to the water catchment should this project proceed. More than 74 working farms and residences will be directly affected visually and physically if the foreign-owned Gundry Solar Farm project progresses. I want to make my position clear. The Goulburn electorate is saturated with renewable energy projects. While I understand the importance of these projects as an alternative power source, it should not be at the expense of the local community, agriculture and environment. It is time to share the burden. Perhaps there should be wind farms on Sydney Heads and solar panels in Centennial Park—the possibilities are endless. I am committed to the zero-emissions target by 2050, but not at the expense of prime agricultural lands. I am looking forward to the report by the Commissioner for Agriculture to address this and to guidelines being produced to support our agriculture industry. In the meantime, no to Gundry Solar Farm and no to a waste-to-energy incinerator at Tarago.

PARRAMATTA LIGHT RAIL STAGE TWO

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (18:33): The Government has made another announcement about stage two of the Parramatta light rail project, which is about the fourteenth announcement in five years. To some extent, one could say it was a victory for the local community, which pushed for the project to be completed because the electorate of Auburn, particularly Wentworth Point, Sydney Olympic Park and the future Carter Street, will have some of the highest population densities in Australia. The Government's re-announcement is at least something from the Government for a project first announced in 2017. The Government, which tweeted that the project would be \$600 million and then deleted the tweet, has announced it will do stage two but with no costing and no time line. The community is in the dark as to what \$600 million will actually deliver.

Earlier this year, Geoff Lee said that the cost of stage two is likely to be around \$3 billion. If it is \$3 billion, we need to see a time line in the upcoming budget of how much the project is going to cost. Without that, there will continue to be scepticism in the electorate of Auburn about when the project will be delivered. The community had to wait a decade for their high school and are still waiting for their foreshore park. The Carter Street primary school was in a redesigned master plan to add an extra 700 units to the 5,500 dwellings that were already being built there. That is 6,200 dwellings on one block on the basis that stage two of the Parramatta light rail would be built. That revised master plan to significantly increase dwellings on a densely populated hectare of land was released on 7 September 2018. The then Minister Rob Stokes said they could build the extra 700 units because the light rail stage two was going to be built. They said that in 2018, but in 2022 we have no time line and no costing.

The Government decided to put a high school in Wentworth Point when it should have been in Sydney Olympic Park, where it was offered three sites by the Sydney Olympic Park Authority. Wentworth Point has one road in and one road out, Hill Road. There are about 20,000 dwellings in Wentworth Point. One can imagine how many people are in that part of the peninsula. The Government does not even have enough land at Wentworth Point to meet the open space requirements for the school. The light rail stage two is going to be vital for a school that the Government says it is building next year. If so, how are the kids getting to the school without a time line? And where is the money to build the rest of the light rail stage two? The communities in Wentworth Point, Sydney Olympic Park and Newington deserve the infrastructure they were promised.

The Premier gets up in the Chamber during question time and talks about his fabulous infrastructure projects. If one believes the nonsense put forward by the Premier about Parramatta Road, the road flows better now the tolls are back on the M4. The road was a parking lot before that. The Government's own reports said that traffic on Parramatta Road would increase 20 per cent in Silverwater, Auburn and Granville once the tolls were put back in. The House has Standing Order 129, which is about being relevant. We would love for the Government to be relevant, but we should have a standing order about being disingenuous. The Premier referred to the member for Parramatta when he said that. The member for Parramatta will find out from the people of Wentworth Point, Silverwater and Newington that they are not buying that line at all, just as they are not buying the line that, somewhere in the future, stage two of the light rail will be built. Labor wants to see a time line of when the Government is going to build stage two, when it will be delivered and when the rolling stock is coming, which is supposedly being manufactured locally. Labor appreciates that. Those are the answers that our communities seek.

RURAL HEALTH WORKFORCE SHORTAGES

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (18:39): It feels as if innovation and thinking outside of the box are skills that decision-makers within the New South Wales health bureaucracy lack when it comes to developing new ways to address workforce shortages within the rural health sector. The old systems of recruitment, retainment and remuneration of medical professionals are simply not working. Pouring more money into old, failed systems will not deliver different outcomes. Thankfully, though, workable solutions to the crisis are being developed right in the heart of the Northern Tablelands at the University of New England [UNE]. Incredible minds—like those of the dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Health, Professor Jennifer Williams; Professor Rod McClure; and senior lecturer in rural medicine Dr Rod Martin—are exploring ways that basic telehealth can evolve to the stage where hospital-level care is not dependent on a physical location. The fruit of this work is the New England Virtual Health Network [NEViHN], a system that will support the delivery of in-place health care close to people's homes for patients and in-place learning for all future UNE medicine and health students across the region.

NEViHN has been developed in collaboration with the Hunter, New England and Central Coast Primary Health Network and the Hunter New England Local Health District. Utilising joint virtual care clinics [JVCC] in Armidale and Tamworth, UNE medical school students will maintain their learning while undertaking placements in local GP clinics or community health centres and hospitals in one of seven participating regional, rural and remote towns. The university will lease the study spaces in the town's hospital or GP clinic and equip them with an internet link back to the JVCC, where students can access simulated learning and virtual reality programs and network with NSW Health facilities, local hospitals, to observe consultations and surgical procedures and consult with practitioners, specialists and patients.

That is exciting because, instead of students completing their placements in larger urban and regional hospitals like John Hunter Hospital in Newcastle, they will be able to do it in our region and will not need to leave the region to complete their full medical qualifications. By completing their studies in places like Glen Innes, Inverell and Moree, where, coincidentally, there is a severe shortage of GPs working in our hospital system, they will get a taste of regional practice whilst maintaining the high standards required of medical school training. Students will be provided safe and suitable accommodation to ensure a comfortable experience in their town.

From a patient perspective, the JVCC will support clinicians already in place from Armidale and Tamworth and other externally based specialists to deliver telehealth services to people across the New England North West through NSW Health's My Virtual Care. The facilities will be staffed by a permanent doctor and senior nurse but will also utilise students in the later stages of their training who are capable of some clinical care. A practical example of the type of care the JVCC can provide occurred at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, when intensive-care-quality remote monitoring units were provided to COVID patients in the home, testing their blood pressure and oxygen saturation. That information was fed back to health practitioners at the JVCC who monitored the patients' condition and, if their health deteriorated, had them transferred to their nearest local hospital. In the first instance the patient was kept at home and not admitted to hospital, therefore freeing up a bed and staff resources.

The real question is, "Where to next?" Launched in 2021, this transformative model is in its infancy and requires significant financial support for new infrastructure, technology capabilities and the employment of additional staff. The University of New England anticipates \$9 million of initial capital funding will be needed in years one and two of the project, with a total investment of \$62 million over the 10-year duration of the set-up phase. Last month I facilitated a meeting between UNE and the Minister for Regional Health, Bronnie Taylor, who was extremely interested in hearing about NEViHN's trial phase. I would not have made that approach if I did not sincerely believe, as a representative of my region in this Parliament, that the initiative had the potential to bolster our existing medical and health workforce and help reverse the devastating trend of a severe reduction of the GP workforce in the regions. It ticks a huge box for me. It leverages telehealth technology and the existing GP workforce. It supports GPs but also makes sure we can continue to educate students in medicine and keep them in the regions for the full extent of their degree. I commend NEViHN and the University of New England, and I look forward to working with the Minister to turn the project into a reality.

NEW BANKSTOWN-LIDCOMBE HOSPITAL

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (18:44): I update the House on the new Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital, which was announced by this Government in March 2019, 10 days before the State election. Alas, three years later there is still no hospital or hospital site and we are none the wiser on where the new hospital will be. I saw only a very small allocation of funding for the new hospital in the 2021-22 budget: \$109 million. That is less than 10 per cent of the estimated total cost of the hospital of \$1.3 billion, which was announced in March 2019. In the 2019-20 and 2020-21 budgets that followed the project announcement, no funding was provided for the development of the new hospital.

In July 2020 the New South Wales Government issued a request for information [RFI], calling for landowners or appointed agents in the East Hills and Bankstown regions to nominate potential locations as the site for the new hospital. There were certain requirements, including that the land be around four hectares in size. The RFI process concluded on 28 August 2020. I understand the Government received six RFI submissions and has been assessing several sites in response. To date, the Government has not released what sites have undertaken assessment and what the outcomes of the assessments were. I understand that the current Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital site has been ruled out as an option by the Minister for Health. I only know this because I asked the Minister question No. 2601. His response stated:

The current hospital is restricted by the nearby residential area, major roads ...

It is difficult to understand why, given that there is already a hospital there, a new hospital could not be built because of major roads and it being in a residential area. Most hospitals are in residential areas or surrounded by major roads. There has been speculation in the media that the Bankstown TAFE site is a strong contender as the site of the new Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital. Those comments have been pushed by certain sections of the development and business community. The April 2022 project update on the new hospital, published by Health Infrastructure NSW, identified that:

... easy drop-off and pick-up, less clutter, and the need for access to quiet spaces and gardens were paramount.

Given Bankstown TAFE's proximity to a major highway and its landlocked location and that it is next to residential areas and has no access to any green space whatsoever, it is an inappropriate location. That begs the question: Why is that site being considered and why is the public none the wiser that it has attracted interest? The Bankstown CBD already experiences heavy congestion and significant parking problems. A train line cuts the Bankstown CBD in half, and very soon a 400-metre interchange from the heavy rail to the metro line will divide our city further. Our local ambulance station relocated from Meredith Street to Canterbury Road for this very reason. It has become incredibly challenging for vehicles to manoeuvre from one side of the Bankstown CBD to the other. If I have to get from one side to the other, I often walk because it is incredibly difficult to drive in the CBD.

I note that the Minister for Skills and Training claims to be an advocate of TAFE. I am therefore unsure why he has not come out and stated publicly that the Bankstown TAFE site will not be in any way compromised by the new Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital. The current hospital site is in close proximity to Canterbury Road. It is also across the road from a large block of land that contains a school, a sports complex and plenty of ground space. I understand the Bankstown City Sports Complex has also been considered as a potential site, with NSW Health conducting an investigation into the site last year. However, the findings of the report were never released. Earlier this year Canterbury City Council commissioned an independent report that found asbestos and lead on the site. Despite that, the council has allowed kids to continue to play sport. It has a duty of care to make sure that land is rehabilitated, particularly given that it has been ruled out as a potential site for the new hospital.

EMERITUS MAYOR OF DUBBO ANNE JONES, OAM

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales) (18:49): I congratulate Anne Jones, OAM, who was recently honoured with the prestigious title of Emeritus Mayor by Local Government NSW. Anne first became a councillor in 1995 as part of the former Wellington Council and went on to serve on council for 21 years, including as deputy mayor for seven years and mayor for eight. In 2015 she was honoured with an Order of Australia medal for her long record of service to local government and to the community of Wellington. Anne has always been a fierce advocate for her community. Following the amalgamation of City of Dubbo and Wellington Council, in 2016, she was appointed as an adviser to the administrator of the newly merged council. In 2017 Anne was elected as the first deputy mayor of Dubbo Regional Council, and she represented Wellington ward until December last year. At a recent meeting of the Dubbo Regional Council, Anne was honoured with a Certificate of Acknowledgement of Emeritus Mayor from Local Government NSW.

But there is lot more to Anne Jones than her record of service in local government, and her commitment to community goes well beyond the title of councillor. Anne was born in Austria but emigrated to Australia with her family at 18 months of age. She graduated as an accountant in 1979 and joined a firm that would go on to become Ernst & Young chartered accountants and, after two years, was appointed as the manager of its Liverpool practice. But it was in 1980 that Anne's life changed forever. She has often said that, despite having left at only 18 months of age, the first time she went back to Austria she felt that she was back home. She felt the same feeling in 1980, the first time she visited a quaint yet bustling little town in the Central West nestled between the banks of the Bell and Macquarie rivers. That town is Wellington. "When I went there, I just felt that it was the place to be", Anne recalls. She was so taken with the place that, the same weekend she visited, she and her partner bought a farm. Six years later Anne and her then husband, Bill, had made the "tree change" and she started her own accountancy practice above the State Bank of New South Wales, which she ran until selling it in 2002.

Anne believes her greatest achievement as an accountant has been the people she has helped outside of her practice. She acknowledges that finance is her strong point, and she has gladly lent her expertise to a number of groups over the years. Anne was on the consultative committee when the first Wellington jail was built, she helped establish the Wellington PCYC and she represented the Orana Command at the Community Awareness for Policing program. Anne is Chair of the Independent Appeals Panel for the State Government's Rural Assistance Authority and is on the boards of Maranatha Aged Care; Binjang Community Radio; and the Westhaven Association, which is a disability service provider and employer in the Dubbo region of which she is also a life member.

But possibly Anne's greatest contribution has been through Lions. She is a member of Lions Clubs International and has been the district governor of Lions Clubs of District 201N4, which covers a third of New South Wales. In 2013, Lions raised \$344,000 for the relief effort after the Wambelong fire near Coonabarabran in January that year, and another \$400,000 following the Blue Mountains fires later in the year. Anne was disaster alert chair for the district and was responsible for giving out vouchers to farmers. When the worst drought on record was gripping our region, Anne was again at the forefront of the relief effort. As the Lions district's drought relief coordinator, Anne hosted Hay Days at her Gollan property. I was lucky enough to go along to a couple of them, and they ran like clockwork and provided amazing support for landowners. Not only did farmers come from far and wide to collect much-needed hay; they were also given a chance to open up and talk about how they were coping with the crippling drought. The wonderful volunteers from the Lions club then made sure everyone got a bite to eat before they hit the road for home.

By August 2019 the region's Lions clubs had raised more than \$1.3 million and distributed more than 9,000 bales of hay. Our government did its part to make sure that money went as far as possible, with the Rural Assistance Authority covering the transport costs—about \$850,000 since Hay Days began. The clubs also distributed more than \$800,000 worth of care packages in my local district alone, which made a huge difference to plenty of people's lives. It was far from a solo effort but Anne played a pivotal role in giving hope to our district's farmers, and one cannot put a price on that. Anne has now retired from local government after more than

25 years serving communities around Wellington, Maryvale, Geurie, North Yeoval, Dripstone, Mumbil, Stuart Town, Euchareena and the many villages and rural localities in between. I know full well that her days of service are far from over, and for that I am grateful. I congratulate emeritus Mayor Anne Jones, OAM, and thank her for everything she does.

ENERGY FROM WASTE INCINERATOR

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (18:54): I speak about the energy from waste proposal at Eastern Creek by The Next Generation, which has been troubling my community for many years. It has been ongoing since 2013, when The Next Generation presented its proposal to build the world's largest energy from waste incinerator at Eastern Creek at a Blacktown council meeting. My colleague the member for Blacktown and I were councillors at the time, and we have been opposed to incinerator proposals in the Sydney Basin over the past nine years. There is perhaps no greater a solemn duty for a government than to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the people it is elected to represent. It is therefore puzzling that, amid increased consciousness of environmental issues, which was made demonstrably clear by the barometer of public sentiment—that is, the recent Federal election—our State Government could so catastrophically fail to pass legislation to outright ban the development of energy from waste incinerator facilities in metropolitan areas.

This Liberal Government came out last year, beating its chest and making big announcements about its intent to ban energy from waste facilities in Sydney metropolitan areas and limit such facilities to four precincts in regional New South Wales. However, the Government has failed to cement its announcement by enacting legislation and amending the State environmental planning policy to ensure that the restrictions announced are acted upon. Here we are again, fighting another amended energy from waste proposal by The Next Generation. The issue of a toxic energy from waste facility in western Sydney is causing my community anxiety, stress and concerns about their future health and the health of their children. The lack of legislation to limit the areas where energy from waste facilities may be built has caused my constituents and others who live nearby to be subjected to uncertainty caused by this Government.

In 2018 development consent was first refused by the Independent Planning Commission for a State significant development application by The Next Generation to construct such a facility in Eastern Creek, only one kilometre from residents in Minchinbury and nearby Erskine Park. The Next Generation then filed an appeal in the Land and Environment Court of New South Wales and, consequently on appeal, the court became the determining authority. The Next Generation twice tried to amend its development application while the matter was before the court, with the first attempt deemed too significant to be an amendment. The second attempt was merely an amendment for the facility not to accept floc waste. An arduous, complex and technical hearing at the court resulted in The Next Generation being permitted to have its amended proposal considered. While I acknowledge that the Land and Environment Court conducts its deliberations independently from Parliament, it is abundantly clear that this decision contravenes the intent of the Energy from Waste Infrastructure Plan.

I highlight the failure of the State Government to legislate against such proposals because it is certainly not in the public interest. Insufficient safeguards were put in place to prevent the facilities from being constructed in metropolitan areas, including in the middle of the Sydney Basin. They fail to consider the unique challenges caused by the local topography, including the effects of temperature inversions and an adjacent mountain range that traps airborne pollutants above the localised area, which corresponds precisely with the city that the majority of our State calls home. The proposal by The Next Generation flies against the notion that the duty of a government is to protect the people it represents. The proposal for an incinerator in western Sydney is an ugly, dirty and polluting analogy to the legend of the phoenix rising from the ashes. I call on this Liberal-Nationals Government to follow through its announcement of banning those facilities from the Sydney Basin and to have retrospective laws that will allow for this application to be again refused and bring certainty to the community I represent.

WAGGA WAGGA ELECTORATE HOMELESSNESS AND YOUTH JUSTICE

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (18:59): I speak about issues affecting some of the most vulnerable people in my electorate of Wagga Wagga—the homeless and young people dealing with our justice system. Homelessness is appearing as a significant emerging issue this winter in Wagga Wagga. Community services, government and non-government alike, are reporting increases in rough sleepers and those seeking housing help. There is almost a perfect storm of pressures in regional New South Wales. People are being buffeted by the increasing costs of living, including food, fuel, energy, rent and interest rates. Writing in *The Canberra Times* last month, the CEO of Housing Trust, Michele Adair, said, "The biggest election issue in regional Australia is the lack of affordable rental housing." Shelter NSW spoke about its concerns in its pre-budget submission. It said:

Shelter NSW is concerned about the housing crisis in NSW and the rising trends in homelessness; housing rental stress as well as the impacts of poor-quality housing, particularly on low-income households.

The Wagga Wagga electorate is feeling the impacts of housing pressures too. Residential vacancy rates for April in Wagga Wagga were just 0.6 per cent. Like larger metropolitan centres, Wagga Wagga is feeling pressure on housing in particular from multiple factors, including lack of housing supply; bushfire and flooding disasters; the rising costs of living, inflation, fuel and energy; interest rate increases; the effects of the short-term rental market; pandemic population shifts; and the ending of the COVID eviction moratorium. In addition, Wagga Wagga is a regional centre. People travel to regional cities like Wagga looking for better options in a range of areas, including housing, health care and government services.

On top of that, it has been suggested that Wagga is experiencing an unusual increase in rough sleepers in what is the coldest time of the year because of the recent floods in northern New South Wales. I point out those increasing pressures because the Government has been making substantial efforts in regard to homelessness with some success till now, and those pressures threaten to undo that good work. I have seen examples of excellent support and outcomes for people who have been homeless, and I have seen reductions in numbers of those sleeping rough in my electorate.

One program achieving that is the Together Home strategy. I have seen firsthand how that can be effective. Sadly, it may be that that good work will be overtaken by increasing demand. That is certainly the message I got when meeting with local service providers in Wagga Wagga last week. As a result, I have raised that matter with the Minister for Families and Communities and sought an immediate investigation of the situation in Wagga Wagga and prompt support for those affected. If that means additional resources, they should be made available. I am assured that this will be followed up. It is a matter I will pursue.

Another issue for our electorate concerns youth who come in contact with the justice system and receive bail conditions. Police have raised concerns with me that some of those young people are not receiving supervision and support in their home environments to encourage them to stick to their bail conditions. Firstly, I believe it is important that an address used for bail is a suitable dwelling and that the young person is entitled to live there. Secondly, anyone being named as the supervisor for a young person being granted bail should be assessed to ensure that their supervision will be appropriate and effective so that, for example, curfews are enforced.

If there is no-one considered to be suitable in the immediate community, consideration should be given to bailing a young person under the supervision of someone outside the young person's usual suburb or town of residence, so long as real links to family and community can be maintained. In cases where there are multiple, repeated breaches, steps should also be taken to positively intervene. For example, young people should be required to regularly attend school or an alternative support program if that is considered to be in their best interests. Finally, consideration should also be given to limiting the number of times a young person will be granted continuing bail after repeated breaches. I suggest that a figure of three might be suitable. I have heard of instances of up to 21 times in six months.

I appreciate that the courts have to balance the best interests of individual young people with those of the community, but I believe there are changes that can be made that offer better outcomes for both. There is a feeling of optimism in our regions and a sense that, after years of decline, we are finally booming. This growth is to be welcomed, but growth must always be responsible and sustainable. It is important that we do not leave behind the most vulnerable. That is the measure of a just community.

THANK A FIRST RESPONDER DAY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (19:04): I acknowledge that today is Thank a First Responder Day. Could there be a more fitting time to thank our first responders than after the past couple of years? First responders are ordinary people, just like us. They have families, commitments and homes to go to at the end of their working day. They have dinner to make, shopping to do and bills to pay. But they are also extraordinary. They dedicate every day to protecting us and keeping us safe. Whether it is local firefighters battling fires in our homes; paramedics responding to emergency callouts every day; or marine rescue, police and lifesavers working to find missing persons and keep our communities safe, we owe every one of them a great debt of gratitude. We also need to ensure that, as a Government, we continue to support them in this place.

Today I touch on the recent announcement about how the Government is supporting our healthcare workforce across New South Wales. During the COVID pandemic our healthcare services were on the front line, keeping our local communities safe. That terminology is used a lot, but I do not use it lightly. My sister, her husband, my friends and the people in my network are on the front line in our health services, and what they reported back to me was their personal experience and that of their colleagues. Our nurses, doctors, paramedics, and wider hospital and health staff were instrumental and worked tirelessly in fighting COVID. There was a huge amount of strain put on them and on our health system.

Everyone in New South Wales is indebted to our health workers because their efforts were selfless throughout the pandemic. Early on in particular, before we had vaccinations, there was a significant amount of risk for those individuals, and they were doing it to keep us safe and well. We will remember for a long time that they risked their lives to take care of their patients. Our Government is seeking to respond to the need within our healthcare system, noting just how strained our healthcare workers have been and the impact that the healthcare system has faced. We need to expand our workforce. While there has been significant investment in infrastructure through new and upgraded hospitals, we need workers there, not only to care for us but also to support the existing staff across our healthcare system. That is why the Government has committed to a record 10,000 extra full-time equivalent staff for hospitals and health services across the State as part of the upcoming budget.

This investment will help us care for health staff across the State, providing much-needed respite for those individuals. It will boost staff numbers in hospitals to deliver quality health care closer to home, ensuring better health outcomes and a brighter future for New South Wales families. This \$4.5 billion investment over four years is intended to relieve some of the pressure on existing staff and will ensure that there are appropriate levels of health staffing for our pipeline of new health infrastructure projects. It will include nurses and midwives; doctors; paramedics; pathologists and scientific staff; pharmacists; allied health professionals; and support and ancillary staff, who ensure the continued operations of New South Wales hospitals and the wider public health system.

The new staff will give relief and support to our hardworking health workforce, help normalise hospital services as we move toward a post-COVID environment and provide additional services delivered by health professionals. It will ensure that we have the staffing profile needed for increased elective surgeries and provide additional staff for newly constructed hospitals. The New South Wales Liberals and Nationals have delivered 1,700 hospitals and health facilities since coming into government in 2011, with a further 110 underway. This funding will ensure that those hospitals have the workforce to keep serving communities in the future. Another boost the Government has announced is \$1.76 billion for NSW Ambulance to recruit more than 2,000 new staff and open 30 more stations. Across metropolitan and regional areas, boosts at existing stations and staff for new stations is the support NSW Ambulance needs.

I particularly acknowledge the healthcare staff who work and reside in my electorate of North Shore. They might work at Royal North Shore Hospital, a local medical centre, a GP or a pharmacy. They might be a paramedic or a midwife—they helped me a lot. I acknowledge and thank them. I acknowledge all the first responders. The many people across our local community willing to put their hand up to help others are inspirational. I acknowledge our police from North Shore Police Area Command, stationed at Mosman and North Sydney; our firefighters at Mosman, Neutral Bay and Crows Nest; our SES; and our Marine Rescue at Middle Harbour. I thank the 300,000 first responders across Australia, particularly those in my community.

CENTRAL COAST HEALTH WORKFORCE

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (19:09): This week the Perrottet Government claimed that it is an ally of health workers across New South Wales. Armed with a blank cheque and a "with sympathies" card for the past decade of pay cuts, staff shortages and healthcare budget slashes, it is obviously a scrambling Government on the way out that is desperate to make up for the damage it has caused in the past 10 years. At the same time, the Perrottet Government continues its assault on hardworking healthcare staff on the New South Wales Central Coast. As we are seeing at Wyong and Gosford hospitals, radiography and medical imaging staff have been advised that their department will face significant cuts to its radiology units. The two chief radiographer positions at Wyong and Gosford will be merged into one, and at least four other full-time positions face the axe.

Typical of this Liberal Government, those opposite are quick to appear next to a ribbon cutting for new equipment. But, when they are asked to staff appropriately, they head straight for the hills. The Perrottet Government has proposed to cut radiographer roles in the Central Coast Local Health District despite the radiography unit reporting record workloads. The Health Services Union [HSU] has disclosed that this would render Wyong Public Hospital without a chief radiographer, and the delays would get even longer. This news comes after reports of long delays, with those who should start radiotherapy waiting almost two weeks more despite being classified as high-category patients. I would not want that to be a member of my family.

The cuts also render the new equipment at Gosford Hospital useless, with no-one to deliver the potentially life-saving service. At Gosford Hospital there is a licence for a second MRI machine. That MRI machine was put there with the licence, designed to service outpatients from across the coast. The good people in the radiography and medical imaging department work in the public system so that they can serve the people of the Central Coast well, yet we are seeing cuts to staff, which is going to render that licence not very useful in the public sector. At the same time, through cutting staff and not staffing properly, the Government is forcing public patients to go to private facilities and pay up to \$1,000 for MRIs, which leaves many people struggling to be able to afford the medical assessment that they need and that is supposed to be provided in our public health system.

The HSU has opposed the proposal and initiated a petition calling on the Perrottet Government not to cut these resources from our community. Central Coast Labor MPs have supported this and opposed the proposal, calling on Premier Perrottet to increase rather than decrease their radiography services, which are in high demand in our community. These cuts sit alongside the GP crisis across the coast, resulting in more people ending up in the emergency department, chronic bed block and our paramedics trying to get patients assessed so that they can get in. We should not be putting in place more barriers to getting people through the bed block and into the hospital.

This is all happening while the medical imaging staff are completely fatigued. Like all health staff, they welcome the \$3,000. I wish it came a bit earlier, because they are absolutely worn out and they are working at maximum capacity. They are very scared that when team members are taken away it is going to make things a lot worse and impact other departments in the hospital, putting lots of specifically trained staff under unnecessary pressure. I encourage our excellent new CEO to look at the way this department is being managed. In the People Matter survey, this department has the lowest employment engagement score, at less than 50 per cent; the lowest score in wellbeing outcomes, at less than 60 per cent; and scores 42 per cent in role clarity and support, which is more than 20 per cent lower than other departments.

It scores 20 per cent lower in teamwork and collaboration, and scores 31 per cent in satisfaction for learning and development, which is 20 per cent lower. It has the lowest satisfaction with senior managers and is the lowest in communication and change management, and it scores 20 per cent lower than other departments in employee voice. Should we be shrinking the department? Or should we be taking a good, hard look at how the department is being managed? As we praise our staff at Gosford Hospital who care for people on the Central Coast, we should also ensure they are appropriately resourced and serviced, and given appropriate communication, leadership and training so that they do not go to work in fear of workplace health and safety risks to their wellbeing. They want to work in our public system. They want to serve the people of the coast. They need efficient leadership, a quality team to do the job and a sustainable workforce. If the Premier is putting money into our system, why is the Central Coast Local Health District cutting medical imaging staff?

TOOLEYBUC BRIDGE

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (19:15): In 1925 the first car radio was fitted to an Australian car, King George V was reigning over the Commonwealth and sunscreen had not been invented. It was also the year that Tooleybuc Bridge was opened for use. Tooleybuc Bridge spans the banks of the mighty Murray River and forms part of the Mallee Highway, which is the shortest route between Sydney and Adelaide. The single-lane, timber, Allan truss bridge was designed to open to allow the passage of paddle-steamers up and down the Murray River—a sign of old times. Tooleybuc is a vibrant, industrious community that relies on the bridge to provide reliable access to emergency and essential services and health and education. It also supports industry by enabling personnel, freight and tourists to move through the region. Industries such as large-scale dryland cereal farming, livestock production, intensive horticulture, wineries and tourism exist in the region. The mineral sand-mining operations in the nearby town of Balranald, 50 kilometres to the north, use the Tooleybuc Bridge as a direct freight route to Victoria.

The old timber bridge now caters for over 850 crossings per day and struggles to meet the high demands of a prosperous agricultural and mining community. B-doubles, road trains and caravans cross daily and frequently. The bridge is essential to the community for many reasons. In 2013 the Tooleybuc community received some exciting news from the New South Wales Government: A new, fit-for-purpose bridge was to be constructed to better serve the town and broader community. Necessary land and houses were acquired in preparation for the new bridge. Time passed and planning was put on hold for the "short to medium term". However, in 2019 the New South Wales Government decided to upgrade rather than replace the bridge. In a poorly planned and communicated move, the Government decided to close the bridge for six weeks to complete necessary repairs. That was devastating news for the community and for businesses. For the Tooleybuc and wider community, it was social and economic suicide. Worse still, residents reported finding out about the plan when a Transport for NSW official informed the Tooleybuc Post Office.

The local community of Tooleybuc was quick to make its concerns known. The decision raised anxieties in the community, which, sadly, are only too familiar after the community suffered through the disastrous border closures of the COVID-19 pandemic. Those border closures put local businesses under enormous financial pressure and disproportionately impacted the community. The Government's decision to divert tourists around the town resulted in motels and hospitality venues losing valuable revenue. Emergency services will now respond more slowly because they have to navigate another route, over another bridge. Children travelling to school will have an 86-kilometre round-trip detour on poorly maintained roads. The community will be cut off and impacted by high fuel prices. It is paying for bad, ill-conceived decisions by this New South Wales Government.

After a huge community outcry, Minister Faraway rightly met with the residents of Tooleybuc. However, listening and understanding is something that The Nationals do not do well. The Tooleybuc community has now been given three options, of which none is acceptable. Tooleybuc has been shafted yet again by the party for regional New South Wales—The Nationals—which is not listening, not helping and not understanding. The answer is clear: Tooleybuc needs a new bridge. The funding for it should be reinstated, and a plan for the construction of a new bridge should be made clear. A temporary bridge must be installed while the new bridge is being built. The military can do that in three days. It has done it before. The New South Wales Government must step up and stand up for this community. Is that a bridge too far?

Community Recognition Notices

AMANDA CHEN

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I would like to congratulate Yagoona resident, Amanda Chen, on being selected as one of eight Australian musicians to join the Sydney Symphony Orchestra's Fellowship program. This year the program received 160 applications. It is delightful to see one of our local talents being chosen for this prestigious program. The Fellowship program is an annual, year-long program provides the next generation of musicians with the mentoring and skills to pursue a professional career in music. The program is now in its 21st year and for the first time, the Fellowship Program will be guided by 12 of the Sydney Symphony's permanent musicians, drawn from across the orchestra, who will guide the artistic direction and professional development activities of the program. Congratulations Amanda on this wonderful and well-deserved achievement!

FAIRY WREN MOVEMENT

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I take this opportunity to acknowledge the Fairy Wren Movement's Black Tie BBQ Fundraiser which was hosted on 9th April at Deepwater Park in Milperra. The Fairy Wren Movement (FWM) was established in early 2021 to support young people facing mental health conditions through overcoming stigma and enacting meaningful change. The Movement offers high schools the opportunity to host workshops and roundtable discussions run by the organisation. Today, the Fairy Wren Movement is a registered Health Promotion Charity and appears on the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) Register. I congratulate the co-founders of the Fairy Wren Movement, Angela St Baker and Lachlan Hyde, on this fantastic initiative. I also acknowledge the Executive Committee Members, Connor Burke, Cooper Gannon, Mikala Theocharous, Nicola Di Bona and Stassi Austin for their terrific work in organising this event. I wish the Fairy Wren Movement the best of luck for the remainder of 2022.

TINA RAHIMI

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I would like to congratulate Bass Hill resident, Tina Rahimi, on being selected as the first Muslim woman to box for Australia at the Commonwealth Games. Tina, who competes in the 57kg division, is one of eight Games debutants in the boxing team of four women and seven men for the Games. Impressively, Tina earned her selection last month by winning the national title, despite suffering a shoulder ligament injury at the start of the tournament. With a 15-2 win-loss record, last month, Tina went to Turkey to compete in the women's world boxing championships – her first international competition, and only four years after taking up boxing. Tina has said being the first Muslim woman to represent Australia in the event could inspire more women and girls from all backgrounds to take up the sport. Congratulations Tina on this incredible and well-earned achievement. Our local community will be cheering you on!

SS PETER AND PAUL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL YEAR 6 STUDENTS

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of NSW acknowledges a group of Year 6 students from Ss Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School in Kiama. During the remainder of school term, these Year 6 students are learning to cook, work in teams and understand food waste through Ozharvest's FEAST program – which is focussed on educating children on food waste, composting and nutrition. I acknowledge Year 6 teacher Emma Groves at Ss Peter and Paul Catholic Primary School who has been helping to coordinate the program. The theory work and cooking materials are provided by Ozharvest. I acknowledge and thank Pip Aitken who has also volunteered at Ss Peter and Paul. This is the first year the school has adopted the program and the response from students and parents has been overwhelmingly positive.

LADIES CRAFT GROUP AT KIAMA UNITING CHURCH

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of NSW acknowledges the Ladies Craft Group at Kiama Uniting Church. The Ladies Craft Group meets every Monday during school term from 9am until 12pm at the Hall inside Kiama Uniting Church in Manning Street. I acknowledge and thank the new organiser Jill Lambert, and members including Thelma Allman, Joan McClenaughan and the other wonderful ladies involved

with this art group. The group caters for all types of interests and skill levels including assistance provided for welcome newcomers. From cross stitch, embroidery, knitting, card making, crochet and painting – it's a great way for these ladies to enjoy craft activities, socialise with others on a regular basis and stay connected to our local community which is so important.

CHELSEA POTTENGER FROM GERRINGONG

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of NSW acknowledges Chelsea Pottenger from Gerringong. Chelsea is an international motivational speaker, mindfulness and meditation coach from Gerringong who has just released her first book *The Mindful High Performer*. This book is designed to give you the tools to refresh your mind, reduce stress, reframe negative thinking and bolster your resilience. Chelsea has worked with some global brands including Google, eBay, Uber, Macquarie Bank and Estee Lauder, training more than 90,000 professionals every year to take charge of their mental wellbeing. *The Mindful High Performer* is an important guide for those entrepreneurs and business operators who want to perform at their best in work and life – with a focus on sustaining and growing your mental fitness and mindfulness.

CLUB CHARLESTOWN

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—Club Charlestown has always been a strong part of the Charlestown electorate community. Their slogan is "Where good friends meet", but time and time again Club Charlestown has shown that they are a good friend to our community. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the club kept their community spirit alive by continuing to host its weekly raffles virtually and donating the proceeds to charity. It was no surprise to locals when Club Charlestown was nominated in the annual Clubs NSW and Community Awards in the 'Heart of the Community' category.

While the club did not take home the silverware at the awards, held at Darling Harbour on Thursday 26 May, it was wonderful to see their efforts recognised publicly. I want to acknowledge the staff, in particular Sarah and Sally, ably led by chief executive officer Michael Gray, and the directors led by chairman Jeff Davis, for all the work they do to keep Club Charlestown going and to support our community—especially throughout the difficulties of the last several years. Congratulations, Club Charlestown!

CYCLING WITHOUT AGE

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—The new Cycling Without Age program is bringing generations together to enjoy cycling, with triobikes allow volunteers to help older members of the community recapture the joy of cycling. The rain held off for the official launch of the program on 20 May. The triobikes were funded via the Community Building Partnership Program, and I am very proud to have one of the triobikes named "Charlestown". The program will allow NovaCare to help connect those no longer able to ride for themselves with their community and the outdoors with a ride on a triobike, piloted by our wonderful volunteers. I attended the launch of the "Charlestown" bike, where I met with Maree Edwards, Aboriginal Community Development Officer at Lake Macquarie City Council, and volunteer Chris. Charity Novacare Community Services is running the program in Lake Macquarie and is now on the lookout for volunteers to become involved. I was proud to help fund the program, and I would like to acknowledge Novacare, its CEO Joseph McCarthy, and the nationwide Cycling Without Age organisation, led by CEO Karen O'Connor. What a welcome addition to our community!

DUDLEY REDHEAD FOOTBALL CLUB

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—Established in 1896, the Dudley Redhead Football Club is one of the oldest in the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie region. Over more than 120 years they have become a fixture of the community in the Dudley and Redhead area. There's no doubt that they love their community and that they love their football, and I am so impressed with the facilities they have worked so hard to provide for their club and the broader community. In May, I was invited to join with Goody, Emma and Nathan from the Dudley Redhead Club to celebrate the installation of their brand-new digital sign. To thank me for the role I played in securing funding for the sign, they put a big picture of me and words of appreciation up—but really, all the appreciation should go to the club and their incredibly hard-working members and officials. My thanks to Goody, Emma and Nathan for showing me around, and to club President Troy Conway, Secretary David Pfister and the entire committee, as well as the countless volunteers who keep the club going. The Dudley-Redhead community wouldn't be the same without the Club.

BAYSIDE MEN'S SHED

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale)—I would like to acknowledge and congratulate The Bayside Men's shed for their recent donation to the flood victims. This community based organisation, based in my electorate at Kyeemagh, consists of a membership of 50 people, aged between 65 and 92. It provides opportunities

for men from all walks of life, skilled or unskilled, to come together and help the broader community through various charitable projects. Members volunteer and perform tasks based on their strengths and anyone who is active and wishes to be involved is welcomed. After seeing the devastation caused by the recent floods, the members decided to raise funds for the flood victims and set up a collection box for anonymous donations. Bayside Council Mayor Dr Christina Curry was invited to open the collection box on 20th May 2022 and it was found the members had raised \$1,000. Some of this outstanding organisation's other current projects include making toy cars for sick kids in NSW hospitals and making bee boxes for the Billion Bees project. I thank this humbly active group for their wonderful act of kindness and wish them all the best for their future ventures.

LENNOX HEAD LIONS CLUB FLOOD PROGRAM

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I wish to thank the Lennox Head Lions club for their wonderful flood program. Bill Farrow from the club contacted me recently telling me of their successful program and how it has helped flood impacted locals across the Northern Rivers region and it is right they are recognised in parliament. The flood program raised over \$79,000 for flood affected locals. The donations mainly went to Lennox Head, Woodburn, Wardell, Broadwater, Bungawalbin, Coraki and individual farms and properties between. These smaller communities and farms small feel forgotten in the coverage of the floods and I thank the Lennox Head Lions Club for going out of their way to help. They have assisted in many ways donating gas cookers, food vouchers, helping with mould removal, cooking warm meals, cleaning supplies and more. I thank Bill and all the members for their generosity and kindness. It is this community spirit that has sustained us all through these devastating floods.

THANK YOU STEVE BRIERLY - CEO OF ST VINCENTS HOSPITAL LISMORE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I place on the parliamentary record my appreciation and admiration for Steve Brierly who has recently announced his retirement as CEO of St Vincent's Hospital in Lismore. Steve has been associated with St. Vincent's for 15 years and has been CEO for 8 years. Through that time he has provided outstanding leadership during drought, bushfires, COVID-19 and of course the floods. St Vincent's is also a provider of aged care which is vital to our region. St Vincent's hospital is a central and critical part of the health system in our region. It is so important to have a hospital like St Vincent's servicing our country communities. Steve and I enjoyed a great working relationship and he wrote me such a lovely letter announcing his retirement which of course I responded holding him in high regard. He is held in high regard across our community and medical profession. Thank you Steve for your years of service and leadership. I wish you well for the future.

ROZ KNIGHTS KYOGLE - H.E.A.R.T. AWARD

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I pay tribute to the wonderful Roz Knights and congratulate her on receiving the Honesty, Empathy, Acceptance, Respect and Trust (H.E.A.R.T.) award from the Lions District Governor. Roz is an absolute powerhouse in Kyogle and is the driving force behind many community initiatives. Most notably Roz is the coordinator of the Kyogle Lions foodpantry which feeds thousands of residents in need from Kyogle and Villages every year. I had the privilege of joining Roz and Kyogle Lions Club for their opening of the foodpantry. Over the past 3 months Roz has not stopped volunteering her time and energy to help flood affected locals. She has done this through volunteering through the foodpantry and the Kyogle Evacuation Centre. Both in rescue and recovery Roz has been there for Kyogle and Villages. People like Roz are the heart and soul of country communities. I thank Roz for her compassion, dedication and endless effort in helping others. She is truly deserving of this award.

ROYCE SIMMONS - 300,000 STEP JOURNEY

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—I take this opportunity to both thank and congratulate Royce Simmons as he commenced on a 300-kilometre journey by foot, in order to raise awareness and funds for dementia research on 17th May. Royce disclosed in January 2022 at age 61, that he had been diagnosed with dementia in 2021 before then establishing his registered charity foundation, Royce's Big walk. As his walk commenced, Royce was joined by Cowra league legend, Andrew Farrar, and NSW Origin Coach Brad Fittler. On Tuesday 17th May at 7:30am, the trio took their first step starting from the Goolong Country Club walking 38 kilometres to Cowra. Royce travelled between 17 and 38 kilometres daily, for 11 days, arriving at Bluebet Stadium, Penrith where his journey ended. He was welcomed by Penrith Panthers with a generous \$100,000 donation to his charity. Royce's initial goal was to raise \$500,000, and he has more than delivered, raising an enormous \$555,510. I would like to commend Royce once again for his extraordinary efforts and extend my thanks to all involved for what is such a brilliant cause.

NARRANDERA EARTH FEST

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—I wish to personally congratulate the organisers of the Narrandera Earth Festival, Wiradjuri Sisters, Rosie Powell and Angela Galluzzo of Prickly Lizard Events on a very successful three-day Aboriginal event. With the support of the Australian Government's Building Better Regions Fund, Narrandera Shire Council and Narrandera Bendigo Bank the event was able to come to light and be the first of its kind for the area. The community of Narrandera Shire came together to celebrate local Wiradjuri culture and learn history and skills of the Wiradjuri peoples. The event was attended by Aboriginal Elders, community and approximately 200 school children. Attendees could partake in any or all events over the course of the 3 days including smoking ceremonies, bush tuckers, traditional dancing, performances, storytelling, animal displays, artworks and much more. I extend a huge thank you to everyone involved in making this festival the success that it was. Special thank you to Wiradjuri Elder, Michael Lyons, Sandhills Artefacts, Dr Jessica Byre, Wiradjuri Man, Anthony Galluzzo, Auntie Joy Ingram, Neville Bamblett, Dinawan's Connection and Narrandera Shire Council. Congratulations and thank you once again to everyone involved and I look forward to joining you all next year.

VALE MR ROBERT MENZIES, OAM

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—It is with great sadness that I advise of the death of Mr Robert Menzies, OAM, better known as Bob, former Mayor of Coolamon Shire Council and Charter Member of the Coolamon Lions Club. Bob was elected as a councillor of Coolamon Shire Council in 1995 and served with dedication continuously until 2012. Councillor Menzies was sworn in as Mayor in 1999 and held this position until his retirement from Council in 2012. Bob was also a charter member of the Coolamon Lions Club since its formation in 1979, in which he held numerous positions in the club including President, Secretary and Treasurer. Bob was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in 2018 for his services to Local Government and the community. He was also awarded the title of Emeritus Mayor by the Local Government Association of NSW in recognition of serving for more than 5 years as Mayor. Bob was a tremendous advocate for the Coolamon Shire and his legacy will live on within the community for many years to come. My deepest sympathies are with Bob's wife, Betty and their children, Russell and Karen. May he rest in peace.

PCYC CEO DOMINIC TEACKLE - ROTARY CLUB OF SYDNEY HONORARY AWARD

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—I would like to offer our community's and my personal congratulations to Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) CEO Dominic Teackle on being awarded honorary membership of the Rotary Club of Sydney on Tuesday 31st May. Dominic started at PCYC NSW in November 2016. Dominic has extensive executive experience across Government, Events and entertainment, IT services and sporting organisations, with a 20 year career as an Army Officer which included representational and operational experience. Dominic brings to PCYC NSW a strong values based leadership style, respect for the Police and history, and a passion to grow the legacy of PCYC NSW to deliver expanded empowering experiences to youth and the community. Given Dominick's experience and commitment working with emergency services in our community, it is therefore fitting that he has been awarded this honorary membership by the Rotary Club of Sydney. This is because the Rotary Club is an organisation which acknowledges the hard work of our emergency service workers. Congratulations again to Dominick Teackle on being awarded this honorary membership. I look forward to further working with you in the future.

RETIREMENT OF NSW BAR ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT - MICHAEL MCHUGH, SC

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—I would like to offer my personal gratitude to Michael McHugh, SC, for his service as President of the New South Wales Bar Association. After eighteen months of service as President, Michael McHugh, SC, retired at the May NSW Bar Council meeting. Mr McHugh has stated that leading the NSW Bar has been an honour and has been the highlight of his career at the Bar. Under Michael's stewardship, the NSW Bar has undertaken significant reforms during the COVID-19 pandemic. Such reforms include the Bar's "Strategic Plan 2021-25", which supported barristers in the conduct of the profession and helped to develop successful practices. When confronted with evidence of sexual harassment, which has long threatened the reputation of the Bar, Michael ensured that the Bar Council continued to respond with real clarity of purpose. Michael has also developed up to date Best Practice Guidelines with a WHS focus, and set up Bar Brief, a wholly owned subsidiary of the NSW Bar Association to assist in direct briefing of their members by in-house and government lawyers. Thank you, Michael McHugh, SC, for your outstanding service and dedication to the legal profession and our community.

MS JADE ALLEN

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega)—On behalf of the Bega electorate, I would like to congratulate Ms Jade Allen on her brilliant debut on the international stage after being selected to play her first international match with the South Coast Sapphires at the 2022 Fairbreak Invitational. This six-team tournament, made up of players from all around the world have spent two weeks in Dubai participating in this world-first Women's T20 Cricket Tournament. Born and raised in Cobargo, the 18-year-old leg-spinner top scored for her side with 33 not out off 41 balls. Ms Allen is a great inspiration for those pursuing a career in cricket, particularly for helping the advancement of women in professional sport. I congratulate Ms Allen on her achievement and look forward to following her cricketing career for years to come.

MS TAYLOR TRAECEY

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega)—I would like offer my congratulations on behalf of the Bega Electorate to Ms Taylor Traecec for her great achievement in the recent Rocky Trail Run held in Mogo on May 15. Ms Traecec, a student at Broulee Public School is the newest running sensation in the Eurobodalla after placing second in the trail run with a time of 43:33. At only 12-years-old, Ms Traecec finished second overall in the seven kilometre event, with it also being her first time running on such rough terrain. Ms Traecec has been pursuing running for the past two years, after finding a love for the sport during school cross country competitions where she has excelled both at her school, at a district level and regionally. I wish Ms Traecec the best of luck in her upcoming regional cross country event being held in Nowra on June 10 and I look forward to seeing her work towards her goal of competing in the 2032 Brisbane Olympics. Well done Taylor!

CARE SOUTH - AUNTIES & UNCLES PROGRAM

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega)—On behalf of the Bega Electorate I would like to commend CareSouth for their introduction of the Aunties & Uncles program which has recently become available in Batemans Bay. The Aunties & Uncles program works with young people and their families in reducing their likelihood of entering the foster care system by providing early intervention support. The program supports vulnerable children aged three to twelve through connecting them with a carefully-matched volunteer carer who becomes a mentor and role model to the young person. Our community volunteer carers provide guidance to those who need it most, from new experiences to everyday activities they otherwise would miss out on, such as walking the dog, cooking, playing team sports or watching a movie together. Started in the Shoalhaven in 1992, CareSouth also provides support for people with disabilities along the NSW south coast, and west in-land as far as Deniliquin. I'm thrilled to see this program now in Batemans Bay and I urge any community members wishing to get involved with the program to reach out to CareSouth on 1300 554 260 or email by info@caresouth.org.au.

MICHAEL HABGOOD (NSW RFS)

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—I would like to congratulate Michael Habgood on being awarded the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) National Medal. He joined the Bishops Bridge Brigade in 1996 and transferred to Lochinvar in 2015, being an active member of both ever since. Michael has attended numerous incidents during his time with the NSW RFS, not only bushfires but also MVAs and assisted with flood works and on the AF assessment weekends. Over the years, he's helped the brigade in many fundraising events, such as the Lovedale Long Lunch, community engagement activities at Heritage Park and several others. Michael regularly assists the brigade with training and maintenance days. He is a well-respected member of the NSW RFS, especially within his own brigade where his on-the-job knowledge is second to none, making him a worthy recipient of such an honour. Congratulations Michael, this honour is well-deserved.

BRENDAN GAZZARD (NSW RFS)

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—With almost three decades of service under his belt, Brendan Gazzard is a worthy recipient of the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS) National Medal 1st Clasp. He joined the Lochinvar Brigade in 1994 and has been an active member ever since. Over the years, Brendan's held the roles of president, vice-president, callout officer, health and safety officer, training officer, permit issuing officer, first aid officer and the ranks of Deputy Captain and Senior Deputy Captain. In 2017, he was elected as Deputy Group Captain for Group 5. Brendan's also been an active participant in fundraising for the Lochinvar Brigade at events such as Groovin' the Moo, Lovedale Long Lunch, Hunter Valley Caravan and 4WD Show and Maitland Show as well as concerts at Roche and Hope estates. He's taken a keen interest with training in the Lower Hunter District, too. Brendan was honoured with Life Membership of the Lochinvar Brigade in 2016. Congratulations Brendan, and thank you for your service.

JOHN RUSSELL (NSW RFS)

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—I would like to acknowledge John Russell, who recently received a National Medal 1st Clasp with the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSW RFS), following 27 years of service with the Lower Hunter organisation. Currently a member with East Maitland, he was elected Group Officer for Group 7 in 2017. Over the years, John has held various roles within the brigade such as health and safety officer, training officer, equipment officer, first aid officer, permit issuing officer and vice-president, and ranks including Deputy Captain and Deputy Group Captain. He is also a member of the Senior Leadership Team. John sets an inspiring example in his continuation to strive for excellence and has achieved outstanding results through hard work and an unflinching devotion to his various offices. His distinguished service to the community and NSW RFS has not only acquired him the respect of his peers, but also all who have had the opportunity to observe from afar. Congratulations John, this honour is well-deserved.

PASQUALE TURANO

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Today I want to congratulate Pasquale Turano on his completion of the recent Sydney Morning Herald Half Marathon. Pasquale is a staff member of mine from the east of my electorate in Horsley Park. On 15th May, he ran for just over 21 kilometres starting out the front of Parliament House, through to Circular Quay, under the Harbour Bridge, through Barangaroo to Darling Harbour, around Pyrmont, back to the Royal Botanical Gardens, around Mrs Macquaries Chair and finally finishing in Hyde Park. It is a significant event which requires a lot of training and hard work. In addition, Pasquale used this opportunity to raise funds for a charity he holds near and dear to his heart, the Charlie Teo Foundation. Fifteen years ago, his father underwent brain surgery to remove a tumour which has permanently affected his balance and coordination. By the time Pasquale had completed his half marathon, he had raised three times his initial goal. Congratulations Pasquale on this achievement and for all your hard work.

LAYLA SHARP

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Today I want to congratulate a future Paralympian, Layla Sharp from Emmaus Catholic College in Kemps Creek. In April Layla competed in the Australian Junior Athletics Championships and went home with a hat-trick of silver medals in the 400m, 800m and 1500m races. This is an incredible achievement and I especially take note of the fact that Layla is 14 years of age and competing against athletes up to 19 years of age. Layla competes in the T12 disability category for athletes with vision impairment and holds the all-age Australian 1500-metre record, the Australian U20 800-metre record and the Australian U16 400-metre record. Layla has aspirations to become a Paralympian as well as a desire to raise awareness and promote inclusiveness for those with disabilities. Layla, you are an inspiration to your community and I want to commend your abilities not only in the track but also in the arena of supporting those with disabilities in sport.

RICCARDO PISATURO

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Today I want to congratulate Mr Riccardo Pisaturo on celebrating his 100th birthday. On the 24th of April, Riccardo celebrated his 100th birthday, a significant milestone for any person. I hope your special day was celebrated, surrounded by all the people you love and care for. Born in the year 1922, Riccardo has seen a lot of change, the development of society, culture and technology. I want to wish Riccardo well and once again congratulate him on celebrating his 100th birthday.

PENNY HACKNEY - GUM FLAT HALL

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise Mrs Penny Hackney and the Gum Flat Hall Committee for ensuring that the 100 year old hall is maintained and available as an important meeting place for the isolated community. Over three years ago the new committee saw the need for refurbishment to their much loved centrepiece of the Gum Flat village. Working bees covered a general clean-up. The hall was then ready for social gatherings and monthly barbecues became a regular event for the farming community where loneliness can lead to unhealthy problems. The community Christmas party was brought back with a huge gathering in attendance. The hall is available for school activities, weddings, and whatever occasion is needed including emergencies where it becomes a vital information centre. Most recently the Committee was successful in a grant that ensured the longevity of this important and historic hall. I congratulate Penny and the Gum Flat Hall Committee on the success of their commitment to the Hall. I commend the Committee on recognising the importance of the Hall as a meeting place for the Gum Flat community and for its historic value.

NORTH STAR PUBLIC SCHOOL - SMALL SCHOOLS RELAY

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise North Star Public School students Annabel McMaster, Thomas Critchlow, Sophie McMaster and Indya Doolin for winning the Earl McGee Small Schools Relay at the NSW Primary Schools Sports Association competition hosted at Sydney Olympic Park

Aquatic Centre in Homebush. This is an impressive achievement for a school without a local pool for training. However, lacking training facilities doesn't stop the determination of a rural community. The swimmers travelled to the pool at a neighbouring town and to practice technique they relied on their sports teacher Sue Nixon using a local lap pool. I congratulate Annabel, Thomas, Sophie, and Indya for winning the gold medal for the Earl McGee Small Schools Relay. I commend North Star Public School for ensuring that their students are not disadvantaged from the challenges presented to rural schools.

PETER CHAMPION - INVERELL ARTIST

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise Inverell artist Peter Champion for his contribution to art in the Northern Tablelands. Trained as an art teacher at the National Art School at East Sydney and the Alexander Mackie College of Advanced Education, Peter settled in the New England area of NSW. Peter and his wife Carol are retired after leaving their business of 26 years, New England Hobbies & Art Supplies. Now Peter can concentrate on painting and developing his style in the use of light with his Impressionist inspired works. His interpretive abstracts, the landscapes of the New England region and seascapes of the coast reflect his passion to reproduce the effect of light and reflection. Peter has exhibited his acrylic and oil landscapes throughout the region and most recently he is showing his work at The Makers Shed in Glen Innes. I congratulate Peter on his many awards, prizes, and successful exhibitions. I commend Peter on his commitment to art and his commitment to artistic excellence which has brought pleasure to so many.

KAITLYN MATETA

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government)—Today I recognise and celebrate the selection of Miss Kaitlyn Mateta, from Trinity Catholic College in the HSC Showcase. Each year, the HSC Showcase displays a selection of top major works of students across visual arts, performing arts and technologies. I am pleased to share that Miss Mateta's piece 'Stop the Spread' has been selected, her creativity and innovation shared with the local and broader community through ARTEXPRESS 2022. Kaitlyn, I am so proud of what you have achieved – not only completing the HSC in a year like no other, but producing work of such high quality. The many hours spent planning, preparing and executing your major submission has certainly paid off. I congratulate you, and also each of your educators at Trinity Catholic College who have helped you achieve such a feat. Your efforts are to be congratulated.

EUGOWRA LODGE OF MANCHESTER UNITY NSW AND LOYAL EVENING STAR NO. 100

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I recognise the Eugowra Lodge of Manchester Unity NSW and Loyal Evening Star. The Lodge celebrated 140 years before closing its doors for the final time on February 19. The lodge formed on March 3, 1881. The Lodge was a friendly society with community health and welfare roles. Manchester Unity was a long-standing and large medical benefits fund, formed before the advent of Medicare and welfare services, and the Lodge's welfare arm ensured widows and orphans were cared for. Members have a long history of community fundraising, through street stalls, balls, picnic days, competitions and other events, to raise funds for many worthy local causes. Members recalled the Eugowra floods in the 1950s with local homes being inundated and funds directed towards supplying new carpet and mattresses. The Lodge had a widows and orphans fund which supported the education of children. Membership had been flagging due to age and ill-health, leading to the Lodge closure. The final meeting was held at Parkes Services Club, and members enjoyed a trip down memory lane. I recognise the members from current and past generations for their service to the community of Eugowra.

OTAS 2022 FLY-CASTING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—The historic Orange Trout Acclimatisation Society is one of the oldest societies of its kind in Australia. OTAS, as the society is most often referred, have been meeting continuously for the past 92 years, passing along the traditions of fly-casting from generation to generation. The society's members' skills have been honed through mentorship and expert tuition from club stalwarts and elders – a few of whom are former Australian representative fly-casters and title holders. The annual OTAS Fly-Casting Championships were held this year at Lake Canobolas, on Saturday March 12th. Twenty-plus competitors entered the competition, which comprised several disciplines – distance, accuracy, double-handed, single-handed and skish accuracy. The day's conditions were perfect, with nary a zephyr and glass-like still water. Liam Callaghan won the single-handed event, while Kevin Laughton took out the skish accuracy and named overall winner of the championship, being awarded the coveted JN Brazier Cup. The Brazier cup is a trophy which has been presented annually for the winner of an event which encompasses multi-disciplines with use of both wet and dry fly. I congratulate the event placeholders and OTAS for upholding this traditional sport and pastime, which members continue to share together.

GOULBURN BEARS

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government)—Today I recognise the Goulburn Bears Basketball association. Despite the season being forced to end prematurely due to Covid-19, the Goulburn Bears accomplished a great deal, particularly with their junior teams. There were four major award winners for 2021. Bailey Stewart was awarded Goulburn's Basketballer of the Year in 2021. He played an integral part in the Association throughout the season playing, refereeing and coaching for the Goulburn Bears. Isaac White took out Junior Male Basketballer of the Year, Hannah Bowles – Junior Female Basketballer of the Year and Jess Edmonds – Coach of the Year. I would like to recognise the efforts of Bailey, Isaac, Hannah and Jess as well as all other award recipients and players. I wish them and the Goulburn Bears all the very best for their 2022 season.

QUEENWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL ECO WARRIORS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Today I am recognising the Queenwood Junior School Eco Warriors who recently at Bradley's Head Amphitheatre collecting rubbish as a belated Clean Up Australia Day event. A special thank you to Queenwood students Ella, Sasha, Natalia, Ines, and Eden in Year 6, Waverly and Abby in Year 3, and Sarah from Year 1 who braved the cold to clean up Bradley's Head. They picked up hard plastics, Styrofoam, fishing lures, soy sauce plastic fish containers, plastic bottles, shoes, balloons, cans, plastic cups, lollipop sticks, tennis balls, and more to help make the area safer for wildlife and for future generations. A special thank you to Queenwood Parents Association Sustainability co-ordinator Jenni Hagland and Hazel Clarke for organising the day. With more than 2.7 billion plastic items ending up in NSW waterways each year, harming our local environment and wildlife, I am proud of these local students from Queenwood for doing their bit. With the ban on single use plastics being phased in this year, hopefully there will be less plastic and general rubbish to pick up in our local environment, and that we protect our natural areas for future generations.

SYDNEY SEAHORSE ART PROJECT

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I want to recognise the Sydney Institute of Marine Science (SIMS) for their Sydney Seahorse Art Project. SIMS partnered up with North Sydney Council to deliver this program which helps raise awareness for the endangered Sydney Seahorse species. Through the program, primary aged school students were able to learn about the Sydney Seahorse in online modules. They were then invited to create a unique piece of artwork inspired by the Sydney Seahorse and what they had learnt about conservation. These unique artworks were all submitted in January and are currently being developed into an animation which will be exhibited in May at the Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability to help spread awareness about the Sydney Seahorse. Thank you to Director and CEO of SIMS, Martina Doblin, and the entire team at SIMS for championing this project and for the consistent conservation work you do in North Shore and the wider community. Thank you to North Sydney Council for helping bring this project to fruition. I would also like to extend my thanks to other organisations who assisted with the program which are Stanton Library, SEA LIFE Aquarium, NSW DPI Fisheries, UNSW, and UTS.

WANDA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I congratulate Wanda Surf Life Saving Club members on their success at the 2021-22 Surf Life Saving Sydney Awards of Excellence. Life Member Gordon McKirdy won the prestigious President's Medal. Gordon joined Wanda as a nipper in 1976. He completed 13 years of patrol service, being a Patrol Captain and holding many club positions. He is a Level 2 Surf Official. He has twice been the Sydney Branch Official of the Year. Gordon has been appointed as Sectional Referee R & R for over 18 years at the Sydney Branch Championships. He has mentored numerous coaches and officials. As an R & R coach Gordon has been awarded several medals at Sydney Branch titles, 18 Gold at NSW Surf Life Saving Championships, and 8 Gold at the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships. Kai Hammond was Athlete of the Year, recognising his sporting excellence in Open Aged Competition. Dane Sutton was the Junior Athlete of the Year 13-14 Year Male. Ben Sutton was the U15 Surf Lifesaver of the Year. I also thank everyone at Wanda SLSC for their efforts this patrol season.

ALMA HOMER 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—It is with great pleasure that today I acknowledge Mrs Alma Holmer as she celebrated her 100th birthday on 3rd June 2022. Turning a century is truly a momentous occasion and I am sure Alma celebrated it accompanied by her closest friends and family. I take this opportunity to again extend my sincere congratulations to Alma and wish her good health and happiness for the future.

MR AND MRS SKINNER'S 60TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—I take this opportunity to congratulate Mr Michael and Mrs Jeanne Skinner of Heathcote on their 60th Wedding Anniversary which will be celebrated on 23rd June 2022. 60 years of marriage is a wonderful milestone and I hope they enjoy their Diamond Anniversary. I wish them many more years of fun, enjoyment, happiness and good health.

ESTHER ADEYINKA

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—Congratulations to former graduate, Class of 2014 of St Patricks College, Esther Adeyinka on being named a finalist in the OSMEN Creative Design category at the 7NEWS Young Achievers Awards NSW ACT for her business SHADIE by EA. The purpose of the 7NEWS Young Achiever Awards is to acknowledge, encourage and most importantly promote the positive achievements of all young people in NSW and the ACT up to and including 29 years of age as of 31st December each year. Congratulations once again Esther on your award, something to be very proud of and to reflect all of your hard work you have contributed to making your business such a success.

BLUE PLAQUE IN CAMDEN

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—The incredible work of Camden women during wartime will be recognised with a Blue Plaque, thanks to the nomination from local historian, Dr Ian Willis. The NSW Government Blue Plaque Program was recently introduced to honour important people or groups, events and places from local history. Of more than 750 nominations received in the first round, the Camden Red Cross Women's wartime Sewing Groups were among the 17 successful. A Blue Plaque will be installed at Camden Library, formally the Camden Town Hall where the Red Cross women met to make garments and more during World War I and World War II. Thank you, Ian, for your wonderful work in the nomination for a Blue Plaque.

CAMPBELLTOWN HOSPITAL COMPLETION

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—Last month I had the privilege along with the Hon. Dominic Perrottet, Premier, The Hon. Brad Hazzard, Minister for Health and Melanie Gibbons, MP, member for Holsworthy and NSW Health staff at Campbelltown Hospital to mark the completion of the new 12-storey Clinical Services Building. I welcome the expansion of key medical services, including those for children and women, mental health, and the care of older members of the community. I am incredibly pleased that this redevelopment will not only cater to the needs of our community for years to come, but has also seen the involvement of around 4,000 workers over the project.

BRENDAN BEEBY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—Today I acknowledge Brendan Beeby who received the Long Service Medal for completing 12 years of service as a member of the NSW Rural Fire Service Gwandalan Brigade. The NSW Rural Fire Service is that largest volunteer fire service in the world. For over a century, their volunteers have worked and trained to mitigate fire risks through comprehensive risk management programs and the development of regulations for bush fire prone areas. Brendan was awarded the medal at the Central Coast Volunteer Appreciation Day and District Medals Presentation last month, which was held to recognise the region's hard working firefighters who go above and beyond to ensure that the local community is protected against fire dangers and other hazards. I had the privilege of attending the award ceremony and it was great to see NSW Rural Fire Service volunteers, including Brendan being honoured in this way. I congratulate Brendan on receiving the Long Service Medal and thank him for his efforts to keep the people of the Central Coast safe.

DAVID BROAD

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—Today I acknowledge David Broad who received the Long Service Medal for completing 12 years of service as a member of the NSW Rural Fire Service Gwandalan Brigade. The NSW Rural Fire Service is that largest volunteer fire service in the world. For over a century, their volunteers have worked and trained to mitigate fire risks through comprehensive risk management programs and the development of regulations for bush fire prone areas. David was awarded the medal at the Central Coast Volunteer Appreciation Day and District Medals Presentation last month, which was held to recognise the region's hard working firefighters who go above and beyond to ensure that the local community is protected against fire dangers and other hazards. I had the privilege of attending the award ceremony and it was great to see NSW Rural Fire Service volunteers, including David being honoured in this way. I congratulate David on receiving the Long Service Medal and thank him for his efforts to keep the people of the Central Coast safe.

DAVID GREGORY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—Today I acknowledge David Gregory who received the Long Service Medal 1st and 2nd Clasp for completing 39 years of service as a member of the NSW Rural Fire Service Chittaway and Lake Munmorah Brigades. During his time as a volunteer firefighter, David has held many positions including Deputy Captain, Senior Deputy Captain, Brigade President and Vice President. He has also obtained qualifications like Bush Firefighter, Crew Leader and Breathing Apparatus Operator. David was awarded the 1st and 2nd Clasp at the Central Coast Volunteer Appreciation Day and District Medals Presentation last month, which was held to recognise the region's hard working firefighters who go above and beyond to ensure that the local community is protected against fire dangers and other hazards. I had the privilege of attending the award ceremony and it was great to see NSW Rural Fire Service volunteers, including David being honoured in this way. I congratulate David on receiving the 1st and 2nd Clasp and thank him for his continuous efforts to keep the people of the Central Coast safe.

CANTERBURY DISTRICT SOCCER FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)—Today I bring to the attention of the House the Canterbury District Soccer Football Association as they celebrate their 100th season. Since its beginnings in 1922 the CDSFA has been the product of dedicated individuals volunteering their time to grow football and give something to their community. The association has in excess of 16,500 persons involved in its geographic region, encompassing 165 different nationalities and plays an important part in the health, wellbeing and community spirit of the area. I would particularly like to acknowledge the Hall of Fame inductees Andrew Koczka, Chris Kalantzis, Danielle Holtham (nee Brogan), Jim Fraser, Johnny Warren MBE, Peter Katholos, Ron Corry, Terry Butler, Andy Burton, Cec Barlow, Vince Laws, Brett Holman, Dennis Yaager, Ernie Campbell, John Watkiss, Jim Patikis, Peter Raskopoulos, Roy Crowhurst, Tim Cahill, Sylvia Piaud, William (Bill) Brackenbury and Grace Martin. I also thank the members of the Centenary Committee for organising the Centenary celebration which I had the pleasure of attending on May 28 - Ashleigh Campbell, Maria Gissing, Georgina Kokokiris, Janice Leahy, Christian Layland, Chad Gibson, Frank Pannucci and Rodrigo Martins.

STEPHEN SMITHSON

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)—Today I bring to the attention of the House the work of Stephen Smithson, who has served as caretaker of the historic Balmain Town Hall since January 2014. In his role as caretaker Stephen has assisted with a range of important community events, including Earth Hour, Friends of Balmain Library meetings, school fundraisers, public meetings, probus, film shoots and community celebrations. Stephen has been instrumental to the smooth running of hundreds of personal and community events and his dedicated service to the Town Hall has been much appreciated by the Balmain community. Stephen has also worked for the Leichhardt and now Inner West council for 15 years, including in a role where he prepares sports fields for both summer and winter sports, enabling schools and sporting clubs to participate in various sporting activities throughout the year. Thank you, Stephen, for the work you do for our community.

CASINO BEEF WEEK

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence)—I offer my congratulations to the executive and volunteers of the Casino Beef Week who have produced a fantastic event this year. Tayla Dawson was crowned the Beef Week Queen but the other contestants, Tara Coles, Jesse Noll, Makenzi Chadburn and Sarah Jones were all fantastic entrants who have shown they are all future leaders. The Executive, ably lead by President Frank McKey, along with the numerous committee members and volunteers, have once again put together a huge list of events over the week and they are to be congratulated for their commitment to ensuring that Casino is recognised as the Beef Capital of Australia.

JESS PARRY - BALRANALD

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I would like to congratulate and commend Jess Parry, a local to Balranald and an esteemed local sporting figure for the Balranald community. Jess, a member of the Balranald Football Netball Club, is the coach for both the A Grade and Under 18s netball teams and is the Junior Development Coordinator for the club. Thanks to Jess and her efforts, the Balranald A Grade netball team made history this year, becoming ladder leaders in the 2022 season for the first time in over 30 years. In recognition of her efforts, Jess has previously been the recipient of the Central Murray Coach of the Year, received the A Grades "Best and Fairest" award and was named as Balranald's "Sportsperson of the Year" at this year's Australia Day ceremony. I would again like to congratulate Jess on her team's recent achievements and commend her for all her work in contributing to youth sport outcomes.

MATHOURA'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA 2022

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I would like to recognise the organisers of the "Mathoura's Biggest Morning Tea 2022" event, successfully raising over \$6000 for the Cancer Council this year. The event, now in its second year running, aims to raise much needed funds for the Cancer Council; something they succeeded in this year by raising \$1300 more than their original goal. The event was a complete sell out, selling over 100 tickets with 29 items up for auction, a raffle and lucky door prizes. I would also like to thank the local businesses and musicians that contributed to the fundraiser through the donation of their time, skills and items for the raffle. Congratulations again to all the organisers of this event, and I look forward to next years event.

MARY VINCENT

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt)—I wish to recognise Ms Mary Vincent, a NSW Health Volunteer at the Mount Druitt Palliative Care Unit. Mary has volunteered her time and services to the Palliative Care Services since 2016. Mary has demonstrated incredible compassion and kindness to staff, patients and families. The compassion and kindness Mary has shown is in line with the Elevating the Human Experience guide and the Kindness Works Here initiative. Mary supports new volunteers and guides them with her calm and gentle presence. She is an inspiration, and her contribution is invaluable. Mary has recently been named as a finalist in the 23rd Annual NSW Health Awards and I wish her every success in the future.

NORTH CRONULLA SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I congratulate North Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club members on their success at the 2021-22 Surf Life Saving Sydney Awards of Excellence. Donna Hargreaves won the Volunteer of the Year award. This award recognises Donna for her impressive volunteer efforts at both North Cronulla SLSC and within the local community. North Cronulla's coach of the beach section, Tom Rampoldi, was awarded Coach of the Year, recognising his contribution to athlete performance at competitive levels. Jasmine Springall and Lennox Southwell won the Junior Lifesaver of the Year Award in the respective female and male categories. Kobe Sorenson won the U15 Athlete of the Year and Lucy Flanagan won Youth Athlete of the Year. The North Cronulla Open Beach Relay Team took home the Surf Sports Team of the Year award. I also thank everyone at North Cronulla SLSC for their efforts this patrol season.

EMMA GREENHILL - 2022 YOUNG COMPOSER OF THE YEAR

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I commend Ms Emma Greenhill for her being awarded the national 2022 Young Composer Award for her original composition titled Korrowall. The Young Composer Award stands as a one of a kind and prestigious award in Australia. Founded by the Willoughby Symphony Orchestra, the Young Composer Award is a rare opportunity for young aspiring composers to create an original orchestral score. The Willoughby Symphony Orchestra in their Songs of Destiny concert performed Korrowall at the Chatswood Concourse Concert Hall on 14 May 2022. Korrowall gives tribute to the beauty of the Australian landscape, and has wonderfully conveyed a feeling of awe for nature's enormous complexity, intricacy and delicacy. Her contribution to the Australian story can be seen by her heralding through music the importance of preserving and being guardians for our natural spaces. I acknowledge Willoughby Symphony Orchestra's contribution to promoting and recognising such talent, and our local community. I wish Ms Greenhill all the best in her future endeavours.

CREMORNE CONSERVATION GROUP

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I acknowledge and congratulate the community service given by the Cremorne Conservation Group for their mission to preserve shared artefacts and legacies of the Cremorne local community. I witnessed this commitment in action on 30 May 2022 when they hosted in alliance with the National Trust Heritage Festival the event 'Behind the Scenes of the Cremorne Orpheum Theatre.' This showcase presented the story of the Orpheum Theatre as a prized jewel in Sydney's crown for its historical, architectural and cultural significance. I particularly acknowledge Cremorne Conservation Group founder Fiona Gracie and all the volunteers for their dedication on the cause. Our heritage is so precious, it is a link to our history and a reminder of where we have come from. It is worth protecting and it is a cause I resoundingly champion to ensure our history is preserved for the enjoyment of future generations. The Cremorne Conservation Society serves as a demonstration of meaningful community action and pride for which I thank and commend them.

WILLOUGHBY ARTS CENTRE

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I would like to pay special mention to the Willoughby Arts Centre, an essential arts, education, and community resource for the people of Willoughby. Every week it attracts over 650 adults, teens and children through its doors to engage in a wide range of art workshops. The facilities accommodate workshops from painting to enamelling and jewellery making and more. Established in 1961 the Willoughby Arts

Centre is one of the longest running, not-for-profit, and independently owned facilities in Australia. I had the privilege of visiting this highly valued institution recently. I met with the Centre's leaders including Chairman Harvey Cassie and Manager Louise Ruddock, several tutors and many students. The warmth and pride they had in showing me their work was inspiring and I know from my experience, as well as personal connections, just how much this centre means to local people and their passion for art. I would like to thank the Willoughby Arts Centre for years of service, arts and community.

KELLYVILLE RFS BRIGADES

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)—It was recently my pleasure to meet with members of the Kellyville RFS Brigade at one of their weekly training nights. The Brigade has recently purchased a number of GRN Portable Radios, assisted by a \$5,000 dollar grant from the NSW Government – with additional funds raised from Return and Earn donations; The Brigade features as a donation option on 6 local RVM's. I would like to especially thank Treasurer David Mynard, for his work in raising these vital funds. Further, on the evening I was given a comprehensive tour of the Brigade's equipment and vehicles and met many of the selfless volunteers of the brigade. Many of these volunteers recently won National Emergency Medals including: Anthony Stocker, Brendan Doyle, Brian Richards, Cameron Wade, Daniel Gerzanic, Daniel Mittiga, Darren Willis, David Hay, David King, David Mynard, David Newcombe, Garry Moroney, Graham Attridge, Graham McLeod, Jackson Wade, Jeremy Wong, Joshua Torrens, Kelly Jackman, Kenneth Ellerington, Lisa Kennedy, Luke Rubbo, Mark Bowman, Mark Jeremijczyk, Mark Unwin, Martin Dumas, Nathan Bower, Paul Moroney, Peter Nixon, Peter Willis, Philip Edwards, Richard O'Malley, Scott Pickford, Sergio Colosmio, Timothy Stocker, Trent Smith, Vithushan Lingam. I wish the brigade all the best for the future.

WAGGA WAGGA MEN'S SHED

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—We are all aware of the incredible work being done by the Men's Shed organisation. In Wagga Wagga this month, I was delighted to be able to open the newest addition to the Wagga Wagga Men's Shed complex. As sheds go, this one is pretty impressive and it has provided a lot of much-needed space for the range of work being undertaken by members. Men's sheds are so very valuable in our community, as they provide a safe space for blokes to come together and have a yarn. They also contribute a great deal to the community. The Wagga Wagga Men's Shed has worked in partnership with Wagga Wagga City Council for the past five years to keep some of the community assets in tip top shape for those residents and visitors accessing the city's central business district. Council started rehabilitation works on the main street furniture in 2016 and invited the Men's Shed onboard the following year. Street furniture is dismantled and delivered to the Men's Shed in batches, where it is given some TLC before being returned for public use. It takes about one year to work through all the street furniture.

ANNA GANNON

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—I wish to congratulate Anna Gannon, a proud Wiradjuri woman from Wagga Wagga, on winning two recent awards. Ms Gannon was recently named as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year at a TAFE NSW awards ceremony held in Sydney. She has successfully completed the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, and was also nominated to speak on behalf of the students at the ceremony. Speaking afterwards, Ms Gannon, who is currently on staff at the Wodonga TAFE campus, said she was very proud to speak on behalf of the student body, and shared her own love of learning. She said TAFE has always been a positive environment for her to learn in, which supported her decision to study this course, not only to further her career but to be an educator in her community. After being awarded this honour, Ms Gannon was also named as the 2022 TAFE NSW Gili Technology and Business Services Student of the Year. These awards highlight and celebrate TAFE NSW Aboriginal student achievements, with award recipients selected from across NSW. What a wonderful achievement - not one, but two, awards in a matter of just weeks. Well done, Ms Gannon.

DEBORAH BEWICK

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—Uranquinty's Deborah Bewick has been presented with a NSW Government Community Service Award. Mrs Bewick is a hard-working advocate who has devoted many hours to helping community organisations. I was delighted to present her with this award, which recognises the enormous contribution she has made to organisations in her community. Mrs Bewick is currently president of the Uranquinty Progress Association and played an important role in helping set up the group's website. She is also president of the Wagga Wagga Autism Support Group, which she says she has been "watching grow and change over the last 20 years". Mrs Bewick has been volunteering and working with community groups for most of her life. She has been active in her children's school communities and enjoyed helping others through her church. Mrs Bewick also served for six years on the Carers Advisory Council of NSW. She says the best part of being involved with volunteering is the people. "The people you form teams with, the people you meet and help – they are

community and are connections that matter." Mrs Bewick also paid tribute to her husband Nicholas for his support. She describes their life as a tag-team effort.

RAINFOREST RESCUE

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I recognise the Mullumbimby-based group Rainforest Rescue whose mission is to restore and protect the Daintree rainforest and rainforest habitat in perpetuity. Rainforest Rescue is a not-for-profit organisation that for 23 years has worked to rescue and rehabilitate rainforests across Australia through planting, maintenance and restoration programs. Their projects include securing areas of high conservation value rainforest and preserving its biodiversity and cultural heritage. Each year the group plants up to 12,000 rainforest trees on neglected and damaged blocks in the Daintree – trees which grow into thriving rainforest ecosystems, establishing habitat for the plants and animals' endemic to that specific ecosystem. Rainforest Rescue has planted nearly 325,000 rainforest trees, 291,068 in Australia and 33,000 overseas; it has purchased and rescued 39 properties, 38 in the Daintree and one in Pyengana, Tasmania, constituting 1,756,551sqm of rainforest, 947,151 in the Daintree and 809,400 in Tasmania. In an age of rampant deforestation globally the work of Rainforest Rescue is vital to stem rainforest and biodiversity destruction, while contributing to climate change mitigation and protecting the home of vulnerable animals such as the Cassowary. I congratulate Rainforest Rescue and its members on their amazing work.

ANZAC SERVICE AT ST ANTHONY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—I was honoured to attend the ANZAC Commemoration Service at St Anthony's Primary School last month and join students, teachers, parents, and the whole school community in paying our respects. I wanted to take this opportunity to thank the teachers and members of the community whose work made the service possible, and also for the skilled way they were able to communicate such a sombre moment in our history to the young students. The students so respectful during the service and when they had a participatory role, they did their absolute best. Those moments, such as the Reveille, the Ode of Remembrance and the shared Minute of Silence were truly touching and moving. I was so grateful to have been able to share in this service and join the community in paying my respects at the Shrine of Remembrance. Well done to all the students who participated in the Commemoration Service – you truly did yourselves and your school community proud.

WARREN MALCOLM

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I pay tribute to Warren Malcolm, who died in March. Warren, with wife Jan, was the founder of Concrete, an iconic Sutherland Shire business. Warren graduated from the University of NSW with a Bachelor of Civil Engineering in 1966, and then completed a Master of Engineering Science. In 1976, Warren opened a concrete plant in Kirrawee, initially called FORM Concrete, later rebranded Concrete. Over the next 26 years, Concrete grew to have 10% of the NSW concrete market supplied from its 12 production plants in Sydney and southern NSW. Concrete supplied to local projects including Westfield Miranda and the Woronora Bridge, as well as the Sydney Olympic Stadium, the Horizon building, and the Governor Macquarie and Governor Phillip Towers. Concrete was sold to Boral in 2001, but recognising Concrete's reputation, the business has not been merged into the Boral name. Warren lived in Gympie Bay for over 50 years. He was deeply involved in Rotary and the restoration of built heritage. I extend my sincere sympathy to his wife Jan; children Madeline, Chris, and Evan; and his seven grandchildren.

MR JASON ROBERTS

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney)—I recently had the pleasure of presenting Mr Jason Roberts with a NSW Government Community Service Award. Owner of Elite Sand & Soil, Jason was introduced to Nepean Area Disability Organisation (NADO) back in 2017 and he quickly became one of their major supporters. Jason's commitment to NADO and the many other organisations he works alongside is outstanding and it was my honour to acknowledge his many contributions with this award. Jason is a supporter of events such as the Property Central Charity Day, Nepean Cancer Foundation Relay for Live, Hogs for Homeless, Kookaburra Kids, Living Cancer Charity, Mark Hughes Foundation, Transplant Australia and, he has also had long supporting partnerships with local sporting organisations including: St Marys Rugby League Club, Glenmore Park Leagues Club and Penrith Paceway. It's people like Jason, the quiet achievers across Penrith that make our local community the wonderful place it is.

CONNECTION TO SALTWATER

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley)—Yesterday the NSW Parliament commemorated the 25th anniversary of the NSW Government Apology to the Stolen Generations. More than 50 Stolen Generation survivors, including those from the Macleay Valley, and their supporters attended a ceremonial, sharing their stories and being

acknowledged in both Houses of Parliament. It was a deeply moving experience and we remember and pay our respects to the Stolen Generations who were forcibly removed from their families and communities. The event was held as the final stage of a local Aboriginal art project at Back Creek South West Rocks finished up with a beautifully mosaiced timber seat installed at the significant location.

Kempsey Shire Council has collaborated with South West Rocks Figtree Descendants Aboriginal Corporation and the Out There Collective, to create a culturally symbolic mosaic and resin artwork for a timber seat in Back Creek reserve. This project came about following discussions with the local Aboriginal community to have more cultural representation in this significant area and connect the residents to Aboriginal culture of the area. South West Rocks Figtree Descendants Aboriginal Corporation, Nancy Pattison, said the inspiration behind the artwork was stunning and cultural significance of Back Beach.

MILAN BRADSHAW

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)— I congratulate Menai High School student Milan Bradshaw on her success at the 2022 BMX Oceania titles. Showcasing her exceptional talent, Milan performed flawlessly throughout the competition, qualifying for the final with the fastest time before going on to win the final, earning her the fourteen age group girls Oceania title. This latest success builds upon her incredibly impressive performance at the National Championships which saw her become the National Champion in the 13-years girls' category in 2021. Additionally, Milan was selected in the NSW BMX State Academy with plans to push her through to the high-performance ranks in the coming years. It is undeniable that Milan's dedication and commitment to her sport is inspiring. Before the establishment of the Ridge Pump Track at Barden Bridge, Milan and her brothers would need to travel long distances to access BMX facilities near Sydney Olympic Park and Penrith, but her love of the sport never diminished. With this in mind, I also take this opportunity to acknowledge Milan's parents, Brendan and Chondelle, for all they have done to support Milan on this journey. I congratulate Milan on her incredible success and look forward to following her career into the future.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE CANOE CLUB

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)— I celebrate 50 incredible years of the Sutherland Shire Canoe Club. Founded in 1972, the Sutherland Shire Canoe Club caters for people from all walks of life, ages, paddling experience and paddling interests. Today, the Club has 95 members with more than 1500 people having paddled with the Club since its inception. To commemorate this significant milestone, the Club recently unveiled a plaque at its home in the Burnum Burnum Sanctuary and planted five trees as a symbol of the Club's past, present and future. During its 50th year, two Club members have already seen great success. Lachlan Stokes won bronze at the PaddleNSW State Sprint Championships and George de Vos was the Fastest Male Surfski at the Cockatoo Cup 7K short course. Of course none of this success would be possible without the Club's hardworking volunteers. I commend the Executive Committee and Club Officials including Gareth Stokes, Annette Mathews, Janet Small, James Stuart, Robyn Bingle, Adrian Di Cesare, John Denyer and Bert and Kaye Laurendet. I congratulate the Sutherland Shire Canoe Club for reaching this milestone and extend my best wishes for the future.

SYLVANIA PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)— I congratulate the newly elected leadership team of Sylvania Public School on their appointment. Led by relieving Principal Mat Egan, Sylvania Public School is a caring and innovative learning environment where students strive to do their best. During Term 2, the student leadership team have been busy creating motions to make their school a better place to learn and grow. The results are in and the school's Parliamentarians have implemented many new initiatives including installing a chicken coop, starting gymnastics lessons and introducing a new purple Return and Earn bin for the school. The 2022 leadership team truly embody the values of Sylvania Public School. I congratulate Prime Minister and Speaker of the House Anna Govindrulu, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Wellbeing Nada Mousslimani, Minister for Arts and Environment Lina Trajkovska and Minister for Sport and Technology Romeo Barreto. To be elected by your peers is an incredible achievement of which these students should be proud, and I look forward to seeing the opportunities they embrace throughout the year. I commend the student leaders from Sylvania Public School on their success and extend my best wishes for the 2022 school year.

SAVING FISH AND RIVERS AMONG RESEARCH GOALS: CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I was honoured to be part of the local launch of a new research facility at Charles Sturt University Albury Campus, on the 24th May 2022, the Gulbali Institute for Agriculture, Water and Environment. The word 'Gulbali' comes from an Aboriginal word meaning "to understand country". The Institute will bring together farming and farm productivity, management of the environment and agriculture,

whilst incorporating environmental challenges from climate change and the need to boost regional adaptation and resilience. At the same event Charles Sturt University also officially opened its Aquatic Research Facility. This new facility will engage in research projects such as a breeding program to re-generate endangered native species. I commend Charles Sturt University for its ongoing work in promoting the understanding of our precious rivers and lakes and the fauna in our regional ecosystem.

OPEN WARDROBE, OPEN HEARTS STRIKE RIGHT FIT

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to acknowledge the wonderful work Marg Nichols of Albury's Women's Centre for Health and Wellbeing is doing to promote 'Our Sisters Closet', a non-for-profit organisation. Our Sisters Closet is providing local women who have gone through domestic violence and sexual abuse with an opportunity to feel confident by supplying them with suitable clothing for a job interview or for commencing employment and getting back into the workforce. The charitable centre also provides clothing and toiletries for women facing homelessness and for women in crisis along with their children. Different programs are on offer as well, providing a 'hand-in-hand' to boost self-confidence, dealing with anxiety, learning various skills and tools for job interviews, trauma counselling and parenting courses. Well done Marg and team, for the excellent support you are providing for the most vulnerable in our community by providing a safe and comforting service.

SUMMER FUND-RAISING FOR HEART HEALTH

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate Year 6 student Summer Moore of Corowa Public School who has been recognised for her exceptional fundraising efforts. Summer raised an incredible \$1600 for the 'Jump Rope for Heart' program. Summer skipped in honour of her uncle who sadly passed in 2006 from a heart condition. Jump Rope for Heart is a foundation that assists people with heart conditions and helps them with treatment costs. The program is run by Australian primary schools encouraging students towards, a healthier lifestyle, by moving more, while raising funds to go towards heart health education. This is the second great achievement for the youngster, who in 2016 raised almost \$1,500 whilst skipping and raising money for people with heart conditions. Well done Summer, and all those who supported you in this important fundraising experience.

MUSWELLBROOK COAL COMMUNITY DAY

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter)—I take this opportunity to acknowledge a pioneer of the Hunter Valley's coal and electricity generation industries as it prepares to cease mining operations. On behalf of the Muswellbrook community, I thank Muswellbrook Coal for its 115 year contribution to the town and the recent community day at the local racecourse to celebrate that rich heritage. The company's story began in 1907 when drilling for a water bore on the Muswellbrook Common tapped a coal deposit that would ultimately have a massive impact on the local economy and the region's future. Muswellbrook's population almost triple by 1914 as the mine's workforce rose from four to 40. In 1925, Muswellbrook Coal diversified building the region's first power station which serviced the local community until 1975. The company was also an early adopter introducing open cut mining in 1944 and then in 1989 international investment when Japanese firm, Idemitsu, purchased the colliery. The importance Idemitsu places on the relationship with Muswellbrook was highlighted with three senior executives from Japan attending the community day to thank workers and the community for their support. As one door closes, I now look forward to working with Idemitsu on future energy opportunities.

MATTHEW HYAM

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to acknowledge the incredible achievement of an Oak Flats local, and Year 12 student at Nowra Anglican College, Matthew Hyam, a young musician who has recently achieved a place in the Sydney Youth Orchestras' 2022 program. Matthew joins 530 of the finest young musicians from across NSW, aged 6-24, who earned their place after a rigorous selection process that included almost 900 individual auditions. SYO is the largest youth orchestral training organisation in Australia and the only program that supports musicians from beginner to professional level. It is a vital part of the cultural fabric of NSW and has trained thousands of musicians during the last 50 years. SYO Alumni are found in all Australian State Orchestras, the Australian Chamber Orchestra, the Australian World Orchestra and many more orchestras around the world. Despite a challenging past two years due to COVID-19, the Sydney youth Orchestra is stronger than ever thanks to their musicians and their families, supporters, corporate partners and the support of the state and federal governments. I congratulate Matthew on this fantastic achievement, and wish him the best of luck throughout the Sydney Youth Orchestra program.

GLEN SUTHERLAND

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to extend my congratulations to Glen Sutherland who has been named the NSW Police Employee of the Year. Glen works as an Aboriginal Community Liaison

Officer at Lake Illawarra Police District. He has been in the Illawarra since 2015 and has been an ACLO for 10 years, previously working out of Central West Police district in Orange. Glen was recognised for going above and beyond his normal duties, for supporting the Aboriginal community and for fostering relationships between the community and police. Throughout the pandemic, Glen was constantly in contact with community members through welfare checks by phone and by email, assisted with food deliveries, and promoted vaccination with assistance from the local Aboriginal medicine service and the University of Wollongong. Glen partnered with the Illawarra Koori men's support group in December 2020 to establish weekly programs that help Aboriginal youth at risk of harm. Glen has built stronger relationships through mentoring programs with public school students, as well as with high school students at risk of suspension. I again congratulate Glen Sutherland on his efforts, it is great to see the Police engaging with our local Aboriginal communities in this way.

CLUB MARCONI

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne)—On 29 May 2022, Club Marconi organised a wonderful Italian Republic Day event including a commemorative mass, ceremony and fair with market stalls, rides, entertainment and fireworks. After health restrictions prevented this event from taking place during the past two years, it was a significant day for the Italian community in Greater Sydney to come together and celebrate Italian Republic Day. I would like to congratulate and thank Club Marconi President, Mr Morris Licata, Club Marconi Board of Directors and staff for coordinating a fun, family friendly event.

SCALABRINI VILLAGE

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne)—Earlier this month I attended an Italian Republic Day celebration at The Village by Scalabrini nursing home located in Drummoyne. It was a truly humbling experience to see the joy that this event brought to the residents of the facility. There was a great sense of excitement and nostalgia that filled the room as residents were treated to a show by Italian performer and entertainer, Mr Tony Mazell. I would like to recognise and commend the hardworking staff at the facility for putting on a lovely event and thank them for the kind invitation to share in the celebrations.

VALE MIKE BAILEY, OAM

Mr JOHN SIDOTI (Drummoyne)—I would like to acknowledge Mr Mike Bailey OAM who passed away peacefully on 20 June 2021. Many of us knew him from the days when he graced our televisions as a journalist and weather presenter on ABC and Nine News. Mike was a well loved and respected member of our local community. He was a kind, selfless and humble gentleman. Mike served as Chairman of Wests Ashfield Leagues Club, and Director of Wests Tigers and Wests Magpies. In 2020, Mike was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for his services to rugby league and to the community. On Friday 3 June 2022, a memorial was held for Mike to honour the great man that he was and to celebrate a wonderful life. I would like to pay my respects to his wife Mrs Helena Bailey and their son Michael. Vale Mike Bailey. Rest in Peace.

TACKING POINT SURF LIFESAVING CLUB ANNUAL PRESENTATION

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I acknowledge the Tacking Point Surf Lifesaving Club volunteers who were recognised at the Annual Awards Presentation held on Saturday 28 May 2022. Congratulating the members on another successful season, President Mick Lang commended the Club's performance throughout the year and applauded those who had achieved significant milestones in competition and volunteer hours. Dressed in my best Hawaiian outfit in fitting with the theme for the day, I was proud to present Josh Lawrence with the Club Person of the Year Award. Josh is seen as a role model in the way he represents the Club and diligently performs routine patrols. I thank him for his leadership and commitment. I also take this opportunity to congratulate the Major Award recipients; Lifesaver of the Year - Tony Hallinan. Patrol Person of the Year - Dave Moore. Cadet of the Year - Annelise Turner. A new award was announced this year in memory of Past President and Life Member Graham 'Bingo' Bingham to recognise a quite achiever within the Club. The inaugural Graham Bingham Award was presented to Denise Moore. I thank the membership for their marvellous contribution to Surf Lifesaving.

HASTINGS SECONDARY COLLEGE ZONE CROSS COUNTRY RESULTS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I recognise the young and talented Hastings Secondary College students who recently competed in the Zone Cross Country Carnival held at the iconic Kempsey racecourse. All the students were applauded on the day for displaying a fantastic team spirit and tremendous effort in the rain, mud and long grass with 28 students progressing to upcoming regional events. Age Champions in their division were Olivia Shelley, Kaitlin Jean, Oliver Barry, Ethan Burton and Frida Aaso. Student who qualified for Regional events were Demi Isherwood, Grace McLaren, Jessica Dun, Charlie Dargan, Emily Lyttle, Georgia White, Abbie Brown, Maddy Walsh, Aaron Cook, Zaide Jones, Marcus Webster, David Charles, Tobie Quinn, Chloe Green, Faith Fotheringham, Avalon Enfield, Morgan Edwards, Lachlan Browne, Cameron Carson, Kaden

Knox Sheen, Les Smith, Ethan Apthorpe, Benjamin Webster, Jenson Medcalf, Lachlan Micalos, Tyler Canargie-Jones, Mathew Kehoe, Chris Campbell, Ruby Gallagher, Brenton Mance, Bryson Haines, Caitlin Davis, Ella Kemsley and Edward Redfern. I also acknowledge Tom and Jack Marks, Kayle Enfield, Oliver Barry and Iesha Apthorpe for trudging through the boggy terrain to complete an 8km run. Congratulations to all the students and best wishes for the upcoming events.

JORGIEAH PERRY

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I congratulate Port Macquarie local Jorgieah Perry who was recently awarded the 2022 HVTC School-based Apprentice/Trainee of the Year. Jorgieah Perry is a former student of Newman Senior Technical College. During her time at Newman, Jorgieah enrolled in a Certificate 3 Individual Support for her High School Certificate and commenced a School-Based Aged Care Traineeship with the Hunter Valley Training Company and host employer, Garden Village Port Macquarie. Recognised for her strong commitment, high performance and on-the-job work ethic, Jorgieah was honoured with the prestigious HTVC School-based Apprentice/Trainee of the Year which has earned her an employment opportunity with Garden Village Port Macquarie. Newman Senior Technical College in Port Macquarie is a specialist school in Vocational Education and Training with more than 40 years of experience in delivering trade qualifications and through 'on' and 'off the job' training in a caring and disciplined environment. In 2021, 95 per cent of students gained employment or study thanks to the first-class training and education programs on offer at Newman. Jorgieah is a role model for young women who aspire to undertake a school-based traineeship. I congratulate her for striving to achieve her career goal and wish her every success.

TERRIGAL SLSC AWARDS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—Terrigal Surf Life Saving Club recently held their annual awards to honour the outstanding efforts of members of the club throughout the surf life saving season. Members were awarded across a range of categories. Emma Gunasinghe was named Terrigal SLSC 2022 Lifesaver of the Year whilst Chayse Coleman was the club's 2022 Youth Lifesaver of the Year. Club Person of the Year was awarded to Richard Green and Regional Youth Taskforce alumni Jayden Redfern was named as the 2022 Youth Club Person of the year. Further, Cathy Cole was presented with her Life Member Jacket whilst Peter Connelly and Josh Cole were awarded National Medals for their service to Surf Life Saving. The annual awards are a great way to highlight the amazing volunteers we have on the Central Coast and their dedication to keeping locals and tourists alike, safe on our fantastic beaches.

WARWICK TEASDALE

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I recently had the pleasure of representing Minister Cooke at the NSW Rural Fire Service Central Coast District Volunteer Appreciation Day. I was honoured to present the St Florian's Day Award, Commissioner's Commendation for Service to Warwick Teasdale, a member of the Killcare Wagstaffe and Gosford Fire Control Centre Brigades and Group Captain Retired. Warwick joined the brigade in 1976 and is currently Deputy Captain and previously held the positions of Permit Officer, Secretary, and Captain until he was elected Group Captain of the Gosford District in 1999. Warwick has attended most significant fires in the region as well as participating in activities like hazard reduction and floor recovery in surrounding areas. He has successfully delivered many training courses to help upskill other volunteers, even being called upon to deliver Incident Management training programs to delegates from the Korean Forest Service, National Disaster Management Authority of India and NSW Government agencies such as RMS and Sydney Water. Warwick is a very worthy recipient of this commendation. I would like to thank him for his service and wish him the best of luck in his future endeavours.

PICTON BOWLING CLUB NEW RESTAURANT

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—Lovers of fine dining were pleased to hear that the Picton Bowling Club restaurant has had a kitchen makeover by new owners and celebrity chefs: former Rockpool Bar & Grill executive chef Khan Danis (also founding co-head chef at Totti's Bondi), MG Garage kitchen star Lee Hokianga and produce pioneer Jamie McDonald. The Picton Bowling Club is surrounded by historic buildings and Picton's beautiful botanic gardens. Now, with the new restaurant, they have an impressive drawcard to attract visitors from Sydney to experience Picton's green rolling hills and scenic landscapes. The Bowling Pheasant has opened in a unique setting with a high calibre team. They have modernised the place by rebuilding the kitchen, putting in banquettes and installing pressed metal around the bar. The new menu will feature house-cured ocean trout, devilled eggs, pesto lasagne, free-range schnitzel with tarragon butter and the best carrot cake you have ever tasted made by a local woman - think simple but delicious food! I wish this gold-standard team the best of luck with their business and thank them for bringing culinary sophistication and passion into the heart of Picton.

RESPONSE RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE EXPO

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—On 3 May I attended the Response, Recovery and Resilience Expo at the Mittagong RSL. The expo was put on by local councils, Wollondilly and Wingecarribee, in conjunction with Resilience NSW. Resilience NSW leads disaster and emergency efforts from prevention to recovery. The event focussed on important aspects of our community's disaster preparation and response, by looking at what we have learnt from the last few years and understanding where we are now, to implement best strategies for moving forward. Additionally, the expo discussed what help is available during and after a disaster and the responsibilities different organisations have during disasters. We know and accept that natural disasters are an inevitable part of life, but it is imperative that we do all we can to prepare ourselves adequately so that we can mitigate the damage to homes, properties, and lives. I thank Wollondilly and Wingecarribee Councils and Resilience NSW for putting on this important and informative event.

NGUNUNGGULA GALLERY - NATIONAL TRUST HERITAGE AWARDS

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—Ngununggula Gallery in the Southern Highlands is once again worthy of recognition, as the gallery is one of only 16 winners across 8 categories in this year's National Trust (NSW) Heritage Awards, in the Adaptive Re-Use category. The Gallery, which opened in 2021, was converted from an old dairy and veterinary clinic into the impressive cultural boon for the region it is today. The dilapidated clinic became the Heath by Moonacres Café and the old dairy building was transformed into the impressive gallery that now houses great works from the Highlands and beyond. The Entry Pavilion, which showcases art by First Nations people was constructed to link the two buildings together, creating a unique, yet flowing space. The architects behind this impressive feat are Tonkin Zulaikha Greer Architects (TZG) and their vision was made material reality by Richard Crookes Constructions. I congratulate the Gallery on winning such a prestigious award and thank all those who contributed to making Ngununggula a reality. If you've not yet had a chance to visit and experience this award-winning gallery, I would encourage you to visit the Southern Highlands and see their latest installation Land Abounds.

NERVIO

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—I wish to commend the efforts of local resident and former educator Mrs Dianne Sepulveda in her capacity as Managing Director of Nervio. Nervio was established in 2020 as a charitable and public benevolent company, with the aim of raising awareness to assist with the prevention of neurospinal disorders and to improve outcomes for individuals experiencing these disorders. The charity seeks to provide specialist surgical equipment and resources to public hospitals. Further, Nervio seeks to provide education, resources and research funding to surgical, medical staff, nurses and other health care professionals who are at the forefront of practice and research into the causes and treatment of patients with neurological, spinal disorders and related condition. I was delighted to hear from Dianne that Nervio through the assistance of Professor Mark Sheridan, Head of Neurosurgery at Liverpool Hospital are embarking on a research project investigating the impacts of head and spinal trauma caused by sporting injuries and general accidents and will be working with local Rugby League clubs. I take this opportunity to wish Nervio, Mrs Dianne Sepulveda, Professor Sheridan and their research team well in their collaboration with local schools, clubs and the wider community.

FEDERATION OF DEMOCRATIC KURDISH SOCIETY - AUSTRALIA

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—I wish to acknowledge the efforts of the Federation of Democratic Kurdish Society – Australia (FDKS) in assisting the local Kurdish community. The FDKS seek to provide support and advocacy to members of their community throughout the country. They also work tirelessly to promote and maintain Kurdish culture through language and cultural events. Recently the federation held a successful New Year function at NSW Parliament. I take this opportunity to thank federation Co-Chair Mr Ismet Tastan and Committee Representative Ms Mirfat Ibrahim for assisting their community with the challenges they face here in settling into Australian life.

LUCIANA CUTELLI

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—I wish to congratulate local young author Luciana Cutelli on the publishing of her book "Zoe Is Looking For Her Friend". Zoe Is Looking For Her Friend, is a fictional children's book that was written and illustrated by Luciana when she was six years old during the 2020 COVID-19 lockdown. The main characters of the book are two unicorns named Zoe and Sarah. The book is about never giving up on friendship as well as the love of an adventure to look for a dear friend. The book goes through the emotion of what happens during the search for a friend and the ultimate joy when friends are reunited. Luciana was motivated to write the book to encourage young children to read. I would like to congratulate Mr Anthony and Mrs Randa Cutelli for supporting Luciana's dream of writing children's books. Well done Luciana.

ICARE DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT CENTRE

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—On 25 May, I joined iCare Community Services for their grand opening of iCare Disability Employment Centre (iDEC). iDEC is the latest community project established and steered by iCare Community Services Inc. Since iCare's inception, their aim has always been to change and transform the lives of people with a disability. iDEC is an employment linkage and building project for people with a disability and includes an Op Shop, laundromat and Free Clothing Hamper support services that will be operated by people with a disability. The project will provide training of the highest quality in various employment capacities and categories such as administrative, executive and labouring. iDEC will not only provide people the opportunity of employment but will also provide people with a disability a social environment where they can make friends and interact with other colleagues. From meeting the team I know that making sure that every person walking through their doors is valued and accepted for who they are is their top priority. I want to congratulate the CEO of iCare Community Services, Bishop Richard Asamoah Boateng, and the team for making sure we are a more inclusive society.

MIRATH IN MIND 10TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—On 29 May 2022, Mirath in Mind celebrated their tenth year anniversary at Bankstown Sports Club. Due to COVID-19, it was set back two years but it was worth the wait. Mirath in Mind is a not-for-profit organisation founded in 2010 to promote and keep the cultural legacies of the arts, heritage and culture of Lebanese Australians alive. The milestone's theme was "My Story – My Migration" and it was focused around the stories that make each of us unique and yet the same. As a migrant, I know the importance of staying in touch with one's culture and heritage. Many schools from my community performed an array of cultural songs and dances including my favourite singer Fairuz. Local students from St Charbel's College, St Euphemia College, Holy Spirit College Lakemba and Al Sadiq College came together to put on an amazing show which highlights our community's talent. One of the most exceptional aspects that stands out is Mirath in Mind's consistent dedication to the community. I want to congratulate the President of Mirath in Mind, Chadia Gedeon-Hajjar, for her amazing commitment to preserving Lebanese culture in Australia.

WORLD LEBANESE CULTURAL UNION OF SYDNEY INCORPORATED

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—I am very proud to acknowledge the amazing work the World Lebanese Cultural Union of Sydney Incorporated (WLCU). The WLCU was established in 1959 and is an International Non-Government Organisation registered in the United Nations Department of Public Information. Their aim is to ensure the preservation and propagation of pride in the Lebanese culture and its manifestation throughout the Diaspora and is autonomous and independent of any governmental institution. This year, I joined the WLCU for their HSC Distinguished Achievers Awards, Class of 2021 celebration. This event has been organised for the past 35 years and honours the youth of Lebanese ancestry who have achieved outstanding results in the HSC. It was lovely to pass on wisdom and a few words of encouragement to the students. Their future is in their hands now and I hope they all succeed in their achieving their life dreams. Students that achieved an ATAR of 95+ were rewarded with a beautiful sterling silver WLCU coin. I would like to further extend my thanks to the Australian-Lebanese community and to president Shane Geha, for their effort toward the greater community.

NEWCASTLE CITY POLICE DISTRICT POLICE MEDALS AND AWARDS

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—I recently had the pleasure of attending the Newcastle City Police District Police Medals and Awards with Commissioner Karen Webb APM, Assistant Commissioner and Northern Region Commander, Peter McKenna APM, and District Commander of Newcastle City Police District, Superintendent Tracy Chapman APM, where local Officers received recognition for their commitment and service to the community. Congratulations to Detective Chief Inspector Scott Parker, Detective Sergeant Natalie Sames and Sergeants Amy Walker and Kelly-anne Papandrea, who received the 1st Clasp to the National Medal, Senior Constables Dean Davis and Ashley Henry, who received the NSW Police Medal 10 years, Detective Sergeant Luke Arnold, Detective Senior Constable Christopher Browne and Senior Constables Adam Burgess and Melissa Hughes, who received the 2nd Clasp to the NSW Police Medal 20 Years, Detective Chief Inspector Scott Parker, Detective Sergeant Natalie Sames and Sergeant Kelly-anne Papandrea, who received the 3rd Clasp to the NSW Police Medal 25 Years and Detective Sergeant Scott Wheeler and Detective Senior Constable Jacqueline Flipo, who received the 4th Clasp to the NSW Police Medal 30 Years. Thank you for your service and dedication to the community.

NEWCASTLE CITY POLICE DISTRICT POLICE MEDALS AND AWARDS

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—I recently had the pleasure of attending the Newcastle City Police District Police Medals and Awards where local Officers received recognition for their commitment and service to the community. Thank you to Commissioner Karen Webb APM, Assistant Commissioner and Northern Region

Commander, Peter McKenna APM, and District Commander of Newcastle City Police District, Superintendent Tracy Chapman APM for inviting me along to be part of the ceremony. Congratulations to Leading Senior Constable Timothy Egan, Senior Constables William Lorrie and Michael Sheehan who received the National Police Service Medal, Sergeant David Sendt who was awarded the Warrant of Appointment, Detective Sergeants Scott Wheeler and Stephen Sutherland, Detective Senior Constables Shane Baker, Christopher Browne, Duncan Butcher, Benjamin King, Michelle Lawson and Senior Constable Jessie Wilkinson who received the Northern Region Commander's Unit Citation, Senior Constable James Spallino, who was awarded the Northern Region Commander's Certificate of Merit for his role in a siege at Maryland in 2020, Sergeant Angela Mitchell who received the District Commander's Unit Citation and Sergeant Kelly-anne Papandrea who received the District Commander's Certificates of Merit. Thank you for your service and dedication to the community.

LASER PLUMBING NEWCASTLE CENTRAL

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—The Local Business Awards, run by Precedent Productions, were established in 1985 and currently see around 38,000 businesses nominated for an award annually. The awards are well respected and recognise businesses in a variety of categories as successful and outstanding in their local region. Laser Plumbing Newcastle Central, located in Waratah, were selected as the winner in their category of Outstanding Plumbing Services in the 2021 Hunter Local Business Awards. This win showcases Laser Plumbing Newcastle Central's 'Totally Dependable' service along with their fantastic team of plumbers and support staff. They pride themselves on their professionalism, reliability, high standards, punctuality and knowledge. Ian, the company director, is proud of his eco friendly, ethical and family run business that serves his home town and the surrounding regions. The highly skilled and efficient team have over 100 years of combined experience in the industry and work on a variety of residential, commercial and Government projects, where no job is too big or too small. Congratulations to Ian and the team at Laser Plumbing Newcastle Central on your win!

JESSICA NIPPERESS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—I want to congratulate a young filmmaker from Mudgee who is already making waves on the world stage. Jessica Nipperess is only 16 years of age but her short film Devil Bean has taken out Best High School Production at the WorldFest-Houston International Film Festival, and was officially selected to feature at FlickerUp International Short Film Festival, and the American Pavilion Emerging Filmmaker Showcase at the Cannes Film Festival! Described as a horror-come-anti-drug satire, Devil Bean follows a picture-perfect family that gets torn apart by the new coffee machine – or rather the father's new coffee addiction. Jessica travelled to France with screenwriter, fellow Mudgee local Sam Paine, and says she's "stoked" to see their film receiving recognition on the world stage. Jessica says that living in regional Australia, she can feel quite isolated from the filmmaking industry, so she was excited to network with international filmmakers and gain a better understanding of the business side of the industry, including pitching and distribution. Congratulations Jessica – and I can't wait to see your name held among the greats of this industry.

ROBERT JOSEPH

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—I want to congratulate Mudgee firefighter Robert Joseph who has hung up the helmet for the last time after an incredible 42-year career. Exactly 42 years, in fact, Speaker! Robert joined the 387 Mudgee brigade on the 15th of April, 1980 and had his last shift on the 15th of April, 2022. Robert joined Fire and Rescue NSW because he wanted to give back to the community. Over the years, he has seen house fires, car fires, truck fires, accidents, plane crashes and even hot air balloons coming down. Robert has seen a lot of improvements over the last four decades – he remembers "in the old days you'd go to a fire and you'd just suck in so much smoke... you'd wake up the next morning and your tongue would be stuck to the roof of your mouth". Breathing apparatus and better rescue equipment in the trucks are a huge improvement, he says. A huge thank you to Robert – and his wife Karen – for their committed service to the Mudgee region over 4 decades. I wish him all the best in his retirement!

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:21 until
Thursday 9 June 2022 at 9:30.**