



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Wednesday 22 June 2022

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 22 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.

Bills

TREASURY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) BILL 2022

Returned

The SPEAKER: I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill with an amendment. I order that consideration of the Legislative Council's amendment be set down as an order of the day for a later hour.

Notices

PRESENTATION

[During the giving of notices of motions]

The SPEAKER: I point out that a number of members have given notices of motion that are longer than 30 seconds. Members are reminded to keep to 30 seconds.

Later,

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

Bills

ELECTORAL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Gabrielle Upton, on behalf of Mr Mark Speakman, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vacluse) (09:47): On behalf of Mr Mark Speakman: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I bring before the House the Electoral Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The bill amends the Electoral Act 2017 and the Electoral Funding Act 2018 to implement recommendations made by the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters in its report on the administration of the 2019 New South Wales State election. The amendments primarily relate to recommendations accepted by the Government in its response to the report. In particular, the bill will amend the Electoral Funding Act to implement increased expenditure caps for third-party campaigners for State election campaigns, as recommended by the committee.

This bill introduces important amendments to the Electoral Act to facilitate the upcoming 2023 State general election and any State or local government by-election between 1 July 2022 and 25 March 2023. This includes special provisions for those elections to reflect the Electoral Commissioner's determination that technology-assisted voting will not be used for those elections, other than telephone voting for vision-impaired or blind electors. In part, due to the absence of iVote, it is anticipated that there will be an increase in postal voting at the 2023 State general election. The bill makes changes to certain postal voting provisions to facilitate this expected increase in demand. The bill also makes minor amendments to the Electoral Act and Electoral Funding Act to address minor inconsistencies and administrative inefficiencies.

I turn first to the amendments to the Electoral Act. The bill amends section 114 (2) (a) to reduce the maximum period of early voting to seven days prior to election day, commencing on the Saturday preceding election day. This will give candidates and parties more time to register their electoral material after the ballot draw. This amendment implements the first recommendation of the committee's report. The bill makes a number of amendments to section 149 regarding postal voting to facilitate the timely processing of the anticipated high volume of postal votes in upcoming elections. This includes amendment to section 149 (1) (b) (i) to allow the Electoral Commissioner to receive postal votes up to 13 days following the close of voting, instead of four days.

The bill allows the period to be prescribed by the regulations, being a period not exceeding 13 days. This time frame aligns with equivalent Commonwealth provisions regarding the receipt of postal votes and better accommodates potential delays with postal services.

Additionally, the bill amends section 149 (1) (a) to allow the preliminary scrutiny of envelopes on which a postal vote certificate is printed to commence 14 days prior to election day, instead of five days. This time frame aligns with equivalent provisions applying to local government elections and enables earlier commencement of the preliminary scrutiny of postal vote envelopes to help facilitate the timely determination of election results. The amendments make clear that postal ballot votes cannot be accepted for further scrutiny if the postal vote certificate has been completed after 6.00 p.m. on election day.

Further, the bill inserts a new section 149A to provide that ballot papers are not to be rejected for further scrutiny merely because the ballot papers were not inside the envelope on which the postal vote certificate is printed. This will have the effect of saving postal ballots in certain circumstances where the ballot paper is not correctly sealed in the envelope bearing the postal vote certificate. Safeguard measures are included so that, for example, the Electoral Commissioner must be satisfied that the postal vote certificate has been properly signed and witnessed and relates to the ballot paper.

Moving to other changes to the Electoral Act, section 186 (1) (a) currently requires that, during the regulated period, a person must not print, publish, distribute or publicly display electoral material—other than a newspaper announcement about the holding of a meeting—without legibly showing on the material the name and address of an individual on whose instructions the material was printed, published or distributed. The bill will insert a new section 186 (1A) dealing with social media posts, allowing the regulations to prescribe the way these details must be published or distributed. This will clarify the requirements for publication of authorisation details on a variety of social media platforms and help to ensure electoral laws remain relevant and appropriate for emerging forms of social media that are used during campaigning. There remains an exemption from the requirement to have a name and address recorded on social media posts in certain circumstances, as prescribed under section 186 (2) (d) of the Electoral Act and clause 8A of the Electoral Regulation 2018.

The Electoral Act prohibits a person from canvassing for votes, or displaying a poster, within six metres of an entrance to a voting centre or early voting centre. The bill inserts a new section 206A providing for guidelines to be published by the Electoral Commissioner and considered by voting centre managers and election officials before enforcing the "six-metre rule". This will provide managers and officials with guidance regarding the enforcement of the rule. That is welcome guidance.

Section 268 of the Electoral Act sets out a general obligation not to disclose information obtained in connection with the administration or execution of the Electoral Act, or any other Act conferring or imposing functions on the Electoral Commission or Electoral Commissioner, subject to limited exceptions. The bill inserts an additional exception to enable the Electoral Commission or the Electoral Commissioner to inform persons who have provided information to them or it about the progress or outcome of an investigation or any action taken, where it is considered reasonably necessary and it is in the public interest to do so. Information may also be disclosed to report to the public about the progress or outcome of an investigation into a possible contravention of the Electoral Act, Electoral Funding Act or a regulation under either of those Acts, if the Electoral Commissioner is satisfied it is in the public interest to do so. These amendments will assist to enhance transparency and confidence in the management of reports made to the Electoral Commission or Electoral Commissioner about possible breaches of electoral legislation.

Special provisions for the 2023 State general election and certain by-elections regarding technology-assisted voting will be inserted in schedule 7 to the Electoral Act. The bill provides that technology-assisted voting—other than telephone voting for vision impaired or blind electors—will not be used for the 2023 general election, or a by-election held during the period after 30 June 2022 and before the 2023 general election. This is consistent with a determination made by the Electoral Commissioner on 15 March 2022 under section 162 of the Electoral Act and section 333L of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021.

Schedule 2 to the bill makes a number of amendments to provide for the inclusion of registered party logos on ballot papers for Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council elections. This change will assist voters to identify their preferred party or candidate and may benefit voters with a disability and voters from a culturally and linguistically diverse background. The bill provides that the option for party logos to be included on ballot papers will commence on 1 October 2024, after the 2023 State election. This will enable time for this change to be implemented across the State. The bill allows the regulations to prescribe a date on which these amendments concerning party logos will apply in relation to local government elections.

I turn now to the amendments to the Electoral Funding Act. The bill inserts a new section 14A to deal with the making of disclosures where a candidate in a State election has been disendorsed. A party agent of the registered party may notify the Electoral Commission that the party has disendorsed a candidate. On and from receipt of the notice by the Electoral Commission, the person responsible for making a disclosure required under part 3 of the Electoral Funding Act for the candidate is the candidate and not the party agent of the registered party. This amendment has been recommended by the committee and will ensure that party agents are not responsible for the disclosure obligations of disendorsed candidates. It is a sensible amendment.

The bill makes amendments to section 15 to increase certain periods within which disclosures of political donations must be made from four weeks to six weeks after the end of the half-year or disclosure period concerned. Minor amendments are made to section 19 (2) to clarify that details disclosed about reportable political donations required under section 19 must include the date on which donations were made or received. The bill also increases the applicable caps for electoral funding for third-party campaigners in State election campaigns in section 29 (10) of the Electoral Funding Act. The expenditure caps will be \$1,288,500 for those registered under the Act before the commencement of the capped State expenditure period for the election, and \$644,300 in any other case, with these amounts to be adjusted for inflation.

In the case of *Unions NSW v New South Wales [2019] HCA 1*, the High Court ruled that the State had not adduced sufficient evidence to justify the expenditure cap amount recommended by the independent expert panel led by Dr Kerry Schott and introduced by the Electoral Funding Act in 2018, and that the cap was therefore invalid. The bill reinstates the expenditure caps for third-party campaigners in State general elections that applied prior to the commencement of the Electoral Funding Act in 2018. That is also consistent with the committee's recommendation. The committee considered that, by reinstating these higher amounts, third-party campaigners would have adequate opportunity to present their case, and that the caps would be proportionate to the expenditure caps that apply to political parties under the Act, and other direct contestants at elections.

The Government has considered the committee's recommendations and reasonings carefully across the board. I note that the amended expenditure cap of \$1,288,500 is equal to the cap for parties that endorse candidates in a group for election to the Legislative Council but do not endorse any candidates for election to the Legislative Assembly or only endorse candidates in 10 or fewer electoral districts. It is also equal to the applicable cap for a group of candidates in a periodic Legislative Council election who are not endorsed by any party. The Government has also considered the total amounts previously spent by registered third-party campaigners during the capped expenditure periods for the 2011, 2015 and 2019 State general elections. Notably, the highest amount previously spent by a third-party campaigner at a State general election was under \$1 million, which was less than the cap that applied at the time. The amounts implemented by the bill are also consistent with those that applied for the 2019 State general election under the Electoral Funding Amendment (Savings and Transitional) Regulation 2019.

The bill makes a further change to the caps on electoral expenditure for State and, for consistency, local government elections. Specifically, the bill amends the definition of "electoral expenditure" at section 7 of the Electoral Funding Act to exclude expenditure on travel and travel accommodation for candidates and staff engaged in electoral campaigning for the purpose of the electoral expenditure caps. This change is in response to the committee's recommendation that the Government consider amending the Electoral Funding Act so that travel and accommodation expenses are not captured as electoral expenditure for the purpose of the caps. Those expenses will still need to be disclosed, of course, in accordance with the disclosure requirements under part 3 of the Act.

Next, the bill amends section 57 of the Electoral Funding Act to raise the threshold for the exception to the aggregation rule for small donations at fundraising ventures and functions from \$50 to \$100. That aligns with the cash donation threshold in section 50A. The bill makes amendments to section 90 (2A) and section 91 regarding quarterly advance payments of administration funding. It provides for quarterly administrative funding payments to be made in advance, not in arrears, and for any portion of the quarterly payment to which the party or the elected member is eligible but did not spend to be carried over to the subsequent quarter within a calendar year. Those amendments will provide for a simpler scheme under which a party's entitlement is paid entirely in advance and may reduce disadvantage to smaller parties or independent members of Parliament.

The bill amends the claim period for the New Parties Fund from a calendar year to a financial year and provides for transitional arrangements to implement the change from calendar to financial year and updated indexing. The bill also inserts a new section 157 to enable a party's registered officer—where they have undertaken prescribed training—to sign documentation required under the Electoral Funding Act in circumstances where the party agent is unavailable and notice has been given. That is to assist administrative efficiency. As the House will see, the amendments contained in this bill are sensible. They accord with the recommendations of the committee. Some of them are purely administrative and efficiency amendments. Others are more substantial, but they accord with committee recommendations. Therefore, I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

GOVERNMENT SECTOR FINANCE AMENDMENT (JOBS FOR NSW) BILL 2022**First Reading**

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Stuart Ayres, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney) (10:04): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Government Sector Finance Amendment (Jobs for NSW) Bill 2022. The New South Wales Government is committed to increasing the prosperity of the people of New South Wales through innovation and facilitating competitive industries. We are focused on strategic economic opportunities that position the Government as a catalyst for change—change that delivers long-term public benefits and promotes a business environment that allows private investment to thrive. In 2015 the Jobs for NSW Act 2015 established a new body to leverage private sector expertise and provide strategic advice to government for the creation of jobs and for driving investment into New South Wales. The Act also established the Jobs for NSW Fund, coupled with a Jobs for NSW Board, to provide dedicated funding for job creation incentives, allocating \$190 million over a four-year period from September 2015 to 30 June 2019.

Since 2015 the fund has offered a suite of financial products, supporting industries and entrepreneurial businesses to generate sustainable jobs across the State. Jobs for NSW has assisted over 900 companies to create jobs, expand their operations and enter new markets. It has enabled the establishment of the Sydney Startup Hub, the largest innovation space in Australia, while also supporting the delivery of the NSW Space Industry Development Strategy and strengthening innovation ecosystems across regional New South Wales. However, the bulk of those funds have been spent and the remaining funds are committed to specific initiatives, some of which will extend beyond 2025, with a small amount of remaining funds preserved as a contingency.

In 2021 the Government undertook a statutory review of the Jobs for NSW Act 2015 after five years of operation as required under section 19 of that Act. The statutory review sought to understand whether or not the existence of the Act was necessary to enable the delivery of its objectives to facilitate job creation, investment attraction, economic development and the use of private sector expertise. It identified that through the establishment of Investment NSW, the Jobs for NSW construct was no longer necessary to fulfil the objectives of the Act. In fact, the review found that many of the Act's functions were being progressed by other parts of government and Jobs for NSW was no longer actively pursuing them nor was it operating as effectively as it could due to outdated governance. Since that time, we have also seen the creation of the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade, which is positioning New South Wales as the best place in the world to do business. To that end, the statutory review recommended the Act be repealed and alternative arrangements be introduced to allow the existing contractual obligations to be fulfilled and the Jobs for NSW Fund abolished.

The bill delivers on the recommendations of the statutory review by repealing the Jobs for NSW Act 2015 and inserting necessary transitional provisions into the Government Sector Finance Act 2018 to allow for a temporary transition fund to be established until 30 June 2024. The bill will streamline existing legislation on the statute book and reduce red tape by consolidating the fund into the Government Sector Finance Act, which already deals with some of the Government's financial accounts. Clauses 23 and 24 of the bill will abolish the Jobs for NSW Fund and instead establish a transitional fund, which will continue as a special deposits account and include the balance of the Jobs for NSW Fund. The funds are intended to support the remaining Jobs for NSW initiatives and responsibilities, which include things like the MVP, or minimum viable product, grant program; the Sydney Startup Hub; and the remaining clients for the loan guarantee products, some of which have repayment dates staggered over several years. This approach will enable the Government to satisfy the existing contractual obligations under the Jobs for NSW fund.

Clause 25 provides that the transitional fund be administered by the Minister and will be coupled with the appropriate delegation of powers to the Secretary of the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade to reduce administrative complexity as the transitional fund and its activities are wound up. That provision will enable the Minister to have control and management of the transitional fund, with appropriate accountabilities and administration sitting with secretary, as regularly occurs with other delegation powers across the statute book. Through clause 26 the bill also provides appropriate powers for money payable to the Jobs for NSW fund to be recovered or written off. While those powers are unlikely to be used in practice, they are necessary to ensure that the Government can recover any money that is owed or overdue via a loan or other agreement.

The bill also includes a suite of complementary powers to allow the money to be paid into and out of the transitional fund. I wish to be clear here and specifically identify the purpose of the money that can be paid out of

the transitional fund. Those grounds are clearly stepped out in clause 27 and are: money the Minister is satisfied is for the purposes of funding job-creation incentives, which include a grant of money, a financial guarantee, an investment or the provision of advice or a support program; the costs of any administration or recovering money owed, such as legal expenses; and all other money directed or authorised to be paid out of the transitional fund. As I explained earlier, the intent of the bill is that the transitional provisions are only in force for the time required, which is why the Government has identified a suitable sunset date for the transitional fund of 30 June 2024. That date was recommended by the statutory review to enable the remainder of the fund's responsibilities to be fulfilled and its activities wound up at an appropriate time.

To ensure that the bill can also deal with matters after the sunset date, clause 30 of the bill allows the Minister to give directions without the need for an appropriation about what must be done with the balance of the transitional fund. It will also allow directions to be made about any money payable into the transitional fund immediately before its abolition. Consistent with the recommendations of the statutory review, that will streamline the management of any residual money—which is likely to be small in size—and allow for it to be paid to the department, a government sector finance agency, another fund in legislation or the Consolidated Fund. While the money remaining will likely be immaterial, it can be subject to conditions that will enable the Government to direct it towards objectives that are consistent with the Jobs for NSW Act objectives, such as economic development.

Jobs for NSW was announced in 2015, with the vision of modernising economic development incentives and bringing commercial innovation and entrepreneurship into focus. The New South Wales Government remains committed to that vision but is already proactively targeting those objectives through Investment NSW and the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade, which are both working hard to capture strategic and significant economic opportunities for the State of New South Wales. In the past 12 months the New South Wales Government has outlined a comprehensive approach to supporting economic growth in New South Wales, including through The NSW Industry Development Framework, its 20-year R&D road map; a green paper for industry policy over the next decade; the appointment of an Investment Attraction Council; and the NSW Trade Statement—to name just a few examples.

The bill will repeal unnecessary legislation, reduce duplication and streamline processes while allowing the Government to continue with its economic development agenda. The new industry policy frameworks now shape the design of initiatives and ensure that government interventions are targeted and necessary, while addressing market failures to return the largest public benefit. Together with the Government's strategic approach, the bill will make sure that the focus is on high-impact investment attraction and industry growth to drive productivity, diversification and resilience in the New South Wales economy. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

MUSEUMS OF HISTORY NSW BILL 2022

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr James Griffin, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly—Minister for Environment and Heritage) (10:15): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The New South Wales Government is committed to a future where history is alive and the telling of history, whether cheerful or confronting, is forefront in our culture. New South Wales has a number of prominent, vital and prestigious cultural institutions with specific mandates and purposes. However, there are none with history as their core objective. As the first State, we have an obligation and an opportunity to bring our history to life and captivate generations to come in the archives, places and stories that have shaped and continue to shape the social, historical, political and cultural identity of New South Wales. New South Wales' framework for ensuring good record keeping by its public offices is strong. That robust practice has built the State archives collection over the past 235 years. Record keeping underpins government accountability. Further, public access to the State's collection of archives and the continued creation of that primary source material helps us to understand and reconcile our history, now and in the future.

Just as we have an opportunity to create a new cultural institution dedicated to our history, the normal legislative review processes and subsequent stakeholder engagement have identified improvements to strengthen record keeping in New South Wales and access to the State archives collection. The State archives collection is built on good record-keeping practices, and we are the custodians and beneficiaries of perhaps the world's leading collection that documents the wielding of colonial power as a result. The New South Wales State archives

collection is valued at in excess of \$1 billion and has a cultural worth beyond measure. The bill provides for improvements in record keeping so that that significant collection continues to grow and capture our history, and increases access so that present and future generations learn about our past in order to improve our future.

The State Records Act 1998 was reviewed in 2019 following the twentieth anniversary of its commencement. As a result of that review, several changes were identified to improve and modernise the legislation. Also in 2019, the New South Wales State Archives and Records Authority [SARA] and the Historic Houses Trust, trading as Sydney Living Museums [SLM], were partnered to improve policy outcomes for both institutions. The review of the State Records Act and the potential that was demonstrated by the partnership were referred to the parliamentary Standing Committee on Social Issues in 2020. Following a committee inquiry and the publication of its recommendations, a detailed policy paper was produced outlining the need for and benefits of the changes proposed. The development process has been undertaken over three years, and the bill before the House today has been informed by and benefits from the feedback provided by all stakeholders consulted.

I concede that, as the first State in the colony, New South Wales has a contested history, but it is a wildly significant one. Contestability and significance are a solid bedrock for debate, discovery, inquiry, healing, social cohesion, research and creativity. Much greater access to and understanding of the past—the rich and varied histories, stories and cultures of our State—is paramount. Access and understanding make way for increased connection with our past to promote a stronger, more cohesive society, one that knows where it has come from, understands how we arrived at this present and one that can exert greater agency over a more positive shared future. This is also an outlook for a future where history features more prominently in the cultural landscape of the State. It is an ideal that is founded on the belief that history belongs to everyone. In a society of increasing multiculturalism, with a colonial present and pre-colonial First Nations past, a range of voices and perspectives on our history is essential

To bring this vision to life, and extend the magnificent work they already do, the bill asks Parliament to join Sydney Living Museums and the State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales to form Museums of History NSW. Museums of History NSW will hold the museums currently under the care of the current Sydney Living Museums, and the State archives collection, with the record keeping regulatory function undertaken by the current SARA developed into a focused, standalone public office. This formidable portfolio of assets, ranging from the spectacular to the vernacular, combined with the expertise of their team of dedicated professionals, will allow Museums of History NSW to continue to collect, manage, preserve and increase public enjoyment of the collection under their care and to promote knowledge and appreciation of history throughout the State.

This move will also see New South Wales join every other State in the country in having a cultural institution with its history as a core objective. In New South Wales, being the State of first contact, this rectification is important and it imbues the stories that Museums of History NSW will tell with national and regional significance. I turn now to the key provisions of the bill, starting with the creation of Museums of History NSW and the State Records Authority NSW. The partnership of Sydney Living Museums and SARA has produced significant benefits to each organisation with their complementary strengths and collections; however, there are no further efficiencies or benefits to be realised until the two institutions become one. Every ounce of effort saved will be reinvested in better outcomes for the people of New South Wales, the many visitors to their museums and the users of the State archives collection from across the world.

The key outcome of the Museums of History NSW Bill is the creation of a new cultural institution to novate the functions, powers and assets of the current Sydney Living Museums and combine those with the commercial and custodial functions and assets of the current SARA into a new history-focused cultural institution called Museums of History NSW. Once created, the bill provides for the repeal of the Historic Houses Act 1980 and transfers the functions in parts 4, 5 and 6 of the State Records Act to Museums of History NSW. Museums of History NSW will have objects in its legislation to ensure it is established to fill the gap of a cultural institution tasked with not only the objects of the current State Records Act and Historic Houses Act but a broader history mandate that has a whole of New South Wales focus and is sufficiently empowered to continue to maintain and grow the commerciality of the current SARA and Sydney Living Museums.

The objects will require Museums of History NSW to continue to manage, preserve and increase public enjoyment of and access to the more than \$1.4 billion collection. In addition, the objects require Museums of History NSW to promote knowledge and appreciation of history, the collection and the stories that shape the social, historical, political and cultural identity of New South Wales, including in regional and rural areas. These grand and important objects will ensure the expansion of the great work and contribution to the cultural life of New South Wales made by the current SARA and Sydney Living Museums. Museums of History NSW will be led by a CEO, appointed by the Minister, to manage its day-to-day affairs and administer the Act, and will be guided by a board of 11 members who will determine its strategic direction. The members of the board will be

appointed by the Governor on the recommendation of the Minister administering the Act and at least one person will have knowledge of or experience in history, one in heritage and one in First Nations cultures.

In addition, the bill provides that the current SARA will be renamed the State Records Authority of NSW, which will have responsibility to administer parts 2 and 3 of the State Records Act. The relevant staff and budget currently assigned to manage and discharge these functions will also be transferred to this new entity. Museums of History NSW will take on the functions and responsibilities of the current Historic Houses Act, with minor amendments. The bill also provides for the current references to "historic buildings" in the Historic Houses Act, as replicated in the bill, to be amended to refer to properties according to their significance rather than their historicity, to enable the property-related functions of Museums of History NSW to be exercised without the preconception that it only relates to colonial era places and stories.

A key recommendation from the initial statutory review of the State Records Act was to bring access provisions into line with other commensurate jurisdictions both in Australia and internationally. These recommendations were overwhelmingly supported by stakeholders, as they will provide the citizens of New South Wales with timely public access to records documenting the activities and decisions that shape New South Wales while still protecting sensitive and confidential information for an appropriate period. To do this, the bill provides for a reduction to the open access period, which is currently 30 years, to 20 years.

The reform to reduce the open access period not only provides a more contemporary approach to information access but it also promotes the principle of open government. Generally, most records that are more than 20 years old no longer affect significant interests and are no longer considered sensitive. Of course, in a number of situations, such as health records, 20 years is not long enough and a "closed to public access" direction is able to be implemented and enforced, as it is today. There are no changes in the bill to the capacity for a public office to determine and apply a direction that records are closed to public access. This change to a default open to public access status will significantly reduce this impost on public offices, which will only need to provide a closed to public access direction should they determine that the records should be closed.

The other key improvement to access to the State archives collection is the introduction of a requirement that public offices make and implement transfer plans with Museums of History NSW. This requirement, to be detailed in regulation, will require public offices in New South Wales to identify the records of enduring value that will become State archives and are no longer in active business use, and make plans for their transfer to Museums of History NSW. Transfer of these records to the custody of Museums of History NSW will ensure that they are preserved and accessible. In turn, this will help public offices to manage their obligations under the State Records Act and reduce the costs related to their storage and conservation requirements. These transfer plans also apply to born-digital records where the burden to maintain accessibility to formats is a challenge for each public office.

Finally, I turn to the amendments to the State Records Act, which will improve record keeping across public offices in New South Wales. These improvements can be categorised into three significant changes: the creation of a dedicated public office for record keeping policy and regulation; the creation of a monitoring power for that public office and clarification of definitions or obligations in the current Act; and amendments to the penalty provisions for offences under the Act. The bill provides that the current State Archives and Records Authority of NSW will be changed to the State Records Authority NSW to reflect the changes to its functions after Museums of History NSW is created. The composition of the current SARA board will be amended for State Records Authority NSW to ensure that the CEO of Museums of History NSW is a permanent and full member of the board. The Governor will then appoint, on the recommendation of the Minister administering the Act, the remaining eight members, ensuring that there is at least one person who has knowledge or experience in the use of New South Wales Government archives, a person with knowledge or experience with First Nations cultures and a person who has experience in history.

State Records Authority NSW will be provided with a new monitoring power that will allow it to issue a notice to require a public office to assess its recordkeeping practices, whether generally or specifically, and report back on its findings to enable it to support better compliance across public offices. The bill also clarifies two definitions in the current Act. First, it makes clear that the definition of "public office" does not include private individuals or organisations. This intention was outlined in the second reading speech in the Legislative Council for the creation of the State Records Act back in 1998; however, the drafting in the current Act does not make this plain. Second, the bill clarifies the definition of "State record" by removing "and kept" from the definition to make clear that any record made or received for use by a public office is a State record for the purposes of the Act whether it was kept or not.

The final improvement proposed by this bill to improve record keeping in New South Wales is an increase to the penalty units from 50 to 75 and the period in which proceedings for an offence under section 21 of the State Records Act can be commenced from within two years to within three years to respond to the recommendations

made by the Independent Commission Against Corruption in its Operation Dasha report. This bill creates a new cultural institution for the people of New South Wales that focuses on our history and provides important improvements to record keeping in New South Wales. We have an opportunity to create an institution that makes our history accessible, captivating and engaging. The people of this State will be richer for it. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

CHILDREN'S GUARDIAN AMENDMENT BILL 2022

CHILD PROTECTION (WORKING WITH CHILDREN) AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Second Reading Speech

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Corrections) (10:30): I move:

That these bills be now read a second time.

I have the great privilege of introducing two bills that together will improve the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children in New South Wales. The Children's Guardian Amendment Bill 2022 enhances the role of the Office of the Children's Guardian as the child safe authority regulating an integrated child-protection framework supported by contemporary systems. The Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment Bill 2022 will implement key recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and secures New South Wales' position as a leader in child safe legislative and operational best practice.

The Children's Guardian Amendment Bill 2022 addresses reform in four key areas. First, designated agencies and adoption service providers will be brought within the scope of the Child Safe Scheme and certain child safe organisations will be required to comply with the codes of practice. Secondly, concepts of voluntary out-of-home care and registered agencies will be removed and replaced with "specialised substitute residential care" and related provisions. Thirdly, register provisions will be clarified and updated. Fourthly, the accreditation framework for the designated agencies and adoption service providers will be consolidated in the Act.

I will now describe each of the key reform areas. The Child Safe Scheme commenced on 1 February 2022. The scheme requires organisations in scope to implement the Child Safe Standards as recommended by the royal commission through their systems, policies and processes. The objective of the scheme is to prevent child abuse from occurring in organisations and improve responses when it does occur. Under the scheme the Office of the Children's Guardian has powers to monitor, investigate and enforce Child Safe Standards, informed by the risk profile and willingness of the organisations to be child safe. Designated agencies and adoption service providers were not included in the original scope of the Child Safe Scheme. That was to allow for targeted consultation related to expanding the scope of the scheme to those sectors while they continued to be regulated under the NSW Child Safe Standards for Permanent Care, which are broadly consistent with the Child Safe Standards.

In November 2021 the Office of the Children's Guardian embarked on that further consultation by releasing a consultation paper on the accreditation and monitoring framework for designated agencies and adoption service providers. I am advised by the Children's Guardian that there was overwhelming agreement by stakeholders that statutory out-of-home care and the adoption sectors should come within the scope of the Child Safe Scheme. There was strong support for a single set of standards. Those views were consistent with the feedback previously received on the exposure draft of the Children's Guardian Amendment (Child Safe Scheme) Bill 2021 in December 2020. Accordingly, an amendment to the definition of "child safe organisation" brings designated agencies and adoption service providers within the Child Safe Scheme.

Significantly, implementation of the Child Safe Standards will be mandatory for this sector as it is for others within the Child Safe Scheme. Underpinned by the consultation in 2020 and 2021, the amended definition of "child safe organisation" gives effect to the Government's acceptance in principle of the royal commission's recommendation regarding the scope of the Child Safe Scheme, which covered "child protection services, including out-of-home care". The 10 Child Safe Standards in section 8C of the Children's Guardian Act 2019 are principle based. Organisations have the flexibility to apply them to their specific context. The imperative of the standards is changing institutional culture as opposed to setting prescriptive rules that must be followed.

Organisations have the scope to implement the standards in ways that are meaningful and achievable for their context. In situations of increased risk to children, a more prescriptive approach is required. It is critical that our child safe arrangements respond to the vulnerability of children who are living outside the family home in settings provided by designated agencies, adoption service providers and entities providing specialised substitute residential care—the newly framed form of voluntary out-of-home care. Children in those arrangements may have experienced trauma or may be living with disability. They are particularly vulnerable, and the need for prescriptive

requirements for those organisational settings is compelling. This approach will be achieved through new section 8DA, which allows codes of practice to be prescribed by regulation.

Codes of practice will detail the mandatory prescriptive requirements for implementation of the Child Safe Standards. The Office of the Children's Guardian will continue consultation with the out-of-home care and adoption service sectors over the next 12 months to develop the content for the code of practice. Review of the NSW Child Safe Standards for Permanent Care will form a significant part of the code's development. Until then, the out-of-home care and adoption sectors will continue to be regulated under the criteria set out in the permanent care standards. I turn to the second key reform area: voluntary out-of-home care. The Government remains strongly committed to the arrangements that support children with disability who require accommodation outside the family home or respite care, with the consent of the parent or guardian.

In 2020-21, 830 children and young people accessed voluntary out-of-home care services, and 5,758 placements were recorded. Of the 830 children and young people, 741—or 89 per cent—had a disability. Voluntary out-of-home care agencies range from national organisations to small family businesses operating out of the owner's home. The current voluntary out-of-home care framework was developed in 2011 and is outdated and not fit for purpose. The framework is about the policies and procedures needed for registration. The current framework provides no assurance that the policies and procedures are being implemented and that child safety is being upheld.

Currently agencies providing voluntary out-of-home care operate under multiple regulatory frameworks, including two different regulatory frameworks administered by the Office of the Children's Guardian, the voluntary out-of-home care registration scheme and the Child Safe Scheme. I am advised that consultation in December 2021 indicated strong support in the voluntary out-of-home care sector to streamline the current system. Providers considered that streamlining the approach under the Child Safe Scheme could strengthen the focus of regulation on children's safety and placement needs. There was support for the continuation of mandatory prescriptive requirements and agreements that parents and carers should have a role in keeping organisations accountable to implement the Child Safe Standards.

The revised regulatory approach set out in the bill addresses the current deficiencies in the voluntary out-of-home care registration and monitoring scheme and proposes a fresh, streamlined and strengthened model. This approach is in line with years of research and the recommendations of the royal commission on best-practice regulation. The changes to the voluntary out-of-home care sector will lead to better regulatory outcomes in protecting our most vulnerable children and will enable parents and carers to continue to make choices about care for their children and young people. I will now outline the essential areas of the Government's voluntary out-of-home care reform.

Provisions in the Act relating to voluntary out-of-home care and registered agencies will be removed and, within the existing umbrella of substitute residential care, reframed. It will be classified as specialised substitute residential care, or SSRC for short. "Substitute residential care" is broadly defined in the Children's Guardian Act. It is care involving the provision of accommodation, together with food, care and other support, within New South Wales and for more than two nights. It is of a type ordinarily provided to children in a home environment by persons other than the child's parents or relatives. Examples of substitute residential care providers include organisations that provide supervised camps for two or more days and voluntary out-of-home care providers.

The bill contains a proposed amendment to the definition of "substitute residential care" to clarify that the care is provided in New South Wales for more than two nights in any period of seven days. This covers both consecutive and non-consecutive nights in a seven-day period. "Specialised substitute residential care" will be newly defined in the dictionary as "substitute residential care" for a child that is funded by the National Disability Insurance Scheme or provided for the purposes of respite services or behaviour support. Only providers of specialised substitute residential care will be subject to the mandatory prescriptive requirements in a code of practice. I must emphasise that there will be no diminution of safeguards or protections for these children. On the contrary, with strengthened monitoring, investigation and enforcement functions through the Child Safe Scheme, oversight of the sector will be enhanced.

Significantly, the Child Safe Scheme's focus on capability building and support will be a key feature underpinning the revised regulatory model. We know that education is critical in changing attitudes and cultures that may make children vulnerable to all forms of abuse, including sexual, physical, emotional, and ill treatment and neglect. The current voluntary out-of-home care registration process will be replaced. The twin pillars of the new regulatory model will be the code of practice, outlined in new section 8DA (2) (c), and the self-assessment tool, outlined in new section 8DA (4) and (5). The content of the code of practice for entities providing SSRC, intended to be prescribed in the Children's Guardian Regulation by 1 September 2022, will be similar to the statutory procedures for voluntary out-of-home care.

However, the code will be streamlined to focus on matters relating to child safety, particular needs such as behaviour management or physical restraint, and the Office of the Children's Guardian's regulatory role. Providers must comply with these detailed requirements to be considered as meeting the 10 Child Safe Standards. As with designated agencies and adoption service providers, failure to comply with a code of practice could invoke investigation and enforcement action. Certain requirements that applied to voluntary out-of-home care and registered agencies will be recast in new section 8ZA to apply to children in SSRC. Specifically, the 90-day supervision and 180-day case planning requirements will remain. New section 8ZC will provide for the nomination of a principal officer of an entity providing SSRC. The meaning of "principal officer" will be consistently applied across designated agencies, adoption service providers and SSRC providers.

As an additional oversight mechanism, new section 8ZB will place a requirement on the principal officer to notify the parents, the Children's Guardian and the Coroner if a child dies while in SSRC. This is consistent with what currently happens in statutory out-of-home care or supported out-of-home care. A consequential amendment will be made to the Coroner's Act to ensure that the Coroner has jurisdiction to investigate deaths of children in SSRC. The Coroner currently has jurisdiction over children in voluntary out-of-home care. A child who is the subject of an arrangement for SSRC will be a child in care for the purposes of the Official Community Visitor scheme. Section 151 will be extended to allow Official Community Visitors to share information relating to SSRC with the Children's Guardian. The register for children in voluntary out-of-home care will continue and be renamed the "specialised substitute residential care register".

I now briefly turn to the third key area of reform, the register provisions in the Children's Guardian Act. The amendments to sections 85 to 87 clarify and update existing requirements relating to registers. The clarified regulation-making powers for the carers register and specialised substitute residential care register will secure a seamless transition to the consolidated Children's Guardian Regulation by ensuring that information currently recorded on registers kept by the Children's Guardian can continue to be recorded. The regulation-making power in new section 85 (1C), combined with the addition of definitions of "residential care", "residential care provider" and "residential care worker" to the dictionary, will secure the necessary legislative transparency to support the new residential care workers register. Detailed provisions in relation to the residential care workers register are contained in the Children's Guardian Regulation 2022, which is due to commence on 18 July 2022.

I now turn to the consolidation of the accreditation framework for designated agencies and adoption service providers in the Children's Guardian Act. Since 2003 the regulatory landscape has become more complex, with significant reforms and reviews undertaken. Legislative drafting practices have also evolved. The majority of the proposed amendments in new schedules 3A and 3B reposition existing and long-established accreditation functions in the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012 and the Adoption Regulation 2015 in a remodelled, or contemporary, way. The policy position underpinning the exercise of these functions remains largely unchanged. The amendments either consolidate or clarify functions or they introduce new provisions that were considered by the sector in the consultation process.

I will now briefly outline some of the key aspects of the accreditation scheme. The two anchor points for the accreditation frameworks are sections 72 and 110A. Section 72 will be amended to provide that "designated agency" means an agency accredited by the Children's Guardian under schedule 3A. New section 110A will be inserted to provide that an accredited adoption service provider will mean an organisation or part of an organisation accredited by the Children's Guardian under schedule 3B. An agency, for the purposes of schedule 3A, will mean a government agency or part of a government agency or an organisation or part of an organisation. The organisation may be for profit or not for profit. There is no policy change in relation to this provision, as there was no definitive outcome, from consultations undertaken, indicating a need for change. An organisation, for the purposes of schedule 3B, will mean a charitable organisation within the meaning of the Adoption Act 2000 or part of a charitable organisation. There is no policy change in relation to this provision, aside from aligning the language with designated agencies around "part of an organisation".

Clause 3 in schedules 3A and 3B introduces the idea of "suitable to be accredited". This key phrase will be used in relation to a grant or refusal of accreditation and as a ground for cancelling or shortening the period of accreditation. An agency or organisation will not be suitable for accreditation if it is disqualified from being accredited, not wholly or substantially meeting the accreditation criteria, or if the Children's Guardian forms the opinion that the agency or organisation is not suitable to be a designated agency or accredited adoption service provider. The grounds for the Children's Guardian forming the opinion in clause 3 (2) are familiar, reflecting existing practice. They include failure to comply with relevant legislation—grouped as children's care legislation; failure to comply with a condition of accreditation; making a false or misleading statement; or another circumstance prescribed by the regulations.

The introduction of the concept of disqualification is new. If an accreditation is cancelled, the accreditation holder is disqualified from being accredited for two years after the cancellation takes effect. Cancellation of

accreditation is rare. It is only considered where within an organisation there have been critical failures that compromise the safety of children and where less intrusive regulatory responses have been exhausted or are inadequate. Restricting an agency from applying for accreditation for a period of two years is an appropriate safeguard.

Clause 4 in schedules 3A and 3B streamlines the current requirements for an application for accreditation. Clauses 5 and 17 in schedule 3A replicate the existing provisions in section 72 (3) to (6) related to withdrawal of an application for accreditation and surrender of a designated agency's accreditation. These provisions have been mirrored for adoption service providers in schedule 3B. Clause 6 in schedules 3A and 3B gives the Children's Guardian power to grant or refuse accreditation to an applicant. The clause provides for the exercise of discretionary power and the execution of mandatory power. The Children's Guardian may refuse to grant accreditation if the application for accreditation is noncompliant or on a ground prescribed by the regulations. The Children's Guardian must refuse to grant accreditation if the applicant is not suitable to be accredited. The exception to this is if the Children's Guardian has deferred her decision under clause 7.

Clauses 7 and 8 of schedules 3A and 3B set out a new, more transparent pathway for the Children's Guardian's deferral of a decision to grant or refuse accreditation to an applicant. The Children's Guardian will defer a determination, rather than refuse an application for accreditation, where an agency recognises that it is noncompliant with the accreditation criteria and has provided evidence in the form of an action plan that it is taking steps to correct the noncompliance and manage risk to children and young people. The Children's Guardian must be satisfied that the applicant will meet the accreditation criteria if the applicant implements the action plan—in other words, the steps the agency is taking to correct the noncompliance could reasonably be expected to result in the agency being substantially or wholly compliant with the accreditation criteria within the deferral period.

In the Children's Guardian's experience, most deferred decisions are resolved—meaning the accreditation is renewed or cancelled—within two years of deferral. Clause 7 introduces a new time limit on the deferral period. The Children's Guardian may defer a determination for only 12 months, with the possibility of an extension for a further 12 months. If a decision to grant or refuse accreditation is not made at the end of 24 months, the application is taken to have been refused. Including time limits for deferrals will ensure that agencies subject to a deferral have a clear understanding of the Children's Guardian's expectations and will ensure that agencies implement their action plans in a timely manner. Existing regulatory provisions around full and provisional accreditation have been retained. The accreditation periods, including the maximum period of accreditation, have been consolidated in clause 11. Clause 12 in schedules 3A and 3B reaffirms that an accreditation is subject to conditions prescribed by the Act or regulations, or conditions imposed by the Children's Guardian. There is no change in policy in relation to conditions of accreditation or their variation.

Clause 14 of schedule 3A and clause 15 of schedule 3B consolidate the current arrangements in relation to an agency being wholly or substantially compliant with the accreditation criteria. An agency that is accredited on the basis it is wholly compliant with the accreditation criteria has demonstrated all the practice requirements and activities under each of the 23 NSW Child Safe Standards for Permanent Care. An agency that is accredited on the basis that it is substantially compliant with the accreditation criteria has demonstrated all the practice requirements and activities under most of the 23 permanent care standards. A substantially compliant agency has partially demonstrated practice and activities under the remaining permanent care standards and demonstrates that it is taking reasonable steps to be wholly compliant with each of the permanent care standards within 12 months.

In determining to accredit an agency on the basis of substantial compliance, the Children's Guardian will consider whether the agency could reasonably be expected to be wholly compliant within 12 months. Accrediting an agency based on substantial compliance provides for a more flexible and nuanced approach to regulating the out-of-home care sector. It ensures children are not moved and displaced unnecessarily, causing instability in their placements, when the Children's Guardian is reasonably confident that the agency will be wholly compliant with close monitoring. An agency may have made recent changes to a practice area, and the Office of the Children's Guardian needs to be confident that the changes are sustainable before wholly accrediting them.

Clause 16 of schedule 3A and clause 17 of schedule 3B provide for the limited circumstances in which the Children's Guardian may transfer an agency's accreditation. This is different from the existing parameters for transfer, which do not limit the circumstances for transfer. An accredited agency might undergo a restructure and establish the statutory out-of-home care program as a separate entity. The agency's staff, policies, procedures and practices remain unchanged, and there is little to no impact on the day-to-day services provided to children and young people. Transfer of an accreditation may also be appropriate in circumstances where two accredited organisations merge to create a third agency.

Clause 18 of schedule 3A and clause 19 of schedule 3B set out the grounds for cancelling or shortening the period of accreditation. The power to suspend an agency's accreditation has been removed because it is not an effective response to noncompliance with the standards for permanent care or where an agency has failed in its

duties to children and young people. The purpose of suspension is to ensure that an agency does not deliver services to children and young people while it corrects noncompliance or addresses failures to comply with conditions or other obligations. However, at the conclusion of the suspension period, as the agency has not been delivering services to children and young people, the Children's Guardian will have little evidence to assess whether the agency can safely resume delivering services.

On that basis, the most effective responses are to either shorten the agency's accreditation or cancel the agency's accreditation. Non-suitability to be accredited and an accreditation being granted in error are the grounds for cancelling or shortening the period of accreditation. A regulation-making provision has been included. This streamlines the current list of circumstances set out in the regulations. Aside from these key reform areas, the Children's Guardian Amendment Bill 2022 makes some miscellaneous amendments to the Children's Guardian Act primarily to clarify or consolidate existing provisions.

I turn now to the amendments in the Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment Bill 2022. The bill makes key amendments to the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 to implement royal commission recommendations. The bill also makes a number of miscellaneous amendments to enhance operational efficiency and secure swift, effective decisions to promote the safety of children. In Australia, each State and Territory has its own scheme for conducting background checks for people seeking to engage in child-related work. The royal commission identified, amongst other things, that disparate legislative and administrative worker checking schemes across Australian jurisdictions facilitated forum shopping by perpetrators. To address this, the royal commission recommended nationally consistent worker checking schemes and robust, child-focused information sharing. In particular, the royal commission recommended a national model for Working with Children Checks, or WWCC, through consistent standards and a centralised database to facilitate cross-border information sharing.

New South Wales has worked with the Commonwealth and other States and Territories to settle the National Standards for Working with Children Checks and agree on an approach to the Working with Children Check National Reference System, known as the NRS or the national database. The Council of Attorneys-General has endorsed the national standards. The NRS is a centralised system established by the Commonwealth and operated by the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission. It is accessible to jurisdictions to record Working with Children Check decisions. New South Wales' participation in the NRS will ensure that New South Wales has access to up-to-date information about certain Working with Children Check clearance decisions made about an applicant or clearance holder by agencies undertaking working with children checking functions in other Australian jurisdictions. The bill makes amendments to facilitate and implement this important information-sharing reform via the NRS.

The bill takes a step further by also implementing national standard 11 of the National Standards for Working with Children Checks endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments. The implementation of that standard ensures that the Office of the Children's Guardian is apprised of relevant risk information not only within but also outside Australia. As the leader in Working with Children Check schemes, New South Wales has always taken the initiative to secure best practice. Whilst the New South Wales scheme is largely consistent with the standards agreed by all Australian jurisdictions, the Government remains committed to child-focused best practice and continuous improvement. The provisions of the bill reflect that commitment.

I now turn to the provisions of the Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment Bill 2022. Proposed new section 36D secures New South Wales' participation in the NRS by requiring the Children's Guardian to record adverse Working with Children Check decisions, known as negative notices, on the NRS. Once a negative notice is recorded on the NRS, it can be accessed and used by screening agencies in participating Australian jurisdictions to inform Working with Children Check decisions. In New South Wales, new clause 2B of schedule 1 will ensure that a negative notice recorded against an applicant by a participating interstate agency will trigger a risk assessment of an applicant or clearance holder. The bill safeguards against misuse of the NRS by requiring the Children's Guardian to record any change in status of a negative notice and notify participating WWCC jurisdictions.

To facilitate information exchange triggered by negative notices recorded on the NRS, proposed new section 36A sets clear and robust authority to share information. New section 36A achieves this by permitting the Children's Guardian to exchange a broad range of Working with Children Check information with interstate screening agencies. The amendment addresses existing legislative barriers inhibiting information exchange by broadening the scope of information that can be shared with other Australian States and Territories and eliminating procedural complexity. Under new section 36A, the Office of the Children's Guardian can exchange information within, and outside of, information recorded on the NRS to support timely and appropriate assessments of applicants and clearance holders. Timely and appropriate identification of information relating to an applicant's or clearance holder's risk to the safety of children relies upon access to, and assessment of, all relevant criminal

history information. Currently, the Office of the Children's Guardian's access to criminal history information is limited to offending that has occurred, or is alleged to have occurred, within Australia.

The bill addresses that gap by ensuring that the Office of the Children's Guardian can identify safety risks arising from relevant international criminal offending. New section 36C imposes a duty on applicants to notify the Children's Guardian of any proceedings commenced, findings made or convictions recorded in relation to a prescribed criminal offence outside Australia. The amendment prescribes criminal offences equivalent to offences listed in schedules 1 or 2 to the Act or any other equivalent offences prescribed by the regulations. To ensure compliance with this duty, proposed new section 36C provides that failure to notify the Children's Guardian, without reasonable excuse attracts a maximum penalty of five penalty units. The bill also makes several miscellaneous amendments to support the NRS, clarify existing provisions, and secure the efficient and effective administration of the Working with Children Check scheme.

I note that the bill has passed the other place with a minor amendment proposed by the Animal Justice Party—an amendment the Government was happy to support. Section 547E of the Crimes Act 1900 will be included in schedule 2 to the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act as a disqualifying, or automatic barring, offence. Section 547E makes production, dissemination and possession of bestiality or animal crush material an offence. This Government continues to be a national pacesetter in ensuring and promoting the quality of child safe standards. The regulation of the organisations in whose care children are placed, for whatever reasons, is a critical element in a total child protection framework. Equally significant is the priority to educate organisations about their responsibilities and monitor organisations to achieve ongoing child-centred culture. Our vision is to move towards sector-wide cultural change to ensure safe places for children.

These two bills together continue to ensure that the New South Wales child safe framework is robust, fit for purpose, integrated and consistent with recommendations from the royal commission. I commend the bills to the House.

Second Reading Debate

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (11:08): As shadow Minister for Family and Community Services, I lead for the Labor Opposition in debate on the Children's Guardian Amendment Bill 2022 and the Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment Bill 2022. I thank my colleague and Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, the Hon. Penny Sharpe, for placing on record Labor's position on the bills in the other place. Once again I confirm that Labor will not oppose the bills as amended in the other place. The bills give effect to recommendations arising from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Over 16,000 individuals contacted the royal commission.

The commission heard more than 8,000 personal stories in private sessions. Over 1,000 survivors provided a written account of their experience. It also heard from parents, spouses and siblings about the abuse of their relatives, many of whom had died, sometimes by suicide. The commission found that thousands of children had been sexually abused in many institutions in Australia—horrific situations where children were failed by the very institutions that were meant to protect them. It is as a result of the incredible courage and determination of victims, survivors and families who told their horrific stories, that important recommendations were made. The two bills arise from those recommendations and reflect this Government's responsibility to implement its urgent and much-needed reforms to protect children from harm. The Office of the Children's Guardian also undertook significant and extensive consultation with the sector to guide the changes. I thank the Children's Guardian and her staff for doing so.

The Children's Guardian Amendment Bill will expand the number of organisations covered by the Child Safe Standards. The relatively new Child Safe Scheme covers a number of organisations working in the child protection space. That list will be expanded to include statutory out-of-home care and adoption providers, creating a single set of standards for those organisations. I understand those changes are welcomed by the sector. The changes will also allow the Office of the Children's Guardian to provide the accreditation for certain New South Wales Government agencies and adoption service providers. When the State removes children from their parents on the grounds that they are not safe at home and in need of protection, it is clearly then the responsibility of the Government to ensure that those children are put in a safer place. The expansion of the Child Safe Scheme and the strengthening of the accreditation system is a step in the right direction.

The bill also removes the concept of voluntary out-of-home care and replaces it with specialised substitute residential care. Voluntary out-of-home care has been an important part of caring for children with complex needs and disabilities. While it contains the language of out-of-home care, this system is used when there are no concerns about the welfare of the child involved. The system is distinct from the statutory out-of-home care system. Voluntary out-of-home care providers in New South Wales have been accredited by the Office of the Children's Guardian. Those providers offer both short-term and long-term accommodation, with services such as respite care

through to ongoing residential care. Voluntary out-of-home care is a concept that predates the National Disability Insurance Scheme. I recall that during the rollout of the NDIS there were issues with the demarcation of "out-of-home care". It was labelled a State issue, whereas the reality was that those services were being delivered as specialist residential care for children with complex needs and disabilities.

My office was involved in a handful of advocacy cases in which the agency formerly known as Ageing, Disability and Home Care NSW and the National Disability Insurance Agency were arguing about who was responsible for funding those residential services. Stuck in the middle were families who were just trying to get care for their children with profound disabilities. The benefit of voluntary out-of-home care prior to the NDIS was that it allowed a family to retain custody of its children when they entered New South Wales government-funded residential care. This concept was important for both the parents and the children, and it allowed them to continue their parenting responsibilities and role. During those demarcation disputes, it was suggested to some parents that they relinquish custody of their children to the State, which would trigger a statutory out-of-home care process and the State would be responsible for ongoing funding of the care. That suggestion was horrific and unacceptable and I am pleased, alongside parents, that the situation was ultimately resolved. The strengthening and streamlining of the regulatory requirements of those services as set out in the bill are also welcome.

The other bill we are considering is the Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment Bill 2022. Working with Children Checks are an important tool in protecting children from harm. Many workplaces, including the New South Wales Parliament, undertake those checks as part of a suite of measures to reduce the risk of harm to children. In its 2015 report, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse called on State and Commonwealth governments to adopt nationwide standards for Working with Children Checks and implement a national database of relevant offences that would be captured by those checks. It is an unfortunate legacy of our Federation structure that for many decades State governments were not effective in sharing criminal record history across jurisdictions. In some instances that has allowed perpetrators to move between States to evade detection and continue their offending behaviour.

The Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment Bill 2022 implements a 2019 agreement from the Council of Australian Governments to implement a national model for a Working with Children Check framework. The bill also makes a number of procedural changes or clarifications about the grounds on which an application can be terminated, the offences that trigger a cause for concern, or the data that can be shared with the national database. Collectively, those changes act to enhance and clarify the operation of the Working with Children Check scheme, with the ultimate goal of keeping children in New South Wales safe. But there is still much more to do. That has been brought into sharp focus this week by the ABC's reports into the child protection scheme, which have revealed what many people have known for many years—that the child protection scheme is broken, and that it is failing too many vulnerable children and families.

It continues to be the case in New South Wales that only 30 per cent of children being reported as at risk of significant harm are being seen by a caseworker. That tragic figure has not changed in a decade, yet the number of reports of children being at risk of significant harm has doubled in a decade. Those are horrifying statistics. Child protection workers are breaking under the pressure and they know that vulnerable children's lives are likely to get worse while cost-of-living pressures on families rise. The bills are a small step towards keeping vulnerable children in New South Wales safer; however, I urge the Government to do much more to protect vulnerable children in New South Wales. I commend the bills to the House.

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (11:16): I speak in support of the Children's Guardian Amendment Bill 2022 and the Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment Bill 2022. The Committee on Children and Young People has statutory oversight of the Office of the Children's Guardian, and in my capacity as chair of that committee I am pleased that the bills demonstrate the Government's commitment to robust, integrated regulation and continuous improvement. In November 2019 the New South Wales Parliament passed the Children's Guardian Act. The commencement of that Act on 1 May 2020 was a significant milestone in the development of an integrated child safe framework in New South Wales. That Act brought together under one Act all the functions of the Children's Guardian.

In November 2021 the New South Wales Parliament passed the Children's Guardian Amendment (Child Safe Scheme) Act 2021. The reforms in that Act built on the Government's commitment to keep children safe in organisations and strengthen oversight to hold organisations to account for their child safe practices. Significantly, the Act brought together the vision of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse to have the same oversight body responsible for a regulatory Child Safe Scheme, the Reportable Conduct Scheme and the Working with Children Check. I commend the Minister for bringing forward a bill that integrates the existing accreditation scheme in the Children's Guardian Act. To a significant extent the bill consolidates existing provisions related to the accreditation of designated agencies and adoption service providers.

As the Minister said, the majority of the proposed amendments in new schedules 3A and 3B reposition existing and long-established accreditation functions in the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012 and Adoption Regulation 2015 in a remodelled or contemporary way. The language has been modernised. The drafting is contemporary. The policy underpinning the provisions remains largely unchanged. To a significant extent, the bill also clarifies existing provisions and practices related to the Children's Guardian's accreditation functions. Without being exhaustive, it clarifies the Children's Guardian's functions in relation to designated agencies and adoption service providers as accreditation, monitoring and investigative functions; the grounds on which the Children's Guardian may find that an agency is not suitable to be accredited; the periods that an accreditation may be granted; and the grounds on which the Children's Guardian may shorten or cancel accreditation.

The bill gives effect to some new provisions that enhance existing powers. The New South Wales accreditation scheme for statutory out-of-home care providers commenced in July 2003. In January 2009 the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2000 was amended to allow the Children's Guardian to defer determining a designated agency's application for renewal of an accreditation. When the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012 commenced in August 2012, the Children's Guardian's power to defer a determination of an application to renew accreditation was preserved. In the intervening 10 years, the Office of the Children's Guardian's processes and practices have been refined. The thinking around deferral decisions has evolved and the need for clearer parameters to the Children's Guardian's decision-making has become apparent.

The bill reaffirms the Children's Guardian's power to defer a decision to grant or refuse accreditation. The following new elements have been added to the deferral process: that there are limited circumstances in which the Children's Guardian may defer a decision to grant or refuse accreditation; that a deferral period may be for up to 12 months; that more than one deferral may occur, but the total period of the deferrals must not be more than 24 months; that agencies must submit an action plan; and, where a decision has been deferred for 24 months and no decision has been made, that the application is automatically refused. The bill makes less opaque the distinction between the circumstances in which an agency is deferred and the circumstances in which it is refused. An agency may be deferred where it is already taking steps to correct noncompliance and manage risks to children. I congratulate the Office of the Children's Guardian on its work and the processes of continuous improvement that have led to this bill being presented to Parliament.

The amendments to the Children's Guardian Act 2019 will strengthen and streamline the guardian's regulatory role across the following three categories of service providers: statutory out-of-home care, adoption services, and voluntary out-of-home care—commonly known for providing respite services to NDIS-eligible children and young people. A primary highlight of the proposed amendments is to bring these providers consistently within the scope of the Child Safe Scheme. The proposed amendments will remove voluntary out-of-home care as a standalone form of care in the Children's Guardian Act, meaning it will also be regulated under the Child Safe Scheme, consistent with other child safe organisations. It will be renamed "specialised substitute residential care". A code of practice under the Child Safe Scheme will set out more prescriptive requirements for those agencies to comply with in recognition of the fact that they provide services to vulnerable children.

In October 2019 Cabinet approved amendments to the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 to implement the National Reference System, which enables sharing of information between jurisdictions about people who should not work with children through a national database, consistent with recommendations from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Other jurisdictions such as Western Australia, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania have already introduced corresponding legislation. Queensland has a bill currently before Parliament. The Children's Guardian is an independent statutory authority whose functions include administering the Working with Children Check scheme, the Reportable Conduct Scheme and the Child Safe Scheme, which requires a broad range of child-related organisations in New South Wales to implement the Child Safe Standards recommended by the royal commission into child sexual abuse, monitoring and accrediting non-government and government service providers of statutory out-of-home care and adoption services, and registering and monitoring voluntary out-of-home care providers.

The current provisions in the care and adoption regulations will cease to have effect on 1 September 2022. In the absence of the amendments proposed in the bill, the guardian will have insufficient powers to undertake their accreditation functions. The proposed amendments to the accreditation scheme are not controversial. The Office of the Children's Guardian has consulted with the sector on all of them. The proposals to the voluntary out-of-home care sector were also consulted on and amendments have been made to accommodate comments provided by the sector. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (11:25): I speak in debate on the Children's Guardian Amendment Bill 2022 and the Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment Bill 2022. As stated by the shadow Minister in her contribution, the legislation is non-controversial. It arises from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and a consultation paper from the Office of the Children's Guardian. As the shadow Minister so articulately outlined the technical details of the bill, I will not go into those, but I do agree with her statements regarding the failure of the child protection scheme. We know that that is happening. That is why I am speaking today. While the Government pats itself on the back about how quickly it has moved on this minor piece of child protection reform, I note that the final report was actually delivered to the Governor-General in 2017.

What really concerns me is that, despite the hard work of all the workers at the Department of Communities and Justice [DCJ] and the affiliated agencies that provide assistance and funding to families who are struggling, the current chronic underfunding environment means that only 30 per cent of children at risk of serious harm are assessed. I am very concerned at the delay on this bill but it is to be expected, with the lack of resources and support for children living in unsafe situations across the State, whether they are in out-of-home care or they are indeed living with parents.

Last week I was shocked to a level I never believed possible in my time in this place when I heard of a case of three children. I can probably paint the House a picture of it when I say that it was similar to the Turpin family case in the United States that we heard about some years ago, where the children had had no contact with any social welfare services for some 20 years. In this case, three children had no contact with schools, the Department of Education, the Department of Social Services or welfare for the first 11, nine and six years of their lives. The oldest child had some initial vaccinations and two early surgeries, which were concerning, but thereafter never engaged with the health system. The two younger children never had any engagement with the health system—no vaccinations, no early childhood checks, nothing. Since they were found, two of the children have been engaged with NDIS. That concerns me.

They had been living with their mother until they were evicted from their rental property and are now living with their grandparents and mother in what has been described to me as extreme squalor. They were found only in January 2020. Given the constraints that COVID has put on child protection services in terms of visiting homes over the last 2½ years, thank God they were found at that time. They were identified as a result of a community report. I thank the member of the community who raised their concerns with child protection officers and I thank those child protection officers for looking for and finding the children. They started school in years 5, 3 and 1 and their educational outcomes are so challenging, as members can imagine.

That should be the end of that story—that they are back and engaged with all the services that they need, and everything is going hunky-dory. But I understand that in the past six months, there have been 20 reports to child protection from various sources, including service providers and family members. The family is not engaging with all the services they are supposed to be engaging with, and they have an 80 per cent school attendance rate—aside from COVID lockdown days, when they do not attend. Of the good days when they can attend, it has been 80 per cent.

People who care about those children have been reaching out to DCJ and other agencies, which have formally withdrawn support from the family on the basis that the children do not meet the threshold for being at risk of serious harm. Those people, who care so much and so very deeply for those children that they have done incredible things to be there for them, have been told that they are a protective factor. Their presence in the children's lives therefore means that Family and Community Services or DCJ can withdraw, even though they have, themselves, no power under legislation to really offer and deliver safety plans to keep the children safe.

Members in this place will know of my strong advocacy against out-of-home care for children where families can be assisted to quickly be safe, loving and functional homes again. But under this Government, it is just not happening: It is not happening in out-of-home care and it is not happening in in-home care. It is not enough just to make regulations, change the rules, change the names of the agencies and give providers more oversight if we are not actually providing the resources to the people who need to do the work on the front line of child protection.

Of the children at risk of serious harm, 30 per cent are getting assessed. When a report comes in from the community, what happens if those kids fall into the category of the 70 per cent? I have reached out to the Minister, and that is why I chose to speak today. I do not want to go into the details of this family any more, because I do not particularly want to identify them, but I want to get the Minister to actually engage with this issue. I am astounded that no Minister and no advisers are in the Chamber to listen to what might be said in this second reading debate.

Mr David Elliott: The advisers are here.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: I acknowledge they are there, my apologies. But I hope that they will take this back to the Minister, because I reached out to the Minister for an urgent briefing and intervention last week for the safety of those children. I understand it is a busy week with legislation and all that sort of thing, but those children are at serious risk. The allegations that I have heard, which I have put to the Minister, are very serious and my calls for help for them have fallen on deaf ears. To put this in perspective, three children are struggling every day and people who want to help them are being told that they are the barrier to them getting the help they need. The Government has withdrawn any oversight. When I raise it with the Minister, she does not have time to talk about it, look at an intervention, get back to me, make a phone call or meet with me while we are here in Parliament together. What else do those people have to do to get those children to safety?

As a community, we had a chance to change those children's lives in February 2020. From what I have been told there has been some change, which is good. The agencies and service and education providers that are working with them are doing their best, but it is not enough. Two and a half years later there are ongoing allegations of sexual, physical and emotional abuse and a number of indicators of severe post-traumatic stress disorder, which are impacting on those children's learning, on their lives and on their capacity to grow in the future.

In 2015 a 12-year-old girl in my electorate was abused on so many levels, repeatedly, until she was killed by her stepfather after minimal intervention by DCJ or any other agencies. I have raised that with the Minister. We are not doing enough; we need more resources. I begged the Minister to meet with me in relation to this, and she has failed to do so. If this Government cannot provide the resources that are needed to protect children in their own homes and ensure that every child who needs an assessment of risk of serious harm is assessed then how can we expect, however they change the rules and regulations, that we can care for those who are in out-of-home care? We just talked in the last sitting week of this Parliament about how we have failed Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children in out-of-home care for decades and generations. If we cannot get it right in just one or two individual cases, how can we get it right for everyone else?

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (11:34): I support the Children's Guardian Amendment Bill 2022 and cognate Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment Bill. As we all know, the safety of our children is paramount. The cognate bills are designed to drive a child safe framework that is strong, sustainable, suitable, sensitive and very effective. This, of course, is such an important reform for our State. I focus on the Children's Guardian Amendment Bill. The bill finalises important reforms, bringing organisations that provide services to our most vulnerable children and young people into the Child Safe Scheme. It creates a shared understanding across all child-related sectors about what it means to be child safe. It is an integrated, better and more modern way forward.

The New South Wales Child Safe Scheme implements the recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse that child-related organisations should implement the 10 Child Safe Standards. The goal of the scheme is to prevent child abuse from occurring in organisations and to enhance institutional responses to abuse when it does occur. The Child Safe Standards are based on the royal commission's extensive research and consultation as well as its findings from private sessions and public hearings. In June 2018 the New South Wales Government supported the Child Safe Standards as the framework to create child safe organisations and committed to further consultation to develop an oversight scheme for the standards. The Office of the Children's Guardian has undertaken extensive consultation with child-related sectors in New South Wales to design an oversight scheme that encourages organisations to develop child safe cultures, minimise regulatory burden on agencies and, most importantly, promote the safety of children and young people.

In 2020 and 2021 the Office of the Children's Guardian undertook public consultation on the exposure draft of the Child Safe Scheme to further refine the regulatory scheme and ensure that the intent of the scheme could be fully realised. Those consultations confirmed that child-related organisations and community groups continue to support the Child Safe Scheme and recognise that the Child Safe Standards provide a strong framework for creating child safe organisations. The bill is thus the culmination of a three-year consultation period by the Office of the Children's Guardian. Public consultation in late 2021 indicated broad support for bringing out-of-home care and adoption providers into the Child Safe Scheme. Stakeholders have told the Office of the Children's Guardian that the Child Safe Scheme would promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people in out-of-home care; promote adoption arrangements; and reduce regulatory burden on organisations.

Importantly, the Child Safe Standards are principle based and allow organisations to implement them in a way that reflects the particular needs of the children and young people whom they serve. The bill provides for codes of practice to be developed for organisations providing services to children and young people in out-of-home care, specialised substitute residential care or adoption arrangements. That will ensure that the needs

of vulnerable children continue to be met within the Child Safe Scheme. The Office of the Children's Guardian has committed to further consultation with those sectors to develop codes of practice.

The Office of the Children's Guardian has considered feedback provided by those sectors within the Child Safe Scheme and has carefully balanced fidelity to the royal commission's vision regarding a child safe regulatory scheme with the need to ensure that organisations can continue to be flexible, responsive and innovative in the way they deliver services to children and young people. Providing for sector-specific codes of practice will allow organisations to translate the Child Safe Standards into their particular practice context. The long and extensive consultation process has provided an important opportunity for discussion in a community context about what is expected of organisations delivering services to children and young people.

My colleague the Hon. Taylor Martin outlined well in the second reading speech in the other place the extensive background and consultation work conducted. I recognise his contribution and that of the Minister, the Hon. Natasha Maclaren-Jones. In November 2021 the Office of the Children's Guardian released a summary of the results of its consultation on the accreditation and monitoring framework for designated agencies and adoption service providers. There was overwhelming strong agreement by stakeholders that the statutory out-of-home care and adoption sectors should come within the scope of the Child Safe Scheme. Understandably, there was strong support for a single set of standards. That feedback was consistent with the feedback previously received on the exposure draft of the Children's Guardian Amendment (Child Safe Scheme) Bill 2021 in December 2020. Vital, valuable, extensive, deep and meaningful consultation underpins and guides these reforms in what we all understand is a very significant and sensitive area of public policy.

Beyond the extensive consultation that has taken place in the past three years, I am confident there will ongoing discussion of this topic. There is always more to discuss and do. As the Office of the Children's Guardian continues to support child-related organisations and hold them to account in their efforts to be child safe, I am sure that those discussions will continue. The safety of our children is paramount. That is why the many elements of the Children's Guardian Amendment Bill 2022—I will outline a few of them—are so important, and why it is timely that this gets done. Among other things, the bill provides for codes of practice to ensure certain child safe organisations comply with the Child Safe Standards, provides for the nomination of a principal officer of certain child safe organisations, removes the concepts of voluntary out-of-home care and registered agencies, and replaces the concept of voluntary out-of-home care with specialised substitute residential care.

The bill also updates provisions relating to registers to be kept by the Children's Guardian and updates the functions of the Children's Guardian and authorised persons. The bill includes adoption service providers and entities providing specialised substitute residential care as schedule 1 entities, provides for the accreditation of designated agencies and adoption service providers, serves to update certain definitions, and includes savings and transitional provisions. The bill also consequentially amends a number of other Acts, which I will not list now. The bill does a lot and so it is understandable, right and reasonable that it has taken some time to be brought to the House. I note the comments of those opposite, but it is important to go about this thoroughly, sensitively and, ultimately, effectively. Of course, we in this place are all on common ground when it comes to recognising how precious children are and that the safety of all children across New South Wales is absolutely paramount. The bills will help to ensure that the organisations trusted to care for our children are well regulated and can better serve the essential task of keeping our children safe. I commend the bills to the House.

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (11:44): I speak in support of the Children's Guardian Amendment Bill 2022 and the Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment Bill 2022. Following the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, the bills expand the Office of the Children's Guardian's capabilities as a child safety authority. I thank my colleague the Hon. Taylor Martin for introducing these two bills in the other place. The bills go a long way to protecting our youngest and most vulnerable citizens from abuse. The Children's Guardian Amendment Bill 2022 reforms four key areas in implementing Child Safe Standards. First, designated agencies and adoption service providers will become part of the Child Safe Scheme's scope and mandate certain organisations to follow the codes of practice. Secondly, legislation surrounding voluntary out-of-home care and registered agencies will be streamlined by removing both terms and replacing them with "specialised substitute residential care". Thirdly, registered providers will be updated. Fourthly, the accreditation framework for agency providers will be consolidated.

Since the Child Safe Scheme's commencement on 1 February 2022, organisations in the scope of the scheme must implement the Child Safe Standards recommended by the royal commission. That aims to prevent child abuse from occurring in organisations and to improve responses if it does occur. The Office of the Children's Guardian is able to monitor, investigate and enforce Child Safe Standards. Designated agencies and adoption service providers were not included in the original scope of the Child Safe Scheme. Instead, they continued to be regulated under the NSW Child Safe Standards for Permanent Care while targeted consultation about expanding

the scope to these sectors occurred. There was overwhelming agreement among stakeholders that out-of-home care and adoption sectors should come under the Child Safe Scheme and be subject to a single set of standards.

Organisations can flexibly apply the principle-based 10 Child Safe Standards, but in riskier situations prescriptive rules need to be applied. Children living outside the family home and in arrangements provided by designated agencies, adoption service providers and specialised substitute residential care are especially vulnerable. They often live with disability or have experienced trauma. In those settings, organisations will be required to comply with regulation-prescribed codes of practice. I turn to the second key area, voluntary out-of-home care. Agencies that provide arrangements that support children—often those living with disability—who require accommodation outside their family home or respite care, with the consent of their guardian, are varied and currently operate under multiple, outdated and unfit regulatory frameworks. Two of those frameworks are administered by the Office of the Children's Guardian: the voluntary out-of-home care registration scheme and the Child Safe Scheme. There is strong support to streamline the system and strengthen focus on children's safety.

The reformed model set out in the bill is aligned with years of research and the recommendations of the royal commission on best practices. Voluntary out-of-home care and registered agencies will be reframed under the substitute residential care umbrella as specialised substitute residential care [SSRC]. Specialised substitute residential care is defined as substitute residential care—that is, provision of accommodation together with food, care and other support within New South Wales—for more than two nights in a home environment by people other than the children's family, provided to a child who is funded by the National Disability Insurance Scheme or provided for the purposes of respite services or behaviour support.

Providers of SSRC will be subject to mandatory prescriptive requirements. The current registration process for voluntary out-of-home care will be replaced with the code of practice and a self-assessment tool. The code of practice is intended to be prescribed in the Children's Guardian Regulation 2022 by 1 September 2022. An entity providing SSRC will have to nominate a principal officer, who is required to notify the parents, Children's Guardian and the Coroner if a child dies while in SSRC. Consequentially, the Coroners Act 2009 will be amended to ensure the Coroner can investigate deaths of children in SSRC, as the Coroner does for children in voluntary out-of-home care.

I briefly turn to the third key area of reform, which is the register provisions in the Children's Guardian Act 2019. The amendments clarify and update existing register requirements. The clarified regulatory powers will enable a seamless transition to the Children's Guardian Regulation by ensuring that information on registers kept by the Children's Guardian can continue being recorded. Detailed provisions concerning the residential care workers register are contained in the Children's Guardian Regulation 2022 and are due to commence on 18 July 2022.

I turn to the fourth key area of reform, which is the consolidated accreditation framework for organisations in the Children's Guardian Act. The bill introduces two new ideas: "suitable to be accredited" and disqualification. If an agency or organisation is disqualified from being accredited, does not wholly meet criteria, or in the opinion of the Children's Guardian is not suitable to be a designated agency or accredited adoption service provider—due to failure to comply with children's care legislation or making false or misleading statements—it is considered not suitable for accreditation. A disqualification occurs when accreditation is cancelled. The accreditation holder is disqualified from being accredited for two years. That measure is to be rare and only considered when critical failures that compromise the safety of children have not been alleviated by less intrusive responses.

A new, more transparent pathway is provided for the Children's Guardian to defer a decision to grant or refuse an application for accreditation. If the applicant recognises that it is noncompliant with the accreditation criteria and has provided an action plan to take steps to correct the noncompliance and manage risk to children and youth, the Children's Guardian can defer a determination rather than outright refuse accreditation. [*Extension of time*]

To grant a deferral, the Children's Guardian must be convinced that the applicant will meet the accreditation criteria when its action plan is implemented within the deferral period. A determination may only be deferred for 12 months, but a 12-month extension is possible. If no decision has been reached after 24 months, the application is considered to have been refused. Most applications are rejected or approved within 24 months. The Children's Guardian may also transfer an agency's accreditation. If an agency undergoes restructuring whereby its statutory out-of-home care program is undertaken by a separate entity, the agency's accreditation can be transferred to that entity. The agency staff, policies, procedures and practices must remain unchanged and there must be little to no impact on the day-to-day services provided to youth. Accreditation may also be transferred if two accredited organisations merge to create a third agency.

The Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment Bill 2022 makes key amendments to the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 to implement royal commission recommendations and miscellaneous administrative amendments. In Australia, each State and Territory has its own processes for conducting background checks for people wishing to work with children. The royal commission identified that the disparity between the different schemes allowed predators to forum shop. The royal commission recommended nationally consistent worker-checking schemes and child-focused information sharing. In particular, a national model for the Working With Children Check [WWCC] is to have consistent standards and a centralised database to facilitate interstate information sharing.

New South Wales has worked with the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions to come up with the National Standards for Working with Children Checks and agree on a Working with Children Check National Reference System, known as the NRS or national database. It is a centralised system established by the Commonwealth and operated by the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission to record Working With Children Check decisions. New South Wales will ensure that information about certain Working With Children Check decisions made about an applicant is updated. The Children's Guardian is required to record adverse Working With Children Check decisions, or negative notices, on the NRS. That information can be accessed and used by agencies in Australian jurisdictions to inform Working With Children Check decisions.

The bill goes further to ensure the Office of the Children's Guardian is privy to all risk information, both within and outside Australia. Applicants are obligated to notify the Children's Guardian of any prescribed criminal offences outside Australia. Failure to notify the Children's Guardian without reasonable excuse can be punished with a maximum of five penalty units. This Government continues to be a national pacesetter in quality child safe practices. The regulation of organisations where children are placed in care is critical. Educating organisations about their responsibilities and monitoring to achieve a robust child safe culture is a vital priority. These two bills continue our vision of making New South Wales the best place to raise a child. I commend the bills to the House.

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Corrections) (11:54): In reply: I thank the following members for their contributions to debate on the Children's Guardian Amendment Bill 2022 and the Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment Bill 2022: the member for Campbelltown, the member for Port Stephens, the member for Willoughby, the member for Maitland and the member for Mulgoa. For the most part I appreciate their considered debate of the issues. I note that the bills have bipartisan support.

The Children's Guardian Amendment Bill will ensure that the accreditation scheme for designated agencies and adoption service providers reflects contemporary service provision and is in line with modern legislative drafting; streamline the current voluntary out-of-home care regulatory framework under the Child Safe Scheme; further implement the research and recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse relating to the scope and best-practice regulation; and build upon the reviews of the consultations conducted by the Office of the Children's Guardian and the various principal functions.

The Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment Bill will secure timely and appropriate cross-jurisdictional information exchange by ensuring that the Children's Guardian can access, use and disclose all relevant risk information; facilitate a culture of child safe information sharing by ensuring alignment with the National Standards for Working With Children Checks; and clarify and strengthen administration of the Working With Children Check scheme by the Children's Guardian. I commend the bills to the House.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The question is that these bills be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Dr GEOFF LEE: I move:

That these bills be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

DISABILITY INCLUSION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Second Reading Speech

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Corrections) (11:57): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Disability Inclusion Amendment Bill 2022 to this Chamber. The bill implements the recommendations made in the report *Statutory review of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014*, which was tabled in Parliament on 20 November 2020. The bill makes two key changes to the Disability Inclusion

Act 2014. It ensures that the disability inclusion plans of the State and of public authorities are regularly reviewed, remade and made accessible to people with disability. It also repeals provisions that are obsolete following full implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, commonly known as the NDIS, in New South Wales. The Disability Inclusion Act, which was introduced in 2014, reflects contemporary thinking about the rights of people with disability, consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The Act was and remains an important and powerful statement by the New South Wales Government, affirming the Government's commitment to people with disability. The Act informs and influences all Government activity, covering policy development, program design and delivery, budgeting and performance measurement. Under the Act, the Minister for Disability Services is required to review the Act to determine whether its policy objectives remain valid and whether its terms remain appropriate for securing those objectives. That statutory review was conducted in 2020 and found that two main policy objectives of the Act remain valid. Those objectives, as stated in the report on the review, are as follows:

- ... to acknowledge that people with disability have the same human rights as other members of the community and that the State and the community have a responsibility to facilitate the exercise of those rights ...
- ... to promote the independence and social and economic inclusion of people with disability ...

The statutory review found that the provisions of the Act that apply those two policy objectives are appropriate, relevant and should remain. Some minor amendments, drawn from the experience of implementing the Act, are recommended in the report. I will address these changes later.

The Act promotes the inclusion and participation of people with disability in the community in a number of ways. It requires the development of an overarching State Disability Inclusion Plan for the whole of government. The plan is the New South Wales Government's commitment to identifying and breaking down the barriers that prevent those with disability from enjoying the same opportunities and choices as everyone else. The State plan covers four focus areas aimed at creating long-term change: developing positive community attitudes and behaviour; creating livable communities; supporting access to meaningful employment; and improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes. The State plan is reviewed every four years.

Secondly, the Act requires government bodies and local councils, in particular, to prepare and implement their own disability inclusion action plans. These plans set out goals and measures to support and implement the full participation of people with disability in the community and to improve their access to mainstream supports and services. These plans are also reviewed every four years. Finally, the Act provides for the Disability Council NSW to independently advise the Minister on matters affecting people with disability, their families and carers.

The third policy objective in the Act commits the New South Wales Government to delivering and funding services and supports during the transition period to the National Disability Insurance Scheme, or NDIS, and beyond. The statutory review found that the third and final policy objective is largely, but not completely, redundant. When the Act commenced in December 2014, the NDIS was being developed but had not yet been implemented. Transitional arrangements were included in the Act, to remain in place until full implementation of the NDIS across New South Wales, that are no longer relevant. The transitional arrangements in the Act included New South Wales regulating specialist disability supports and services and funding to people with disability in the State. They also included introducing better-quality standards and safeguards for the disability sector in the Act until the changeover to the NDIS.

As a condition of State funding and delivery of disability supports and services, the Act therefore included requirements for agencies and organisations to comply with disability standards and ensure probity checks to screen the suitability of New South Wales workers who provided supports and services directly to people with disability. Following the full implementation of the NDIS, New South Wales' responsibility to deliver supports and services to people with disability has been gradually taken over by the Commonwealth. The NDIS was rolled out on 1 July 2018 across New South Wales, providing individualised supports and services to people with disability. It is underpinned by a new system of quality and safeguards, overseen by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. From 1 February 2021, the requirements for NDIS worker screening checks have been set by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission rather than New South Wales.

The provisions of the Act covering the transition period from New South Wales Government control of disability supports and services provision to NDIS control of disability supports and services provision are now largely inoperative, and most should be removed. Nevertheless, the New South Wales Government still has a role in this sector. Despite full transition to the NDIS, the New South Wales Government continues to have an important role in supporting disability service provision through the funding and governance of the NDIS, along with other States and Territories. It also continues to provide services to people with disability as users of mainstream services in the community, including education, transport and health services in New South Wales.

On the basis of the statutory review findings, the report made six recommendations for changes to the Act, which are addressed in the bill.

I now turn to the details of the bill. The bill seeks to make two substantive changes to the Disability Inclusion Act. The first substantive change is that the bill requires the State Disability Inclusion Plan and disability inclusion action plans to be remade every four years. The Disability Inclusion Act currently requires these plans to be reviewed and reported on every four years, but there is no explicit requirement to renew the plans each period. During consultation, stakeholders expressed the view that renewal of the State Disability Inclusion Plan and disability inclusion action plans will enhance ongoing inclusion for people with disability. Proposed amendments to section 11 of the Act will require the Department of Communities and Justice to take into account any recommendations in the report on the outcome of the four-yearly review of the State Disability Inclusion Plan, which is tabled in Parliament, and remake the plan, with or without variations, within 12 months of the tabling. In a similar manner, proposed amendments to section 14 of the Act will require public authorities, including government departments and local councils, to take into account any recommendations made in the four-yearly review of their disability inclusion action plans and remake them, with or without variations, within 12 months of the review being completed.

The second substantive change to the Act is that not only are the plans publicly available, but all future remade plans must also be available in one or more formats accessible to people with disability. That requirement is substantially found in proposed amendments to sections 10 and 12. The bill also gives local councils another 17 months to review the disability inclusion action plans they made in 2017. This 17-month extension is effected by a transitional provision that enables local councils to review any plans made in 2017 before the end of 30 November 2022. This extension is due to two unforeseen significant events. The first event was that local council elections were postponed by one year because of COVID-19 public health concerns. The second, soon afterwards, was the recent serious flooding of many local council areas within New South Wales.

I now turn to the provisions in the bill that repeal parts of the Act that are no longer relevant or operational in New South Wales following the NDIS transition. Schedule 2.1 to the bill repeals the NSW Ombudsman's function to review the deaths of people with disability. Full implementation of the NDIS in New South Wales since mid-2018 has resulted in both disability funding and service delivery transitioning from the State to the Commonwealth. This function of the Ombudsman was largely terminated by the full implementation of the NDIS because New South Wales no longer directly funds or provides disability services and supports. The legislation needs to be updated to reflect these changed roles and responsibilities.

The NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission now oversees the deaths of people with disability in connection with the provision of NDIS supports or services. Under schedule 2.3, the bill also confirms that the jurisdiction of the Coroners Court to hold inquests into the deaths of people with disability is retained after full implementation of the NDIS in New South Wales. Schedule 2.7 to the bill repeals the Ombudsman's oversight of reportable incidents in supported group accommodation, as it is obsolete. Providers of such accommodation are now funded by the NDIS, and the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission oversees reportable incidents involving NDIS supports and services. Schedule 2 to the bill also sets out other consequential amendments to other legislation. These include ensuring that any defined terms that are in the repealed parts of the Act and are used also in other legislation are relocated to that other legislation, updated as required, and any cross-references are amended to refer to that other legislation.

Parts 4 and 5 of the Act, relating to services' standards and the powers around provisions of disability supports and services, were created as transitional provisions only. They were intended to be obsolete on full implementation of the NDIS in New South Wales, which has since occurred. Schedule 1, item [13], to the bill omits parts 4 and 5 from the Act. However, it retains section 20, which provides a regulation-making power with respect to disability service standards, and retains and renumbers three provisions in part 5 that are still required. Those provisions are currently sections 37, 38 and 39, to be renumbered sections 21, 22 and 23 by the bill. They enable the ongoing provision of financial assistance to government departments, local councils or other entities to promote the objects of the Act, with related information requirements and liability protections.

Because the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission now administers NDIS worker screening checks in New South Wales, sections 32 and 36 of the Act are no longer required and are deleted by schedule 1, items [13] and [15], to the bill. Schedule 3 of the Act relates to residents' amenities accounts—the accounts and funds of residents with disability in New South Wales Government residential centres. These are obsolete and so deleted by schedule 1, items [14] and [15], to the bill.

I now turn to three amendments that were passed in the other place. The first amendment to the bill is to include LGBTIQ+ people with disability as a group covered by the disability principles in section 5 of the Act, which recognises the needs of particular groups. The second amendment to the bill is to require that, in preparing the State Disability Inclusion Plan, the department consult with the Disability Council and disability advocacy

organisations, as well as people with disability, in section 10 (2) of the Act. The third amendment to the bill is to require that the State Disability Inclusion Plan not form part of another document in section 10 (4) of the Act. I note that these amendments reflect the historical and ongoing practice of the Government.

The Disability Inclusion Amendment Bill 2022 seeks to renew the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 to keep it up to date and relevant following the transformative changes in the disability sector with full implementation of the NDIS in New South Wales. The substantive changes to the Act contained in the bill are to require the State Disability Inclusion Plan and disability inclusion action plans to be remade each four-year period, as well as providing them in one or more formats accessible to people with disability. These substantive changes, along with the Act's existing and remaining provisions, will ensure that the Disability Inclusion Act continues to promote the inclusion and participation of people with disability in the community. I commend the bill to the House.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Port Stephens, I take the opportunity to acknowledge my guests. In the Speaker's gallery are year 12 students from Toronto High School and their principal, Mr Mark McConville. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly Chamber. I hope you have a great day. You have got a good member here—strike that from *Hansard*.

Second Reading Debate

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (12:13): It is not often the Assistant Speaker gets to welcome his own guests and blow his own trumpet at the same time. But I do concur, for the sake of the students, that they are represented by a very good member.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I thank the member for Port Stephens.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: As Labor's shadow Minister for Disability Inclusion, I will be responding to the Government's Disability Inclusion Amendment Bill 2022 on behalf of the Labor Opposition. I thank my colleague the Hon. Penny Sharpe from the other place for already placing on the record Labor's position on this bill, and I confirm once again that Labor will not be opposing this bill as it has been amended in the other place. The legislation before us arose largely from the statutory review of the New South Wales Disability Inclusion Act. That review was tabled in Parliament in November 2020.

Like many processes over recent years, converting those recommendations into legislation has taken longer than many would have wanted. I thank the peak bodies and advocacy organisations that have provided feedback on this legislation, particularly with the constrained time frames the Opposition has to consult on Government proposals. In general, the disability advocacy bodies I have spoken with were comfortable with the sensible changes included in this bill, although a number of organisations believe we need to go further in meeting the goals of full inclusion in New South Wales.

The Disability Inclusion Amendment Bill before us today will require New South Wales Government agencies and local councils to entirely renew their disability inclusion action plans every four years. Previously agencies were required to undertake only a somewhat vague review process, with varying degrees of sincerity and success. Our recent experience of COVID-19 as well as the rapid technological change we are witnessing have demonstrated how quickly the options for inclusion can change. Disability inclusion action plans are important documents that outline the steps an organisation will take to improve access and inclusivity across the organisation. For councils, these plans not only cover footpaths and kerb ramps but also consider how their own services can be more accessible, identifying workplace opportunities to employ people with disability and focusing on the leadership role they can play in shaping community attitudes to disability.

Disability inclusion is a policy area in which some councils and some departments are doing well. However, hopefully this change will spur other government bodies and councils into giving more of a priority to this component of their operations. In speaking to stakeholders I am cognisant of the gap that can exist between lofty plans on a council's website or in an organisation and the lived reality of people with disability in those local government areas and seeking the services of government agencies. For councils and New South Wales Government agencies, another change created by this legislation is a requirement to publish their disability inclusion action plans in a format accessible to people with disabilities. Again this is a sensible change. However, I will continue to speak with stakeholders to gauge how effectively this is being implemented.

There are many and varied forms of disability, and the requirement on these organisations to publish at least one accessible format may still leave some people with disability at a disadvantage. As one stakeholder put it, it would be like the health department printing COVID advice in only one language other than English and then saying it was meeting the needs of the entire multicultural community. Technology such as screen-reading programs can assist many people with disabilities to access written documents. However, I hope these organisations consider also graphic representations and plain English summaries of their policy documents when considering the accessible formats they could use.

The third major change created through this bill is to remove certain sections of the Act where the regulatory responsibility for those activities now sits with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. The National Disability Insurance Scheme is a life-changing reform for many of its participants. But, like all programs, it requires oversight and review mechanisms. That role is now occupied by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. As a national scheme, having nationally consistent regulation is important for both service providers and participants. That being said, I will continue to speak with stakeholders to ensure that this change does not lead to a watering down of regulatory standards or oversight of the care that people with disability receive.

The NSW Ombudsman has played an important role in reviewing the quality of services that people with disability have accessed. I acknowledge the work of current and former staff members at the Ombudsman's office who have undertaken this important and at times difficult work over the past years. To be clear, the changes in this bill relate only to the NSW Ombudsman's role in relation to reportable incidents in supported accommodation and related investigation. People in those services are now funded by the NDIS, so it makes sense for the oversight to be undertaken by the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. The NSW Ombudsman also undertakes individual advocacy in addition to his larger reviews. This is important work, and I note for the debate today that people with disabilities can continue to lodge complaints about New South Wales Government agencies with the NSW Ombudsman.

I ask the Government to confirm in the course of today's debate the ongoing role of the NSW Ombudsman to oversee complaints relating to State-delivered services, as they affect people with disability, such as hospitals, prisons, transport and schools. In removing these sections from the Act, I am keen to reiterate that the New South Wales Government should not walk away from its responsibilities to NDIS participants and other people with disabilities who are not covered by the NDIS. As a key funder of the NDIS, the New South Wales Government should use its position on the ministerial council on disability reform to ensure that proper oversight of the NDIS is being undertaken and that participants are getting not only the services they require but also the quality of services they deserve. The New South Wales Government should also consider how government-run services can better meet the needs of people with disability because, let's be clear, this Government's track record on supporting people with disability in our State has not been great.

Not long ago, this Government was going to walk away from funding disability advocacy services by cutting their funding entirely. Thankfully, the Government was shamed into reversing that decision by an enraged sector that understood the consequences of losing its voice. We have also seen this Government use the implementation of the NDIS as an excuse to completely privatise all the State's disability services. At the time, many in the disability sector were pleading for the provision of a State-run safety net service to ensure that those with the greatest complexities could always receive support. Those pleas were ignored. Now there is an increasing number of people with the most complex disabilities lying in hospital beds for months and months because they have nowhere else to go. This situation affects not only the life and wellbeing of an individual who deserves better but also their family, and it is an enormous cost shift onto the State Government.

It is a soul-destroying and costly scenario that was entirely foreseeable and ought to have been avoided by this Government, but it did not care. It did not plan for the worst-case scenarios, and now some of the most vulnerable people in New South Wales are paying the price. As we transitioned to the NDIS and this Government proceeded with indecent haste to privatise the entire sector, it was constantly asked, "Where are the oversight and safeguards for people with disability in New South Wales?" It could not rid itself fast enough of State services because that meant all responsibility rested with the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. The responsibility for reporting on reviewable deaths in New South Wales was removed from the NSW Ombudsman and placed with the commission. Prior to the office of the Ombudsman losing that responsibility, its last report into reviewable deaths in New South Wales was sobering, to say the least.

The report came at a time when the transition to the NDIS was well underway and the Hunter large residential centres were being closed down. Some members will be familiar with the Hunter large residential centres—I know that Mr Assistant Speaker is particularly familiar with them. They include the Stockton Centre, Tomaree Lodge in my electorate and the Kanangra Centre at the Morisset Hospital in Mr Assistant Speaker's electorate, amongst other disability services across the State. They were home to some of the most vulnerable people in the State with complex intellectual disabilities, which were often combined with physical disabilities and the complexity of aging.

Despite the claims of the Government and various Ministers who have cycled through the position of disability Minister under this Government, that transition was a disaster for some. People died because of neglect and the inadequate care they received when they were moved into their new group homes. This Government has never apologised, and it does itself a disservice by pretending those things did not happen. In closing, I reiterate the importance of local councils and New South Wales government agencies hearing directly from people with disability in the formation of their disability inclusion action plans. The plans must have meaning, weight and

consequence. They can only happen when the voices of people with disability are heard. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (12:23): On behalf of The Greens, I contribute to debate on the Disability Inclusion Amendment Bill 2022 in the Legislative Assembly, and recognise our disability portfolio spokesperson, Abigail Boyd, MLC. The Greens support the bill. However, we have made amendments in the other place. The bill implements the recommendations of the 2020 Statutory Review of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014 and, with the successful inclusion of The Greens amendments in the other place, also incorporates some recommendations made by stakeholders during the statutory review consultation. It was interesting to listen to the contribution of the shadow Minister for Disability Inclusion. In 2019 I read quite a lot of the submissions to the royal commission into disability because it was important to people in my community. It was powerful to read about the experience of people living with a disability and what that actually looks like, let alone about the violence and other terrible experiences that people living with disability have, which were exposed in that royal commission.

We are still waiting for many of those recommendations to be made public and for those changes to assist people living with a disability. With the incorporation of The Greens amendments in the second print, the bill now recognises LGBTIQ+ persons with disability as a group with particular needs, alongside First Nations people with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse people with disability, women with disability and children with disability. LGBTIQ+ people with disability also have unique risks of discrimination and barriers to inclusion, and their inclusion in section 5 of the Act will ensure that they are given due consideration when the Government and its departments are preparing the Disability Inclusion Plan and disability inclusion action plans. We will now see a requirement for consultation during review and remaking of the State Disability Inclusion Plan to include disability advocacy organisations and the Disability Council NSW, as well as people with disability.

Not that long ago the entire advocacy space, which basically runs on the smell of an oily rag, was about to be obliterated. Thanks to communities across the State, we saw the Government backflip on that. Certainly my office experiences the absolute minefield that it is to receive support through the NDIS and engage with the National Disability Insurance Agency. The amendments we have made will ensure that the State Disability Inclusion Plan is a standalone document and not published as part of another document, which is explicitly allowed under the existing Act. This gives due recognition to the importance of disability inclusion and makes the plan more accessible to the public. I acknowledge that the Minister noted that this is the current practice. The amendment ensures that a future government that is less focused on disability inclusion cannot hide that.

The Greens also moved seven other amendments that would have significantly strengthened New South Wales' commitment to our human rights obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and required comprehensive evaluation of State Disability Inclusion Plan progress, not just its review and remaking. It is disappointing that those amendments were not supported. In particular, we would have liked to see one of the objects of the Act, which currently reads, "... to support, to the extent reasonably practicable, the purposes and principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities", changed to omit the weasel words "to the extent reasonably practicable" and to say "uphold" rather than "support" the convention. It is disappointing that we were unable to see that change.

But overall we will see the requirement for the State Disability Inclusion Plan and disability inclusion action plans to be remade every four years and for those plans to be made available in one or more formats accessible to people with disability. It is perplexing to have seen, even during the pandemic, how little sensitivity public institutions have to what it is like to navigate information through able-bodied prejudices. The bill will provide local councils a 17-month extension to review the disability inclusion action plans that they made in 2017, and will repeal provisions in the principal Act no longer required due to the commencement of Commonwealth legislation relating to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

In closing, I give a particular shout-out to the disability advocacy services in the Ballina electorate. I also reflect that a few years ago we pulled together a round table of all the providers—over 60—to specifically look at the implementation of the NDIS for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It was really shocking and disturbing. People spoke in acronyms, so much so that Aboriginal people thought that the NDIS was the NBN—the rollout of the National Broadband Network. There was such a lack of information. There were no community languages. We heard about the hurdles costing hundreds of dollars, let alone the waiting list for paediatric assessments of children. It went on and on and on, hours and hours on the phone. We heard stories from many people who were unable to engage and navigate the process. We welcome the changes at a State level and we support the bill.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (12:29): I welcome the opportunity to speak in support of the Disability Inclusion Amendment Bill 2022. The bill continues the New South Wales Government's commitment to recognising the rights of people with disability. It reflects our commitment under the United Nations Convention

on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities—the UN convention—which Australia ratified in July 2008. These are expressed in the objects and principles of the Disability Inclusion Act 2014. When the Disability Inclusion Act commenced in December 2014, the New South Wales Government was responsible for the delivery of specialist disability services and for funding non-government service providers across New South Wales.

The Commonwealth's National Disability Insurance Scheme was implemented in stages, with the national rollout beginning in July 2016 and the scheme being fully implemented in New South Wales two years later in July 2018. Responsibility for specialist disability services and regulation of these services were shared between New South Wales and the Commonwealth in the period of transitional overlap while the NDIS gradually established systems and processes for effective regulation of the sector. Although the NDIS is now fully implemented in New South Wales, the New South Wales Government continues to play an important role in supporting disability service provision through funding and governance contributions to the NDIS, as well as providing services to people with disability as users of mainstream services.

The New South Wales Government has also made an important step in progressing the rights of people with disability through the introduction of the Ageing and Disability Commissioner Act 2019 and the establishment of the New South Wales Ageing and Disability Commissioner in July 2019. The Ageing and Disability Commissioner provides an important new safeguard for adults with disability and older people in New South Wales, with a particular focus on abuse, neglect and exploitation in family, home and community settings. Three broad policy objectives are addressed by the Disability Inclusion Act 2014. These are to recognise the human rights of people with disability, including giving effect to the ratification of the UN convention; to provide support for the inclusion and improvements in the lives of people with disability; and to commit the New South Wales Government to delivering and funding services and supports in the transition period to the NDIS and beyond.

When I read the speeches in this debate, an important aspect for me is the element of advocacy. I take a moment to mention people in my electorate and acknowledge strong advocates of disability with lived disability. I think of people like Graham Walker, who is a man of much courage and an inspiration on each occasion I meet with him, organisations such as Mercy Connect and CEO Trent Dean, and Kirinari Community Services with Diane Lynch and Paul Vaccaro, and the fantastic work they are doing in disability and more specifically over the past few months in working to provide accommodation in the Albury community. There are countless occasions and touchpoints where I am inspired by the passionate belief of advocates and those living with disability in the need for an opportunity to live lives better.

As I say that, I think of Carly Jensen and Kate Fiedler. I have known Kate for a number of years; she worked with us in our vet practice. I saw them a few weeks ago at City Central Church present a live performance, a living witness or testimony through a show called *This Is My Brave*. The show was being recorded to present before the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability telling, importantly, their story. An important part of advocacy is allowing people to tell their story. As I talk about City Central Church—and I am passionate about this—I mention the great folk at Purple Chicken, led by Tracey Kellock in the kitchen. Purple Chicken is a service in Albury where young people living with disability are given an opportunity to work in a cafe-style setting serving beautiful meals, developing skills and getting an opportunity to feel part of the community.

I also want to touch on the deeply powerful aspect when I meet people, families with lived experience in disability. I acknowledge Peter White, whom I met last week. Peter has set up his own charity, called Make Me Mobile, which is looking to fit cars with disability ramps to enable families with children with disability to access vehicles. Peter's passion behind this is his son, Lochie, who lives with muscular dystrophy. I am sure all of us in our role as local members will come across people who do so much in their communities as champions for those living with disability. I also acknowledge our regional disability advocacy service in Lavington and the great work that it does. It is a not-for-profit organisation that assists people with a disability living in the Ovens Murray district of north-east Victoria and the Murrumbidgee district of southern New South Wales.

During the statutory review of the Disability Inclusion Act in 2020, stakeholders expressed the view that the first two objectives remain valid and relevant in the current context. The third objective is no longer as relevant to New South Wales. This is because delivery and funding of services and supports has transferred from New South Wales to the Commonwealth following full implementation of the NDIS in New South Wales. The Disability Inclusion Act requires that the New South Wales Government prepare a State Disability Inclusion Plan—State plan—and that New South Wales Government entities and local councils prepare disability inclusion action plans. The statutory review found the provisions in the Act requiring a State plan and disability inclusion action plans to be useful and valid in driving effective planning and consideration of the needs of people with disability. These plans are an effective expression of the policy objectives of the Act. The bill enhances this requirement by amending the Act to further require the State plan and disability inclusion actions plans to be

renewed, that is, remade and not simply reviewed every four years. The bill also amends the Act to add the requirement to make the State plan and disability inclusion action plans publicly available in one or more formats accessible to people with disability.

The bill repeals the New South Wales Ombudsman functions to review the deaths of people with disability and to oversee reportable incidents in supported group accommodation, following the full implementation of the NDIS in New South Wales, which has resulted in both disability funding and service delivery transitioning from the State to the Commonwealth. The bill confirms the Coroner's Court jurisdiction to hold inquests into the deaths of people with disability and ensures that it is retained. Parts 4 and 5 of the Act relating to service standards and the powers around provision of disability supports and services were created as transitional provisions and were intended to be obsolete on implementation of the NDIS. As such, these parts are largely no longer relevant to the activities of the New South Wales Government. Good practice dictates removing any inactive elements of legislation so that there are no unnecessary requirements still in force.

As I commend the bill to the House, I reiterate my thanks, gratitude and admiration to those who are advocates in my local community and to the many people who inspire me through their experiences. I will continue to be a passionate advocate. The bill is another important commitment by the New South Wales Government to the rights of people with disability. It renews the Disability Inclusion Act by enhancing established structures and processes in the Act promoting those rights. In particular, the bill requires the periodic remaking of disability inclusion plans at State and public authority levels and requires them to be provided in accessible formats for people with disability. I support the bill.

Dr GEOFF LEE (Parramatta—Minister for Corrections) (12:39): In reply: I thank the member for Port Stephens, the member for Ballina and the member for Albury for their contributions to the debate. I acknowledge their considerations, especially the member for Albury, who acknowledged the champions within his community who advocate for people with disability. It is good to hear that there is bipartisan support for the bill. That extends to The Greens as well. To conclude, the Disability Inclusion Amendment Bill 2022 will make amendments to the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 to implement the recommendations of the report of the statutory review of the Disability Inclusion Act 2014. In particular, the bill will strengthen the role of disability planning within New South Wales.

The bill will ensure that disability inclusion plans of the State and public authorities are not just regularly remade but also renewed. These reinvigorated plans will also be made publicly available in one or more formats accessible to people with disability. The bill will also update the Act to ensure its contemporary relevance in the vastly changed landscape of disability supports and services in New South Wales since it was first passed in 2014. The bill does this in particular by removing the many provisions rendered obsolete by the full implementation in mid-2018 of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Dr GEOFF LEE: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

TREASURY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (MISCELLANEOUS) BILL 2022

Consideration in Detail

Schedule of amendment referred to in message of 21 June 2022

No. 1 **GOVT No. 1 [c2022-121]**

Pages 3 and 4, Schedule 1.1, from line 2 on page 3 to line 34 on page 4. Omit all words on those lines.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: On behalf of Mr Matt Kean: I move:

That the Legislative Council amendment be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

*Committees***LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE****Reports**

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

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (12:43): As Chair: I address the House regarding the Legislation Review Committee's report entitled *Legislation Review Digest No. 45/57*, tabled on 21 June 2022. In the forty-fifth digest, the committee examined five bills introduced into the sitting week beginning 7 June 2022. The committee also examined 21 regulations introduced in May and June of this year and commented on seven of those. I now draw members' attention to some of the issues raised in the digest. The ICAC and LECC Legislation Amendment Bill was introduced to enable a judge of the Supreme Court or the District Court to continue their tenure as a judge after being appointed as an inspector, commissioner or assistant commissioner of the ICAC or the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission. In doing so, the bill inserts new section 6 into the Independent Commission Against Corruption (Commissioner) Act to defer the making of savings and transitional provisions to the regulations.

The committee generally prefers for savings and transitional provisions to be dealt with in primary legislation to ensure an appropriate level of parliamentary oversight, in particular because they generally have a direct impact on how some provisions of the Act will apply now and in the future. The deferral of savings and transitional provisions in the regulations may also result in the creation of a Henry VIII clause, which allows subordinate legislation to amend primary legislation without needing to be passed by Parliament. However, the committee notes that there are statutory safeguards that may mitigate the effect of the deferral of these provisions. For example, section 6 (5) expressly states that the changes do not impose liabilities for an act or omission that occurred prior to the commencement of the provision. In the circumstances, the committee made no further comment.

Another bill introduced was the Treasury Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill, which makes minor amendments to six pieces of legislation. One of those amendments inserts a new section 19CC to the Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers (Superannuation) Act 1941. New section 19CC provides that, for the purposes of part 4A of the Act, the AUSCOAL rules and the AUSCOAL trust deed may incorporate other rules or documents approved by the Minister. The committee generally comments when external material such as rules, codes or documents are included in legislation. This is because these materials are subject to change and are not subject to oversight or disallowance in the same way that bills and regulations are. The committee noted that these materials are incorporated for the purposes of determining eligibility for mine workers incapacitated due to the inhalation of dust in coal or oil shale mines in New South Wales to receive subsidies. Given that this may have an impact on the direct rights and obligations of individuals who are eligible for a subsidy, the committee referred the matter to the Parliament for its consideration.

The Road Transport (General) Amendment Regulation 2022 was introduced to make various amendments to the Road Transport (General) Regulation 2021. The amending regulation changes schedule 5 to expand the type of authorised officer who can issue on-the-spot fines for contravention of certain penalty notice offences. One of the prescribed penalty notice offences under section 175 (2) (a) and section 175 (2) (b) is where a person fails to provide their name or licence to an authorised officer. The committee noted the issuing of penalty notices as it may impact a person's right to a fair trial and any automatic right to have their matter heard by an impartial decision-maker. However, the committee also acknowledged that the exercise of these powers enables efficient enforcement and appears to support the administration of road transport legislation. In the circumstances, the committee made no further comment. That concludes my remarks on the forty-fifth digest for this Parliament. I thank my fellow committee members for their contributions to the digest and the secretariat for their support. I commend the digest to the House.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (12:48): It again gives me great pleasure to contribute to debate on the forty-fifth digest of this Parliament, tabled 21 June. The committee considered five bills. We commented on two of those. The five bills were the Fiscal Responsibility Amendment Bill 2022, which was a private member's bill; the ICAC and LECC Legislation Amendment Bill 2022; the Industrial Relations Legislation Amendment (Public Sector Remuneration Cap Repeal) Bill 2022, which was a private member's bill as well; the Parliamentary Budget Officer Amendment Bill 2022, which was another private member's bill; and the Treasury Legislation Amendment (Miscellaneous) Bill 2022. The committee also considered 21 regulations, commenting on seven of those. The regulations commented on are contained in the digest, as are the comments on all the bills. There is also a list of the regulations that we considered but did not comment on at appendix two.

For members who are interested, appendix three of the digest also includes letters received from Ministers and members responding to the committee's comments. The committee sends a letter to the member or Minister with carriage of a bill outlining its comments and brings them to the attention of the member. Some members and Ministers choose to respond. This is a public record of those who have taken the committee's comments into consideration and appropriately responded to them. I commend the digest to the House. Once again, I thank the secretariat for their support of the committee and my fellow committee members. I hope members take some time to refer to the digest in their deliberations.

Report noted.

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

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome the guest of the member for Granville, Mr Jeremy Klepac, who is doing work experience with the member and is watching question time from the gallery today. I also welcome guests of the member for Lake Macquarie to the Speaker's gallery, in particular Toronto High School principal Mark McConville, school captain Dayna Howard, vice-captain Jye Clifton and prefect Shari Kokany. I welcome all of them to the Chamber. I welcome Ms Charlotte Walker-Broose, who is doing work experience with Minister Bronnie Taylor from the other House. We hope she enjoys question time.

Order! There is too much general conversation in the Chamber.

Announcements

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that an officer from the Premier's office has been authorised to take still photographs of the Premier through the Chamber entrance doors during question time today.

Question Time

SENIOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT COMMISSIONER TO THE AMERICAS

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (14:19): My question is directed to the Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade. Did the Minister intervene to terminate Jenny West's appointment to the position of Senior Trade and Investment Commissioner to the Americas last year?

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney) (14:20): No.

STATE BUDGET AND HEALTH SERVICES

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (14:20): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on how the Liberal Party and The Nationals are strengthening our frontline health services?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:20): I will. The Government is investing everywhere right across the board in this budget, the greatest budget in the history of the State—which is hard, because they just keep getting better.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I know the last five were incredible—really, really good—but this is next level. This is the budget that New South Wales needs not just for today but also for generations to come. The budget delivers for everyone, but particularly for working families right across New South Wales. It is very clear that this budget is a choice between new ideas and no ideas, a vacuous Opposition with no principle, no plan, no purpose, no policy—absolutely nothing.

Our nation-leading wages policy creates increases of 3 per cent this year and 3½ per cent in the second year. Yesterday afternoon the Reserve Bank Governor said the wage increase should have a "3" in front of it, and what have Government members done? We have put a "3" in front of it, unlike any other State or Territory around the country. The Opposition's secret plan to jack up wages will not just lead to inflation but to Minns-flation across New South Wales. That will hurt mums and dads right across our State, from the city to the bush.

With our investments in health services in this year's budget—2,000 new additional staff with NSW Ambulance, including 1,858 extra paramedics—we were backed in by none other than the Health Services

Union. There are 210 ambulance staff, 52 nurses, eight doctors and 30 new ambulance stations across the State, including in Shellharbour, Swansea—one does not see those members complaining about that—Campbelltown and Camden. Right across the board, more ambulance stations are providing greater support to our paramedics and people across the State. Our workforce has increased, with 10,148 new additional staff recruited over four years and 7,674 more workers. [*Extension of time*]

It is a \$4½ billion investment over four years. As the Deputy Premier and The Nationals know, there is a significant health investment in regional New South Wales—\$883 million over four years for the regional health care pipeline of workers, more training positions in rural areas, support for professional development of the rural workforce and recruitment and retention incentives. Our palliative care package, a \$743 million investment, is not just nation leading but world leading. That is an additional 600 nurses and allied health professionals, doctors and support staff, an increase in the number of short-term high-care beds—particularly in regional and rural New South Wales, where they are most needed—and two dedicated palliative care wards at Westmead and Nepean hospitals. I am not hearing anything from the member for Londonderry about that investment in Nepean hospital. This Government has made a substantial investment in rural and regional New South Wales and in western Sydney, where it is needed. Close to \$12 billion will be invested in capital infrastructure over the next four years right across the State.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The member for Tweed is in the Chamber. The Tweed hospital—

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: The Premier is being relevant. There is no point of order.

Mr Ryan Park: It is just over 24 hours since the budget has been in—

The SPEAKER: The member for Keira will resume his seat.

[*Interruption*]

I call the member for Keira to order for the first time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Good news for the people of New South Wales is bad news for Labor. That is what we saw yesterday—the Liberals-Nationals Government delivering for today but with a vision for the future, lining up against an Opposition with no ideas, no policies, no principles. Those opposite have no idea.

SENIOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT COMMISSIONER TO THE AMERICAS

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (14:25): My question is directed to the Premier. If it was not the Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade who terminated Jenny West's appointment, who was it?

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:26): It was the CEO of Investment NSW. Can I say in relation to—

Ms Prue Car: On whose instructions?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: You asked the question, you get the answer. I will say this in relation to this matter. I met with the Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade this morning and I was advised the following; here are the facts. The first recruitment process did not identify a suitable candidate. As such, a second recruitment process was undertaken. That process was independent and led by a third-party recruiter. The Secretary of the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade [DEIT] was the final decision-maker in respect of both recruitment processes, and she will be able to explain the basis of her decision-making. The employment of Mr Barilaro has already been formalised.

Further, I want to make it clear that it would not have been lawful for me as Premier to intervene in any step of the process. Under the Government Sector Employment Act 2013, the Secretary of the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade and Chief Executive Officer of Investment NSW is the person who is authorised to exercise the "employer functions of the Government" in relation to employment of senior executives in Investment NSW, including trade and investment commissioners. That is pursuant to section 26 of the Act. The employer functions of the Government are all the functions of an employer in respect of employees, including the power to employ persons to assign them to roles and to terminate their employment.

The Secretary of the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade is not subject to the direction or the control of the Premier or the Minister. Neither the Premier nor the Minister are authorised under the Government Sector Employment Act to exercise the employer functions of the Government in relation to senior executives

employed in DEIT or Investment NSW, including trade and investment commissioners. That is consistent with the objects of the Act to establish a merit-based, apolitical and professional government sector that implements the decisions of the government of the day. Those are the facts.

STATE BUDGET AND REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (14:28): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on how the 2022-23 State budget delivers better outcomes for the people of regional New South Wales?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (14:28): I thank the member for Coffs Harbour for his question and for the work that he does in advocating for his region. There is no doubt, yesterday was a great day for the people of New South Wales. The Government announced a great budget that outlines this Government's vision for people right across New South Wales, but it also has very strong highlights for people living in the regions. As I said, this budget brings the Government's vision to light. Over the past decade the Government has delivered transformative infrastructure. It has been building roads, bridges, hospitals and schools—the projects that the Opposition failed to invest in when it was last in government. The budget announced yesterday is about reform and ideas. It is a transformative budget. The Government has put people and communities in regional New South Wales and across the State at the centre of its budget. I cannot wait to hear from the Leader of the Opposition tomorrow when he delivers his budget reply, because all we have heard from him in the past is all talk, no ideas. Tomorrow he has the opportunity to actually walk the walk.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Deputy Premier was asked a specific question about the 2022-23 budget. He was not asked to speculate about what the Leader of the Opposition might say tomorrow or what a Labor government might have done in the past.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier has digressed within the scope of the question. He will now come back more directly to it.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I thank the member for Coffs Harbour because last Sunday I had the pleasure of joining him in Coffs Harbour to announce the award-winning tender for the construction of the Coffs Harbour bypass. This is a project that the member for Coffs Harbour has been advocating for quite a number of years. I am pleased to announce that the Ferrovial Gamuda Joint Venture will design and construct the \$2.2 billion Coffs Harbour bypass. It is the missing link in the Pacific Highway. It will be 14 kilometres long and see 12,000 vehicles taken out of the centre of the town. It is going to bypass 12 traffic lights, save 12 minutes' travel time and include three tunnels, and at the peak of construction it will create around 600 jobs. It is another investment that the Liberal-Nationals Government is making for the people of regional New South Wales. Yesterday there was so much good news that I would not be able to finish talking about it all even if I was allowed to speak for the whole of question time. I would have to stay here all day. But I want to talk about some of the good news, starting with regional growth. The impacts of the Regional Growth Fund can be seen across regional New South Wales. *[Extension of time]*

I will take the two minutes. Through the Regional Growth Fund, 2,700 projects have improved the lives of people living in regional New South Wales. The Regional Growth Fund has delivered dedicated female change rooms for the local rugby club in Orange, providing a massive boost to player participation. In Narromine, the fund has helped entice a high-tech business to relocate from Western Australia and to bring its manufacturing business back onshore, creating hundreds of jobs. The Regional Growth Fund has also helped to upgrade the airport at Warren. I am pleased that yesterday it was announced that a further \$1.3 billion would be put into the Regional Growth Fund. That is a program that transforms our regions. The funding will go towards the Resources for Regions program and continuation of the Regional Job Creation Fund, the Stronger Country Communities Fund, the Regional Events Acceleration Fund and the Regional Tourism Activation Fund. These are important investments in our regional communities.

In addition, the \$130 million Critical Minerals Activation Fund will drive investment into critical minerals mining and advanced manufacturing in New South Wales. I am pleased that this Government has continued to grow regional New South Wales and create more opportunities for people in this State. The Government has put its cards on the table and laid out its vision for the future of regional New South Wales. I issue a challenge to the Leader of the Opposition to tell us his vision tomorrow. Tell us the Opposition's vision. So far, we have heard nothing. The Opposition has ignored regional New South Wales. The Opposition leader has not travelled west of the Range to go into the regions. The Opposition packed up Country Labor and it has forgotten about the regions. It is the Liberal Party and The Nationals that continue to represent regional New South Wales.

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

SENIOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT COMMISSIONER TO THE AMERICAS

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields) (14:33): My question is directed to the Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade. Did the Minister ask the Premier or the Premier's office whether the appointment of the Senior Trade and Investment Commissioner to the Americas should go to Cabinet?

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney) (14:34): In November 2019 the New South Wales Government launched the Global NSW strategy with the announcement of the establishment of six senior trade and investment commissioners, often referred to as STICs, across a number of markets. They are the United Kingdom, Europe and Israel; India and the Middle East; North Asia, based in Japan; the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, based in Singapore; the Americas; and China. The following people have been appointed to those roles by Investment NSW: Stephen Cartwright in the United Kingdom; Vish Padmanabhan, India; Michael Newman, Japan; Andrew Parker, Singapore; John Barilaro, the Americas; and Helen Sawczak, China. They are not statutory roles; they are public service roles established under the Government Sector Employment Act 2013 and regulations. The appointees are employed by New South Wales. External recruitment firm NGS Global—

Mr Chris Minns: Point of order—

Mr STUART AYRES: I will answer. I will do it.

Mr Chris Minns: The Minister is a minute into his answer. The question was specifically about whether the Minister consulted the Premier. He is not answering the question.

The SPEAKER: I will allow the Minister to continue.

Mr STUART AYRES: NGS Global was appointed by Investment NSW to undertake the recruitment process for the roles. NGS Global assessed applications and provided a short list of candidates recommended for interview. No questions have been raised about the process, except in the case of Mr Barilaro. On 17 December the STIC Americas role was advertised publicly in the *Australian Financial Review* and on the I Work for NSW website. Mr Barilaro applied for the role as a private citizen. His application was not solicited by me, the Minister, or Investment NSW. Mr Barilaro was shortlisted for interview by NGS Global. The interview panel consisted of the CEO of Investment NSW, the NSW Public Service Commissioner, the managing director for trade and investment at Investment NSW, and an independent external panel member. At the conclusion of the interview process, due diligence processes, including references—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The Minister is being relevant. He has indicated, and I can see, that he is coming directly to the question.

Mr Ron Hoenig: But is he directly relevant to the specific question asked?

The SPEAKER: I am satisfied that he is heading in that direction.

Mr Ron Hoenig: He is nowhere near it yet.

Mr STUART AYRES: At the conclusion of the interview process and a due diligence process, including reference and background checks, Mr Barilaro was recommended for the role. I informed the Premier and the Deputy Premier of the recommendation on 30 April via a phone call. Subsequent to that, Investment NSW completed the process for the China position, contract arrangements were finalised and Ms Sawczak's and Mr Barilaro's positions were publicly announced on 17 June. I reject in the strongest possible terms that the appointment of Mr Barilaro, as suggested by some media outlets, was a captain's pick or a unilateral decision by me or any other Minister. In fact, the only accusation that can be levelled against me is that—

Mr Anoulack Chanthivong: Point of order: My question was specific. Did the Minister consult—

The SPEAKER: Is the member seeking an additional two minutes?

Mr Anoulack Chanthivong: Yes, two minutes suits me, but I am also taking a point of order. I am doing both.

The SPEAKER: I will grant another two minutes so the Minister can get to where he seems to be heading. However, I ask the Minister to return to the leave of the question, which was specific: Did the Minister ask whether the appointment should go to Cabinet?

Mr STUART AYRES: I go back to what I said to ensure that my remarks were clear. On 30 April I informed the Premier and the Deputy Premier of that recommendation. As the Premier indicated in his remarks

and as I have also indicated in mine, these are not appointments to a statutory role and they are not appropriate to go to Cabinet. If we took them to Cabinet, we would be intervening in the process of the Government's—

Mr Chris Minns: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I am satisfied that the Minister is being directly relevant. The member for Kogarah will resume his seat. I call the member for Ku-ring-gai to order for the first time. I call the member for Shellharbour to order for the second time. I call the member for Coogee to order for the first time.

Mr STUART AYRES: I make this point very clear: If members opposite want to level an accusation, the only accusation they can level is that neither I nor any other Minister intervened to prevent the appointment of Mr Barilaro following an independent, open, merit-based recruitment process that recommended a qualified, suitable candidate to represent our State's trade and investment interests in the Americas.

STATE BUDGET AND FAMILIES AND WORKERS

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (14:38): My question is addressed to the Treasurer, and Minister for Energy. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the budget is supporting families and workers?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (14:39): I certainly can. I thank the member for Holsworthy for the question because yesterday's budget delivered for families and workers right across New South Wales. Didn't everyone love it yesterday! Even the kids at Toronto High loved it, they were telling me today. Everyone loved it. In its editorial, the people's paper *The Daily Telegraph* said that this budget will provide "welcome relief to many families". Even *The Daily Telegraph* loved the Matt Kean budget. The "Independent. Always" masthead *The Sydney Morning Herald*—it does love me—said that the Government is making "meaningful investments that will actually help women".

Mr Michael Daley: What about *The Australian*? Tell us about *The Australian*, Matt.

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

Mr MATT KEAN: *The Australian* loved it as well, but I do not have its quote today. The *Australian Financial Review* said that the budget has cast the Government "as a new and fresh force".

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

Mr MATT KEAN: Everyone loved the budget. But guess who did not? Whingey Minnsy and Sooky Mookhey did not like it. Whingey Minnsy and Sooky Mookhey were the only ones who did not like it. When Whingey Minnsy told caucus he had a plan, he did not tell them that it was a plan to pat dogs at railway stations, grow a mullet and campaign in the marginal seat of Kogarah. I wonder if Whingey Minnsy told the Jodi supporters last night that he commissioned emergency polling from the Labor pollsters to—guess what?—find out what to say in his budget reply tomorrow.

First he outsources his question time strategy to the Twitterati, then he outsources his budget reply to a focus group. I can see the pollsters ringing around last night, "Press 1 if you want to support the Coalition's budget to build a better, brighter future for everyone in New South Wales, or press 2 if you want to hear more from Sooky Mookhey and Whingey Minnsy." That is the reality. Last night there were a lot of people pressing 1 and they were all on the other side of the House. [*Extension of time*]

I was just catching my breath. We are proud of our historic budget, which will support families today and invest in building a better, brighter and more prosperous future for everyone tomorrow. It was with great excitement yesterday, under the cover of the budget, that the Leader of the Opposition dropped out his first policy. I was shocked, because our budget delivered one of the biggest public sector pay increases in the country—a 3 per cent pay rise for our nurses, teachers and public servants right across New South Wales. What was the alternative that the Leader of the Opposition dropped out yesterday? Yesterday he revealed he would cancel the Government's guaranteed pay increase for public servants—our police, nurses, teachers and rail workers—and instead force them to get a pay rise through productivity improvements. He went from Whingey Minnsy to Stingy Minnsy!

He cited Victoria's 1.5 per cent pay increase as a good deal for public servants. This can only be seen as Labor's plan to make frontline workers work harder for less money. That is his secret plan. In his budget reply tomorrow will be cuts to the pay of frontline public servants across New South Wales. He will cancel the New South Wales Coalition Government's biggest pay increase—and one of the most generous—to public servants anywhere in the country because he is not just Whingey Minnsy but also Stingy Minnsy.

The SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Orange, I acknowledge that Adla Coure, the wife of the member for Oatley and Minister for Multiculturalism, is in the public gallery.

PARKES HOSPITAL OBSTETRICS UNIT

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (14:44): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. Regarding the objectives of the *NSW Budget 2022-23 Women's Opportunity Statement*, in which one priority area of reform is the support of women's health needs, will the Minister now prioritise the reinstatement of an obstetric-led, full maternity service to Parkes hospital for that growing community?

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

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health) (14:45): I thank the member for Orange for his question. Because we have had numerous discussions about it, the member would recollect that in 2019 there were challenges around getting midwives and obstetricians to Parkes—and Forbes, for that matter. The result was a decision around a midwifery-led practice. But, like every other Minister in the country—both Labor and Liberal—I am challenged by the fact that there are simply insufficient midwives available across the nation. I know that my Labor colleagues in other States have had exactly the same concerns. We continue to do everything we can. I recollect that, after the member raised the issue on a prior occasion, I spoke to the then chief executive, who said that they had advertised many times. Off the back of the request the member had made, I asked if they would continue advertising to try to get midwives available to both Parkes and Forbes. They have done that.

I know that the new chief executive, with whom the member has a reasonable relationship and has discussions quite regularly, has been advertising. In fact, in my last discussions with him he indicated that they were seeking advertisements in New Zealand in the hope that we might be able to get midwives from there. They are doing everything they can to try to help the situation in both hospitals. As the member would recollect—perhaps the Parliament may not be aware—Parkes to Forbes is a 23-minute drive. Women in Parkes are currently going to Forbes. If they have complicated births, they may go to Orange. That is continuing in the aspects primarily focused on safety for those women and their babies.

I can assure the member that the Government is supportive of getting midwifery-led practice back at both Parkes and Forbes. I will continue to do what I have been doing and the regional health Minister will continue to encourage the continuation of that advertising. As we heard from the enthusiastic Treasurer, yesterday a lot of benefits for women were announced in that incredible budget. Many of those benefits, including time off for fertility assistance and various incentives to work in regional areas, will now be factored in to trying to encourage the employment availability of midwives in order to provide services at Forbes and Parkes. The Government will continue to do what it can across New South Wales to provide the best health services as close to home as possible, in the safest possible way.

STATE BUDGET AND WESTERN SYDNEY

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (14:48): My question is addressed to the Minister for Western Sydney. Will the Minister update the House on how the budget will deliver for communities in western Sydney?

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney) (14:48): I thank the member for Camden for his wonderful advocacy of not only his electorate but also the wider south-west region across Sydney. He is at the forefront of the advocacy work from members across the south-west. He knows how important it is that we keep delivering a strong economy because only a strong economy can keep delivering infrastructure for a growing south-west Sydney. A great example of that is the new primary school at Gregory Hills as part of the budget. The New South Wales Treasurer has delivered a fantastic budget. So many things are in it that members on the opposite side of the Chamber would love to have announced if they had thought of them in the first place. But they have not thought of anything over the past 10 years, so why would we expect them to have any new ideas?

The budget is jam-packed with great new initiatives and fantastic new infrastructure across western Sydney. I could go through many things, but I will kick off with the \$16 billion over the next four years for transport infrastructure across western Sydney. That includes critical key roads like Mulgoa Road, The Horsley Drive, Spring Farm Parkway and Mamre Road, which is a wonderful, important road network that links into the aerotropolis, in the member for Mulgoa's electorate, which opens up new jobs. Recently I was there with Mirvac, which is opening up new warehousing, freight and logistics, meaning that more people get to work closer to home. One thing that really stands out in the budget—it is fantastic that the Treasurer has been able to fund it—is Parramatta Light Rail stage two.

It is a fantastic piece of infrastructure that is critical for that central part of Sydney. We are making sure that we build on the wonderful success that stage one of Parramatta Light Rail will be. We are going into stage two with \$600 million, making sure that bridges over the river are built and that people across Parramatta are getting access to the absolute best public transport. The health Minister just spoke about his investments in and support of health in regional New South Wales, and western Sydney is also benefiting from his leadership and the support

that the health department has been able to secure from the Treasurer. Over the next four years \$1.8 billion will be invested in The Children's Hospital at Westmead. We are also investing in the Liverpool Health and Academic Precinct, which the member for Holsworthy has been a huge champion of, and the Nepean Hospital, which is close to my heart. We are making sure that Nepean Hospital is getting the investment that it needs. *[Extension of time]*

After being completely forgotten by Labor for so many years, Nepean Hospital will receive a \$1 billion redevelopment. The budget allows us to go straight from stage one, which recently opened, into stage two, making sure those growing communities across western Sydney get access to great health facilities. Campbelltown Hospital will also be upgraded and funded as part of the budget, and a new integrated mental health facility at Westmead Hospital will deliver wonderful infrastructure. A project that I know will be close to the heart of the Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology—and is relevant to my Enterprise, Investment and Trade ministry—is the viral vectors manufacturing facility at the Westmead Health and Innovation District. The Government is backing in our innovators and the emergence of med tech across our economy, and making sure that all of the work it is investing in across health will lead to the creation of new, smart jobs across our community.

The Government will continue to back up all of those new hospitals with its 10,000 health worker army, making sure that there is hospital staff across the community. There are 33 new ambulance stations coming across the State, with 2,100 new ambulance operators. Communities across western Sydney, particularly in those growth communities in the north-west and the south-west, are looking forward to seeing additional ambulance officers making sure that our community is safe and looked after when they need to be. To top it all off, a great package is coming down the line in the WestInvest Fund. In the budget over \$470 million went into new school infrastructure from WestInvest, and a lot more is coming out of WestInvest as we move into the year. So many great things are in the budget for western Sydney. The Government is full of energy and ideas, and is putting citizens across western Sydney first—unlike those opposite, who, after 11 long years, have still not figured out where western Sydney is or had any ideas for the community.

LAND TAX

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (14:53): My question is directed to the Treasurer. What is his response to reports from leading lenders that have said that paying the Government's new land tax will cause borrowers to be assessed as being subject to land tax forever and result in them being able to borrow less?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (14:54): Yesterday's budget removed barriers for first home owners getting their own homes because we on this side of the House believe in ensuring that everyone has access to owning their own slice of the great Australian dream. If those opposite want to put more taxes and barriers in the way of young people—like the young students up at Toronto High—getting into the housing market, then we say we will stand up to their plans and make home ownership more affordable every single day of the week, because that is what Coalition governments are about. We are not going to stop there. We are going to help people get into their own homes with new initiatives, like ensuring that we take an equity stake to help people break down the barriers of home ownership.

That means you only have to come up with a 2 per cent deposit to get into your own home if you are a teacher, a nurse, a police officer, a single parent or an older single. We know that a big, emerging social area is women who have served their families, have given up their careers to support their families and often, after a divorce, end up moving from the family bed to sleeping on a friend's couch. We want to support those people, help them get back on their feet and help them enter the housing market, because we know that housing is the way to unlock wealth for millions of people across this country. We are not going to apologise for being a low-tax government. We are not going to apologise for helping people get into their own homes. We are not going to apologise for making home ownership more accessible for people, because that is what Coalition governments do.

We know how the Leader of the Opposition deals with housing affordability issues. He gives himself a \$142,000 pay rise by taking out that great corruption fighter and great champion for women, the former Leader of the Opposition, Jodi McKay. We on this side of the House believe in delivering for families, helping them with cost-of-living pressures and introducing reforms that will enable them to get on the ladder of opportunity, the property ladder, sooner rather than later. That is what happens when you reduce stamp duties. For the average person buying an average property worth around \$800,000, instead of paying up to \$30,000 in stamp duty, the new up-front fee will be around \$1,100. That means you can bring forward entry into the home market much sooner.

That is what we are trying to achieve: to get people on the ladder of home ownership opportunity much sooner than otherwise would have happened. We believe in supporting first home owners to get into the property

market, making it as easy as possible for them to grow their wealth and grow the wealth of the people of New South Wales while doing so.

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

STATE BUDGET AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (14:57): My question is addressed to the Minister for Local Government. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is securing a brighter future for the local government sector?

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government) (14:57): I thank the member for Albury for his question and certainly acknowledge the strong connection he has with his local councils and the communities and the ratepayers across this great State. We on this side of the House understand the importance of a strong and sustainable local government sector, particularly to the local communities across New South Wales—unlike those opposite, who left the local government sector languishing on the sidelines when they were last in government for 16 years. There was a huge infrastructure backlog and little support for councils. That is why we have injected record investment into local government, to the tune of more than \$11 billion to deliver—

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: Here he is!

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. What is the point of order?

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 73.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr Greg Warren: If the Minister wants to debate—

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough.

Mr Greg Warren: —how this Government has ruined local government—

The SPEAKER: That is enough. The member for Campbelltown will resume his seat.

[Interruption]

I call the member for Campbelltown to order for the first time. I call the member for Ku-ring-gai to order for the second time. I call the member for Shellharbour to order for the third time. The Minister for Local Government will be heard in silence.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: How extraordinary to see the shadow Minister for Local Government actually having something to say. We have not had a question from the shadow Minister for Local Government since 2018 or 2019—and that was not even about local government. The State budget is proof positive that the Liberal-Nationals Government is continuing to work with the sector and ratepayers by committing \$437 million over four years to secure a strong and livable New South Wales.

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

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: Whilst we have ensured the local government sector remains sustainable and fit for purpose—

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

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: — we have also ensured that our community's most vulnerable are protected from cost-of-living pressures, because on this side of the House we recognise the importance of our senior Australians, especially those on fixed incomes.

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

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN: That is why more than \$844 million has been delivered since we came to office to ease the cost-of-living pressures for pensioners with their council rates, through the council rate rebate. The budget continues that significant funding allocation, with \$314 million over four years to keep the costs of living low for our community elders. But that is not all. Councils will receive \$23 million over four years from the Companion Animals Fund to assist in their management of pets such as dogs, including pounds and shelters, ranger services, recreation areas and education programs. The Government is also investing an additional \$22.3 million over three years for ongoing technical grants support to assist councils with their long-term sustainable vision for scenic coastal and estuarine areas. I notice that those opposite are extremely vocal today.

Why? It is because they are not very interested in local government. I want to make sure that we have a plan for local government into the future. [*Extension of time*]

We are also lending a hand to disaster-declared councils by covering increases to the 2022-23 emergency services levy to the tune of \$43 million. This funding will ease further cost pressures on ratepayers while providing a direct cash injection to councils to allow them to maintain the high standard of services to their ratepayers, who expect and deserve that. That is not all. We continue to ensure that we have a sustainable, fit-for-purpose local government area. We have the plans. We want to make sure that local councils are delivering for their communities. I really want to make sure that we have a great vision and a sustainable local government area. I want the Opposition to reveal its plans and its vision for the local government sector. Last time those opposite were in government, they merged local councils. How do we know that that is not in their plans now? Let us hear from the Leader of the Opposition about his plans to ensure that local councils are sustainable into the future.

FIRST HOMEBUYERS

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (15:02): My question is directed to the Treasurer. Is it true that a first homebuyer with a million-dollar property who moves out of their property after a year or two will go from paying \$3,400 a year to paying \$12,500 a year?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (15:03): Let me tell you what is true. We have just delivered the best budget in the State's history. We have just delivered a budget that delivers for families today, helping them with cost-of-living pressures, like toll relief to ease toll pressures that were delivered to us by Whingy Minnsy over there.

Mr David Harris: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The Minister is not being relevant to the question. If he does not know the answer, he can take it on notice and come back with an answer later.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer has made some introductory remarks. He will now come to the question.

Mr MATT KEAN: We are very proud to have delivered in this budget the opportunity for first home owners to get their first homes. Reducing the amount of up-front stamp duty that they pay will make it easier for first home owners to buy their first home.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I have ruled on the point of order and the Treasurer's answer is consistent with my ruling.

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: I am satisfied that the Treasurer has now come to the question. I have heard enough.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I have ruled on the point of order. It is not upheld. Does the member for Ku-ring-gai have a different point of order?

Mr Alister Henskens: Yes. Opposition members have repeatedly taken points of order that are in breach of Standing Order 131 (9).

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough. I am satisfied that the point of order from the member for Campbelltown was genuine, albeit I did not uphold it.

Mr MATT KEAN: The member for Campbelltown does not understand that our policy is about choice. It gives people the opportunity to choose whether they pay stamp duty or whether they pay a new charge. It is about choice. So people can make the choices that are in their financial interests. We believe in choice, and the member for Campbelltown used to believe in choice. When he had a choice between Jodi McKay and Whingy Minnsy, who did he choose? He chose Jodi McKay.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: My point of order is taken under standing orders Nos 73 and 129. Clearly, the Treasurer is making a personal reflection.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order under Standing Order 73, but I uphold the point of order taken under Standing Order 129. The Treasurer will come directly to the question.

Mr MATT KEAN: We believe in choices. If he had made a better choice, he would have been promoted. That is the reality.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Greg Warren: The question was very specific: Will families pay more than \$9,000 a year?

The SPEAKER: I have ruled on the point of order. I upheld the point of order under Standing Order 129. The Treasurer will come directly to the question.

Mr MATT KEAN: I am being directly relevant.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I have just told the Treasurer that he is not being directly relevant. The Treasurer will be directly relevant.

Mr MATT KEAN: I am talking about choice—a choice whether to pay stamp duty and have that huge barrier to home ownership stand in the way, ensuring that people have to wait years to get their first home, or to make it as easy as possible for people to enter the housing market. We believe in choice. We believe in giving people the opportunity to own their own piece of the Australian dream.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The Treasurer is now being relevant.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Not in my contention.

The SPEAKER: I have ruled that he is. The member for Heffron will resume his seat.

Mr MATT KEAN: I am making sure that I am being relevant. The question that the member for Campbelltown handed to me clearly talks about first homebuyers, and first home owners are better off because of this budget and because of our commitment to give people choices to determine their financial future. That is what the Liberals believe in.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. The question was specifically about whether families will pay \$9,000 a year more under the Treasurer's plan.

The SPEAKER: I am satisfied that the Treasurer is now being directly relevant.

Mr MATT KEAN: I have the question. I am being very relevant. We are talking about giving first home owners the choice to enter the property market sooner than they otherwise would. This Government always believes in delivering lower taxes for the people of this State. We believe in delivering more opportunities for everyone in this State, and that is exactly what the budget does.

STATE BUDGET AND WOMEN

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (15:08): My question is addressed to the Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading. Will the Minister update the House on what the New South Wales Government is doing to build a brighter future for women in New South Wales?

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading) (15:08): I thank the member for her question, and I acknowledge her interest in this important area. The Government is delivering a brighter future for women in New South Wales through this budget. The budget has funded SafeWork NSW to run the Respect at Work Taskforce, with nearly \$10 million over the next four years. Sexual harassment should not be tolerated in our communities, let alone in our workplaces. Unfortunately, we know that four in 10 women have experienced sexual harassment in their workplace in the past five years. It is not just a cultural problem; it is also an economic problem, given the lost productivity, staff turnover and other associated impacts, particularly for our small businesses. The task force will raise awareness about harmful workplace behaviours and the responsibility of employers to mitigate those behaviours. It will ensure that women in workplaces have safe options to seek support, and it will develop a safe set of resources and guidance materials, along with making sure that SafeWork NSW undertakes regulatory activity, targeting high-risk industries and workplaces.

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

Ms ELENi PETINOS: In addition, the New South Wales Government is empowering women to launch their own businesses through a \$10 million venture capital fund established through the budget. The Carla Zampatti fund will unleash a wave of female entrepreneurs throughout this State, providing women with more opportunities to finance their startups and take their businesses to the next level. Over 95 per cent of businesses in this State are small businesses, yet only one-third of those are run by women.

The SPEAKER: The member for Tweed, the member for Rockdale, the member for Maitland and the member for Coogee will cease talking.

Ms ELENi PETINOS: Small businesses are the lifeblood of our economy and communities, and the Carla Zampatti fund will ensure that women in our State are empowered to innovate for the future. This budget is focused on giving women more opportunities for the future, particularly in small business.

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

Ms ELENi PETINOS: The Perrottet Government is investing \$15 million to help women translate their business ideas into reality. Many initiatives will do that for women around this State, including \$3½ million for fee-free training at TAFE NSW Women in Business courses; \$2 million in grants to industry associations and chambers of commerce to run professional networking for women and small business; \$4½ million for Service NSW for Business; and, importantly, \$5 million to expand Business Connect to provide dedicated services to women-led small businesses. Business Connect has supported 44,000 small businesses since 2017, and it will continue to do that for the women in this State. Only a Liberal Government can continue to deliver a strong economy that will invest in programs and services that will make a difference. That is why the Perrottet Government is building a brighter future for women in this State.

STATE BUDGET

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (15:11): My question is directed to the Treasurer. Is the Treasurer concerned that Moody's, the rating agency, issued a report concerned about his spending spree, saying, "New recurrent spending programs will widen the State's operating deficits beyond our initial expectations in fiscal 2023 and 2024, a credit negative"?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (15:11): What I can say is that the best way to deliver a strong budget is by growing a strong economy. What did we do in this budget? We invested in the things that will grow a stronger economy for everyone, creating more opportunities for everyone in New South Wales to realise their hopes and aspirations. That is why we are investing in one of the biggest transformative reforms in this State's history.

Mr Paul Scully: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. We are getting into the same situation we had with the Treasurer's previous answer—

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough. The Treasurer was making introductory comments. He will now come directly to the question.

Mr MATT KEAN: The Treasurer was explaining to the Opposition exactly how to manage the State's finances in a way that delivers a stronger economy. We know that by increasing the participation rate of women in our economy and our policies we will see growth in the gross State product of New South Wales of up to \$17.1 billion. We are investing in those kinds of reforms because the best way to manage our finances is by growing a strong economy, and the best way to grow a strong economy is to invest in our people and give them the opportunities to compete and participate in our economy. That is exactly what we are doing. Our policies are about growing the economy and creating more prosperity and opportunities for everyone, because that is how to deliver strong revenue growth.

Mr Paul Scully: Point of order—

Mr MATT KEAN: And strong revenue growth is how to deliver a strong financial position.

Mr Paul Scully: My point of order is again taken under Standing Order 129. The question was quite specific. It was about a rating agency causing alarm about the expansion of deficits in fiscal 2023 and 2024 and a credit negative. That has not been addressed.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will come more directly to the question.

Mr MATT KEAN: We are investing in the things that will grow our economy. We know that growing our economy grows our revenues and strengthens our financial position, and that is exactly what we are doing. We are supporting families to get through these difficult times. The post-COVID era is still here, which is putting pressure on our hospital system. We have seen a once-in-a-generation flood event and we are standing by the communities of the Northern Rivers when they need us to. We will also be investing in things that will make our financial position more sustainable over the long term, and that is exactly what the ratings agencies want to see. They want to see us growing our economy and growing our revenues. The way to do that is by investing in once-in-a-generation reforms that will enable women to participate more fulsomely in our economy—growing our revenues and growing our State.

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

STATE BUDGET AND ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (15:15): My question is addressed to the Minister for Environment and Heritage. Will the Minister update the House on the New South Wales budget 2022-23 and how it is securing a brighter future for the people of New South Wales?

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly—Minister for Environment and Heritage) (15:15): A brighter future requires a beautiful environment. Yesterday's budget was a beautiful one for the environment—\$2.3 billion for environment and heritage. This funding will protect and preserve our environment and heritage across the State. The budget provides a massive boost to the National Parks and Wildlife Service with an additional investment of \$423.6 million over four years. The more people we get to visit our national parks, the more they love them. That is why the budget includes more than \$56 million to create the new Arc Rainforest Centre and Dorrigo Escarpment Great Walk, which is set to become a must-see destination for people from right around the world.

The Dorrigo Escarpment Great Walk builds on the Government's existing investments in the Wollemi and Great Southern walks, building a network of multi-day trails with accommodation in some of the best, beautiful national parks in the world, investing in nature-based tourism. It was great to hear Bellingen Shire Council Mayor Stephen Allan say that the entire mid North Coast region has been buzzing since the State Government announced this investment. He said:

This is such a huge opportunity for Dorrigo and Bellingen Shire, ...

It will not just create over 250 jobs, but will bring people from all over the world to visit our world-class site. ...

It's certainly going to put Dorrigo on the map.

In addition, there is \$120 million for the creation of a new fund to support the establishment and activation of visitation of reserves to fill critical gaps in the national parks estate and enhance regional tourism and economic benefits. The establishment of these reserves will benefit regional economies by attracting visitors and strengthening local tourism opportunities. It will also generate local jobs to deliver land management activities, such as feral animal control and fire management, as well as construction and maintenance of important visitor infrastructure. This initiative builds on the \$18 billion of economic activity annually that is generated by national parks across New South Wales.

Importantly, we also included funding in our response to the NSW Bushfire Inquiry recommendations, making 200 firefighter roles permanent to provide ongoing resources to deliver increased hazard reduction across New South Wales. We are also safeguarding the future of the World Heritage-listed Lord Howe Island, providing more than \$32 million to deliver a comprehensive biosecurity regime to protect the island's unique ecosystem from rats and other invasive species. Finally, we have committed more than \$40 million to remediate Me-Mel—also known as Goat Island. This funding will clean up and repair a jewel in Sydney Harbour and transfer the island back to the traditional owners, representing a meaningful step towards reconciliation and building a brighter future for all in our State.

ABORIGINAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (15:18): My question is directed to the Minister for Skills and Training. Considering the specific needs of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations delivering vocational education and training to First Nations people, will the Minister commit to creating a targeted funding arrangement for these important organisations?

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai—Minister for Skills and Training, and Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology) (15:19): I thank the member for Balmain for his question, and note his energetic commitment to the community of Balmain and his sincerity about this issue.

Ms Kate Washington: Everything you are not.

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

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: It is really unfortunate. The member for Balmain has asked a very serious question and all the member for Port Stephens can do is hurl abuse across the Chamber. It goes to show the concerns of those opposite for Indigenous young people in our community.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Ron Hoenig: My point of order relates to Standing Order 74. I ask the Speaker to intervene to stop a quarrel. It is for the Speaker to control people's behaviour, not the Leader of the House.

The SPEAKER: As I have indicated before, I will allow Ministers to respond to interjections. I have put the member for Port Stephens on a call to order, which indicates that it was an inappropriate interjection. The Minister may continue.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: Investing in our First Nations people is incredibly important to the Government. As the Treasurer made clear yesterday in the budget, the Government has a strong commitment to investing in better outcomes for Aboriginal people. In my former portfolio of Families, Communities and Disability Services, I had the opportunity to work closely with Aboriginal-controlled organisations and to see the great work that they do. I also acknowledge Tranby College in the electorate of Balmain. I know that the member for Balmain speaks very highly of the difference that that college is making to training Indigenous Australians.

Mr Brad Hazzard: They have for years.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: And they have for years, as the health Minister notes. The New South Wales Government is committed to providing world-class training and education for our Indigenous students. The Minister for Education and Early Learning and I meet quarterly with the Aboriginal leaders and the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group to discuss how we can increase and improve the participation of Aboriginal people in the VET sector. Eligible Aboriginal students are entitled to fee-free training in priority skill areas delivered through registered training providers. That is the best way to get the skills that they need for the jobs they want—whether it is a first job, a new job or a better job.

Through the Smart and Skilled program, Training Services NSW supports seven Aboriginal-controlled registered training organisations [RTO] across New South Wales. Earlier this year I was in the Minister for Agriculture's electorate of Dubbo and I met with two of those organisations: Bamara Education and Training, and Yilabara Solutions. They work closely with training services to deliver transformative training to young Aboriginal people to get the skills they need for the jobs they want. I was particularly struck by Blake, a young Aboriginal man who had been supported through the New South Wales Government's Aboriginal employment initiative. [*Extension of time*]

These RTOs play a critical role in training our apprentices and trainees, and in particular the tailored cultural supports and mentoring for Aboriginal Australians. The Department of Education offers a number of programs specific to Indigenous Australians. The Elsa Dixon Aboriginal Employment Grant adopts a number of strategies to develop and support Aboriginal people through the creation of training and employment opportunities. This grant subsidises the salary, development and support costs of Aboriginal employees in public service agencies and local government authorities. The Barranggirra – Skilling for Employment Initiative—a \$2.5 million initiative in 2021—allows Aboriginal people to have access to end-to-end support for learners through culturally appropriate mentoring. The program is in place to ensure successful retention and completion of training and improved training outcomes.

TAFE NSW is the largest training provider in New South Wales and also offers a number of training supports for Indigenous Australians. I acknowledge that TAFE does not suit all Indigenous learners; however, it currently is proudly training over 30,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students. Over the past three years 20 per cent of job trainer enrolments have been First Nations people.

The SPEAKER: There is too much audible conversation among Government members, particularly the member for Goulburn and the member for Tweed.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: TAFE NSW is committed to having a strong understanding of the need to provide a culturally safe study and work environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Certainly, as I go around TAFE campuses, many of them have yarning circles and other culturally appropriate supports for their Indigenous students. TAFE NSW has made substantial inroads in strengthening its relationship with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, engaging staff and stakeholders in reconciliation.

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

STATE BUDGET AND MULTICULTURALISM

Mr KEVIN CONOLLY (Riverstone) (15:24): My question is addressed to the Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors. Will the Minister update the House on how the Liberals and The Nationals are building a brighter future for multicultural communities across New South Wales?

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors) (15:25): I thank the member for Riverstone for his question and for his hard work in the electorate of Riverstone, particularly with multicultural communities.

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the member for Tweed to order for the second time. He persists in talking.

Mr MARK COURE: As members of this House know, this week marks Refugee Week. The theme is, of course, "Healing". It is a time to acknowledge the experiences of people from refugee backgrounds and the wonderful contributions that they make to our great State. More than 31,000 refugees have settled in New South Wales since 2016, all helping to make our rich multicultural society even richer. We on this side of the House value our multicultural society and the people that make it the strongest multicultural society in the world. Our biggest asset is our people. We are home to people from more than 300 different ancestries and cultures speaking more than 200 languages and practising over 144 religions. That is why we are investing \$28 million in our future. Our announcement represents the single biggest budget allocation any government has provided to supporting our multicultural communities. It is a brighter future for New South Wales. We can do this because of our strong economic management. Some \$16 million is going towards supporting our whole-of-government language services.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Macquarie Fields will come to order. I call the member for Macquarie Fields to order for the first time.

Mr MARK COURE: This will bolster our translation capabilities and ensure that vital information is accessible to everyone no matter the language they speak. This is an important announcement. It makes the Government more accessible to migrants across New South Wales.

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

Mr MARK COURE: We are also investing in a scholarship program, which will secure our State's translation and interpreting capabilities in the future. Some \$10 million will go towards festivals and events to help communities proudly celebrate their culture and identities, and \$2 million will go towards enhancing engagement with multicultural and multi-faith communities. This funding will set us up for success in the future. Thanks to this investment, we will be able to build on all the good work that we have been doing to continue building a brighter future for New South Wales families and making New South Wales the most successful multicultural society not just in Australia but the world. Communities across New South Wales have backed and supported this announcement.

Documents

AUDITOR-GENERAL

Reports

The CLERK: In accordance with section 421 of the Local Government Act 1993, I announce receipt of the Financial Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled *Local Government 2021*, dated 22 June 2022 and received this day.

Committees

COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Reports

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES: As Chair: I table report No. 4/57 of the Committee on Children and Young People entitled *Support for Children of Imprisoned Parents in New South Wales*, dated June 2022. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: BILLS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit the passage through all remaining stages at this sitting of the Bail Amendment Bill 2022.

Motion agreed to.

BUSINESS LAPSED

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that in accordance with Standing Order 105 general business notices of motions (general notices) Nos 3240 to 3268 will lapse tomorrow.

*Bills***BAIL AMENDMENT BILL 2022****Second Reading Debate****Debate resumed from 21 June 2022.**

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (15:31): Not only does the Opposition not oppose the Bail Amendment Bill 2022, it wholeheartedly supports it. In fact, the Leader of the Opposition, Chris Minns, wrote to the Premier last week asking for some bail reform to be brought before the House as a matter of urgency. We are gratified to see that that has been the case. The bill arrives in this place as a result of community concerns about bail decisions that go back to, and have been canvassed widely in the media from, late 2021. Not only the Attorney General but also many media commentators, the Opposition, others and I have said that those bail decisions were clearly out of step with community expectations. That common theme has also permeated this debate, not only in respect of the Attorney General's evidence before estimates this year but also in relation to the Parliamentary Secretary's second reading speech yesterday. In her second reading speech, the Parliamentary Secretary went through the concept of bail, its legal underpinnings and its broad legislative application. I will not go over that again. However, I simply reiterate that the preamble to the Bail Act says that the Act balances:

- (a) the need to ensure the safety of victims of crime, individuals and the community,
- (b) the need to ensure the integrity of the justice system,
- (c) the common law presumption of innocence and the general right to be at liberty.

There are a couple of concepts there: community safety and the presumption of innocence. Of course, in my view, something that needs no stressing is that community safety must always be the paramount consideration of the legal system. In respect to the presumption of innocence, the presumption of innocence most relevantly—with the application to one of the limbs of this bill—evaporates after conviction. The bill has two limbs. The first deals with the granting or application of bail post-conviction—after a person has been convicted of the offence with which they are charged.

The Government's approach to this limb of the bill arose out of media revelations of some extraordinary bail decisions. Why were they extraordinary? Let us go through some of the cases. Robert Van Gestel's offences were committed in the seventies. He was accused of five counts of committing an act of indecency and assaulting a female under the age of 16; two counts of sexual assault and committing an act of indecency with a female aged under 16; and aggravated sexual assault of a victim under the age of 16. One girl was aged between six and eight years old. He was convicted of eight historic child sex offences and was granted conditional bail in June 2022 for sentencing in October. After a media outcry, the Attorney General ordered transcripts of the decision to grant bail, and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions was instructed to apply for a detention application until sentencing. The court hearing for that application is on the fourteenth. Horrific accusations were proven by the court, a conviction was recorded and the magistrate decided to grant that fellow bail. That is not acceptable under any consideration.

Neil Duncan's offences occurred between 2018 and 2020—so they are recent offences. They include eight counts of sexually touching girls between the ages of 10 and 16. In the initial court proceedings, he was found guilty on 2 June by Justice Robyn Tupman in Queanbeyan. He was granted bail until 5 August for sentencing. He moved to Tamworth and reported to police once a week. He then subsequently attended a gymkhana on 12 June and was arrested by police. He was granted bail again at Tamworth Local Court before having to appear at Queanbeyan later in the week. There was some media discussion about that fellow. Janet Fife-Yeomans wrote an article for *The Daily Telegraph* on 10 June entitled, "Bega locals furious paedophile Neil Duncan given bail until sentencing". She wrote:

Outraged parents at Bega, on the state's south coast, have slammed the judge's decision, and warned many locals may be unaware of Neil Duncan's convictions and may "unwittingly allow their children" to go near him. They said the case was similar to that of Bega paedophile Maurice Van Ryn, the former boss of Bega Cheese, who was granted bail in 2014 after pleading guilty to child sex offences. Van Ryn's bail was only withdrawn after a public outcry prompted an intervention.

Good on the member for Bega, Dr Michael Holland, who is newly elected, for having something to say about that earlier today in this place in respect of his citizens. In discussions in this Chamber, he squarely encapsulated the concerns of the people of Bega. A third, unnamed offender was spoken about on the Ray Hadley program. That person was not named due to court suppression orders.

I asked the question: Why are they extraordinary? It was a surprise to me that people were being granted bail for serious offences post-conviction. It was a surprise to many police that I have spoken to. It was a surprise to all the magistrates and judges that I have spoken to in the past week, because they said they just do not do it. It was a surprise to the media commentators, and I think it was a surprise to the Attorney General as well. The

community were certainly surprised, and they have every right to be unhappy about those decisions. Acting on those concerns, the Leader of the Opposition wrote to the Premier last week calling for laws such as this to be brought before the Parliament as a matter of urgency, and here it is—credit where credit is due. This is what happens when there is bipartisan support for the evolution of laws that people in the community have every right to be concerned about. For post-conviction bail, the laws will mean:

... that bail must be refused by a bail decision maker—

that is, a judge, magistrate or registrar—

following conviction or a guilty plea and prior to sentencing where the offender will be sentenced to imprisonment, unless special or exceptional circumstances are established.

The discussion about exceptional circumstances has been widely canvassed in the court, and there is case law as authority for those. The Opposition supports and wholeheartedly agrees with the amendments. The second limb of the bill deals with electronic monitoring as a condition of bail. Concerns around electronic monitoring arose really substantively after the incredible case of Mostafa Baluch, who cut off an ankle bracelet and escaped law enforcement while on bail. He was on the run for two weeks. He had been granted bail after being charged with allegedly trying to import 900 kilograms of cocaine into Australia. He was charged in June 2021. A magistrate had found in October 2021 that his flight risk could be managed with strict bail conditions, including an ankle monitor and a \$4 million surety.

I am not the sort of shadow Attorney General or lawyer who is wont to criticise bail decision-makers. But when a person has the financial wherewithal and apparent international and domestic connections to import almost a tonne of cocaine into the country, I do not know how a magistrate comes up with the supposition that he is not a flight risk. But that was what the judge decided, and it turned out to be an error. That was one of the cases that the Attorney General referred to the Bail Act Monitoring Group. The second aspect of this case that is incredible is what the Opposition discovered about the electronic monitoring regime as it applied to bail, and not to parole. On 16 March, during estimates hearings, the Hon. Adam Searle pursued a line of questioning with the Attorney General.

On 10 November the Attorney General announced that he was referring a number of cases to the Bail Act Monitoring Group. They were Daniel Middlebrook, Salim Hamze, Trent Jeske and Charbel Attie. He then added two more: Jason Williams and Ahmed Karim. He did not request that the Bail Act Monitoring Group reply within a specified time frame. He treated the group's interim report as Cabinet in confidence—that means he was not going to let the public know what was in it. Furthermore, the Hon. Adam Searle asked:

Apart from the review by that existing bail monitoring group, has there been any further investigation done about whether self-arranged private surveillance measures are an appropriate risk mitigation strategy, or are you just going to rely on that advice that you get?

The Attorney General replied, "I do not know whether there has." The Hon. Adam Searle then asked:

Is there going to be a review into the outsourcing of electronic monitoring to private companies more generally?

The Attorney General replied:

Probably not. This is not something that the State organises. It is something that the accused proffer. It is different from parole, where there is electronic monitoring of sex offenders as a condition of parole—or in some domestic violence cases. This is not a State-sponsored activity. This is something that is proffered and, on one view, the court can say, "We are not satisfied as to the efficacy." I do not know operationally if the issue is with whether it is privately run or by Corrections.

We then found out that there were 32 cases of electronic monitoring applied as conditions of bail in 2020 and 47 cases applied in 2021—so nearly 100 in two years. We do not know how many have been applied this year. The Hon. Adam Searle then asked:

Can you give us answers to the following: Is there an accepted standard that devices have to meet? Is that something that the judiciary is aware of?

The Attorney General said that he would take it on notice and look into it. A few days later, *The Australian* published my comment that the public deserves to know defendants are properly monitored if allowed out on bail. I was quoted as saying:

I'm gobsmacked that the government and the courts rely on the effectiveness of monitoring devices when they know absolutely nothing whatsoever about the devices or the people who monitor and supervise them. At the very least a detailed examination needs to be done about crucial aspects of these devices so the community can have the confidence if a potentially dangerous person is being supervised electronically.

The evidence that came out in estimates under questioning from the Hon. Adam Searle was that there are no standards in respect of electronic monitoring devices. Individual evidence has to be proffered to the judge on each and every occasion. The poor old judge has to make up his or her mind about whether bail should be granted or

not in the absence of any guidance from the legislature. Labor is pleased that today the Attorney General is bringing this matter before the legislature. He is doing it by way of regulation. Somewhat curiously, proposed section 30A provides:

If bail conditions impose a requirement for the accused person to be subject to electronic monitoring—

- (a) the bail authority must be satisfied the electronic monitoring is of a standard that at least meets any minimum standards prescribed in the regulations, and
- (b) the bail condition must require the electronic monitoring to be of a standard that at least meets any minimum standards prescribed in the regulations.

On one reading, judges or magistrates, or bail authorities, cannot grant bail with a condition that there be electronic monitoring unless and until there are standards, or, on another reading, they can because there are no minimum standards to be met. I would like the Attorney General or his delegate—I am being waved at by the Parliamentary Secretary—to at least inform the House which of those two versions of the understanding of the operation of prospective section 30A applies. In conclusion, Labor supports the tightening of bail laws because these are sensible reforms to keep the community safe. As I said at the outset of my contribution, the bottom line of the legal system is, and always must be, that community safety is the paramount concern of the system. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (15:47): I contribute to the debate on the Bail Amendment Bill 2022. I endorse, in its entirety, the contribution made by the member for Maroubra. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Leader of the Opposition for immediately writing to the Government about the issue referred to by the member for Maroubra, and I acknowledge the promptness of the Government's response. It is extraordinary that the provisions of the proposed section 22B of the Bail Act are necessary. Proposed section 22B (1) (a) provides that during a period following conviction and before sentencing for an offence for which an accused person will be sentenced to imprisonment to be served by a full-time detention, a court, on a release application made by the accused person, must not grant bail or dispense with bail unless it is satisfied that special or exceptional circumstances exist that justify the decision.

In fact, that has been the practice of the courts for decades. Following conviction—typically by a jury—if a court is of the view that a full-time custodial sentence must be imposed because of either the nature of the offence or the objective seriousness of the offence, then it is only in the most exceptional circumstances that a court would grant bail. It would be unusual for it to have occurred, and it does require the intervention of the legislature to ensure that the practice is enshrined in legislation. However, I did ask the Government to consider the ramifications of proposed section 22B (5). Unfortunately, the Attorney General is not here because he has COVID. I raised the matter with the Leader of the House, who is a silk. He, in turn, raised the matter with the Attorney General. The Government has decided not to change that provision. I accept that.

Proposed section 22B (5) defines a conviction to also include a plea of guilty. Over a number of decades, at least 25 years or so, a practice has developed as a matter of common law, now enshrined in legislation, where discounts are granted to accused people who plead guilty—a 25 per cent discount is applied simply for the utilitarian value of the plea—to avoid the need of an expensive trial and the need for complainants in sexual offences to have to go through the process of a trial. It is a different matter—and different minds have different views—whether or not inducing somebody who denies their guilt by offering them a discount for a plea is a wise decision, but that matter was resolved by the Court of Criminal Appeal quite some time ago and now by statute.

The issue that the Government will need to monitor is whether or not subsection (5), if enacted—that is, conviction is defined to also include a plea of guilty—will impact upon the number of people choosing to plead guilty at the earliest opportunity. That will require some monitoring, bearing in mind the delays in getting defended matters to court. The Local Court is fixing matters where pleas of not guilty have been entered for hearing dates more than 12 months away. It currently takes up to two years to get a trial heard in the District Court due to the delays caused by COVID. So it will be important from a very early stage that the Attorney General and his department maintain communication with the heads of jurisdictions, particularly of the Supreme, District and Local courts, to ensure that the utilitarian value of the plea and the number of pleas received is not reduced because of that definition.

I cannot say the Government has not considered that. I asked it to consider that before the bill proceeded to the House. The Government has decided to go down that path and I do not take issue with that decision. The Government has consulted with the heads of jurisdictions, the New South Wales Bar Association and the Law Society of New South Wales, so I accept that the Attorney General is far more informed than I am of the impact of that provision. But it will take monitoring. I thank the Attorney General for promptly responding to the Opposition leader and for bringing the bill to the House so quickly.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (15:53): On behalf of Mr Mark Speakman: In reply: I acknowledge and welcome the contributions by the shadow Attorney General and the member for Heffron. I know that the Attorney General would much prefer to be here delivering the second reading speech on the bill and responding to the debate contributions, but he is caught up at home with COVID. I say to the Attorney General, if he is watching from home, hello and you are in safe hands. I acknowledge the contributions of the member for Maroubra and the member for Heffron. I will pick up on some of the issues they raised. For the benefit of the member for Heffron, I note that the ongoing work of the Bail Act monitoring group is continuing. I can update the House that the group's final report is expected to be received in July this year—so within a month or so—and the Attorney General and the Government have acted swiftly to enact the reforms now while waiting for that report.

I also acknowledge the contribution of the shadow Attorney General, and member for Maroubra, who highlighted the issue of community expectations. I applaud and acknowledge the swiftness of the actions of the Attorney General, his department and its officials because it is imperative that when we have issues that have been so brazenly recorded by our media—I acknowledge the work of Janet Fife-Yeomans and broadcaster Ray Hadley in talking to the issue of the community's horror about what they saw. As the member for Maroubra said, people did not expect those types of circumstances to occur. I acknowledge that the Attorney General was already on the front foot, working with the officials and the agency to deal with this. That work had already started when—in the spirit of bipartisanship, I acknowledge the letter from the Leader of the Opposition did arrive. It is important that when anomalies exist and we are out of step with the community, we work in a positive way to fix those issues.

The word "any" is included in new section 30A so that electronic monitoring can be imposed if no regulations are in place. The regulations are a matter of weeks away from being tidied up. That is why the word "any" is used. I highlight that this will be the first time in Australia that rules are put in place about imposing electronic monitoring as a bail condition. We are setting that standard. I acknowledge the work of the community in ensuring that happens. I acknowledge the work of the Attorney General in moving swiftly and decisively to improve the operation of electronic monitoring. We have set the bar higher. We have consulted urgently with key stakeholders, including the legal profession, and moved quickly to incorporate practical and sound solutions in the form of this bill. The bill adds an important further protection to our existing law. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: On behalf of Mr Mark Speakman: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Community Recognition Statements

RURAL FIRE SERVICE VOLUNTEER HEIKE APPS

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro) (15:58): I recognise the significant efforts of NSW Rural Fire Service volunteer Ms Heike Apps. Heike is a member of the Jerrabomberra Creek and Lake George support brigades in the Lake George district. Heike is well respected by her peers and NSW RFS management for her dedication and important skill sets. Heike has donated a lot of her time to helping others during the past 12 months, including four days in Western Australia providing critical mapping support to the recent bushfire efforts, nine days in Northern New South Wales supporting the SES in responding to the devastating floods, and a further five days in the Hunter region, again in support of her New South Wales SES colleagues, where she deployed as part of the incident management team and geospatial mapping office. Volunteers like Heike Apps give so much of their own time, often while holding down full-time employment and missing out on important events at home. That selfless, personal sacrifice and drive to help those in need in our communities is the thread that binds our emergency service volunteers together.

MARINE RESCUE NORAH HEAD

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (15:59): I acknowledge the work of Marine Rescue Norah Head. Recently I visited the unit after it received a Community Building Partnership grant and purchased a new vehicle—a four-wheel drive—for \$65,000. It will enable the unit to tow its existing vehicle to assist other units in searches, such as on Tuggerah Lakes or further afield. The new vehicle will provide the unit with the ability to flexibly move the vessel as required. It will also assist members to use a unit vehicle, rather than their own, to attend

regional meetings and exercises, and take the boat for servicing. The additional flexibility will ensure that the Norah Head volunteers are better able to assist in emergencies wherever they are—not just off Norah Head—to deliver vital additional resources in major responses. Currently the Norah Head unit has 48 volunteers. The unit is led by Unit Commander Bill Highnett and his deputy, Julie Rostron. Well done to everyone in the unit.

MISS TEEN GALAXY AUSTRALIA MADELINE SAFAR

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (16:00): I congratulate Madeline Safar of Chipping Norton on being crowned Miss Teen Galaxy Australia 2022. She was a finalist in 2020 and now holds the title. Her achievement means that she will travel to Texas in August to represent Australia. This is a great achievement for Madeline. She will represent not only our local community but also the entire country when she competes for the international title. Leading up to the event, she will continue her work encouraging teenagers to become more confident. She will also continue doing what she can for those in the community who are less fortunate. Madeline likes to promote a healthy lifestyle, such as healthy eating habits and regular exercise, and would like to show others that hard work and dedication can lead to exciting things. I wish Madeline the best of luck in August. I look forward to hearing about her competition and results.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLIE GIBBS

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (16:00): I acknowledge the recent passing of Charlie Gibbs. Charlie was a member of the Port Kembla branch of the Australian Labor Party and a proud supporter of the Labor cause. In 1965 he migrated from Wales with his wife, Maria, and his young family. He settled in Wollongong because that he had heard much about it from the seafarers who came to port near his Welsh home town. I am glad he made that choice because he made a fantastic contribution to our community. Charlie and his late wife, Maria, were inspired by Gough Whitlam to get involved with the Labor Party. They were drawn to his leadership and ideas, and supported his aspirations and values. Charlie was well known for his good humour, cheeky smile and honesty. He was an incredibly decent man and brought that attitude and the values behind it to everything he was involved in. In 2018 he was recognised with a well-deserved McKell Award from NSW Labor for his efforts, dedication and contribution. I thank his family—Paul and Linda; Nikki and Dean; and his grandchildren—for sharing Charlie with us. He will be missed. On behalf of his family, I also acknowledge the wonderful care provided to him since mid-2020 at Uniting Farmborough Residential Care.

NORTH STAR SPORTING CLUB

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (16:02): I recognise the importance of Mr Adam Pearlman, manager of the North Star Sporting Club, and the active members who make the club the hub of the community. Rural towns can be disadvantaged by distance. Returning home late at night, with unexpected surprises such as kangaroos and potholes, makes socialising difficult and even dangerous. A vibrant club just down the road brings the community together, not only for entertainment but for all the advantages of caring for one another. Recently the club hosted the North Star touch championships, in which the club played against the Vicarage Cafe touch team and then celebrated with a barbecue. The club holds seafood nights and pizza nights. An extension is forthcoming for a children's room to ensure family attendance. Many occasions are celebrated at the club. It also hosts important community meetings when North Star comes together to improve the lives of others. I congratulate Adam and his team on the club's success and commend him for his commitment to the club and the community.

STRATHFIELD YOUTH ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (16:02): I congratulate the many outstanding young people who were recognised in this year's Strathfield Youth Achievement Awards ceremony. These awards are organised by the Rotary Club of Strathfield, with support from Strathfield Council, to acknowledge the achievements and contributions of our local young people. With categories for arts and culture; environment; community service; science and technology; and sports, the awards are an important recognition of the contributions made by young people to the social, cultural and civic life of our local communities.

Youth engagement is a vital part of understanding our communities and strengthening social cohesion and wellbeing. I was lucky enough to attend the ceremony earlier this month and talk with some of the wonderful young people energising our community. I congratulate all award recipients, including the Meriden Tildesley tennis team, which was awarded the Team Sports Award; Ci A Lee, who was awarded the Roy Ellis Shield Young Sportsman of the Year; and Jasmine Ye, who was awarded the President's Award. The diverse areas of youth excellence on display demonstrate a cohort passionate about engaging and making a difference. I commend all award recipients and encourage their continued enthusiasm and engagement across their various fields of recognition.

CAMMERAY GOLF CLUB

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (16:03): Sport and recreational opportunities are essential to the health and wellbeing of any community. I make special mention of the Cammeray Golf Club for its longstanding contribution to the life of Willoughby. Established in 1906, the Cammeray Golf Club has a long and rich history, and is the third-oldest golf club in New South Wales. The club provides a local haven for recreational and professional golfers alike to refine their handicaps and delivers open space for the whole community to enjoy. I thank the president, Mark Ohlsson, and general manager, Layton Gould, for their stewardship of the club in recent years, navigating challenges and pursuing a big vision to improve and modernise the club for the benefit of the community and members. The club is presently closed for redevelopment, and I await its reopening with enthusiasm. I am confident that the reconfigured golf course will provide an enhanced space for members and our local community to use and enjoy. I thank the leadership, staff and members of this great local club for their service to Willoughby and to Sydney.

FUNDRAISER MYLA EDWARDS

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (16:04): I recognise the fantastic achievement of seven-year-old Myla Edwards, an Oak Flats local who organised her own sausage sizzle in March to raise over \$3,000 for flood victims in New South Wales and Queensland. After hearing about the devastation caused by the flooding, Myla began organising the sausage sizzle with numerous lists and with the help of her friends creating signs. It was decided that all proceeds should be donated to the Red Cross and the GIVIT foundation. After the event was posted on social media, the local community rallied around the cause. The local butcher donated sausages, and others donated items to be sold on the day or spent their time running the stall on the Saturday morning. Despite the weather on the day, the community still turned out to support the cause. I congratulate Myla and the Oak Flats community. This demonstrates the real community spirit that we have seen time and again.

BMX CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITOR BRODY WILLMOTT

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (16:05): Congratulations to Brody Willmott, a year 5 student from Bethany Catholic Primary School in my electorate. Brody has been a rising star in the Australian BMX community for more than two years. He has finally been able to compete at a national level after two years of events being cancelled due to COVID-19. He got into the Australian team and will be travelling to France in July to compete. At 10 years old, Brody—known among his teammates by his racing number, 321—is the youngest member of his team, Team Redline Australia. In 2021 Brody finished second in the AusCycling National BMX Championships in the 9 Boys category. He had a promising start in the AusCycling New South Wales State series, finishing first in all motos, semifinals and finals in the first round of the 20-inch bike division for boys aged eight to 10. In April he finished third in the Oceania Championships final and fourth in the final of the third round of the AusCycling BMX National series. I wish Brody Willmott all the best for when he competes in France next month. I look forward to seeing what else he can achieve in BMX in the future.

BELLAMBI NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (16:06): I acknowledge and congratulate Cath Daly and the team at the Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre on the centre's reopening. The Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre has experienced increased demand over the past two years, and it is a credit to the board, the volunteers and all the team at the centre for ensuring that the community was looked after during a very difficult time. It was a pleasure to be part of the reopening of the centre. I give a special mention to the children from Bellambi Primary School for their welcome to country. I was joined by our new Federal member, Alison Byrnes, and our local councillor, Richard Martin. The Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre plays a vital role in the community by providing groceries and care packages for needy families. For over 40 years, the centre has been a place for the community to meet, share, play, learn and grow. The reopening will allow the Young Beans Cafe program to restart, giving young people hospitality skills to help them secure jobs. Thank you to the team at the centre for their dedication and hard work.

CENTENNIAL PARKLANDS FOUNDATION

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (16:07): On Sunday 5 June I joined the Centennial Parklands Foundation to unveil 185 new pavers at the Celebration Steps near Willow Pond in Centennial Park. This year 170 pavers were donated by the community and 15 were donated by the foundation. They were dedicated to honouring frontline workers who went above and beyond their duties during the pandemic. I recognise local recipients, including Our Big Kitchen, Bondi; The Run Squad nurse, Rachelle McCue; all the staff at St Vincent's Hospital, including nurse Fiona Cattell; the Prince of Wales Hospital intensive care unit and adult recovery unit nurses; and the staff at the Nelune Comprehensive Cancer Centre. I thank the foundation, including chair, Rebekah Giles, and governors Suzie Blinmen, Fiona de Jong, Macgregor Duncan, Caroline Gurney,

Matthew Hunter and Daniel Janes. They do a tireless job of helping to preserve, protect and enhance our precious and beautiful Centennial Parklands for the whole community.

TRIBUTE TO NEIL EAGLE

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (16:08): I acknowledge the recent passing of water advocate Neil Eagle. Neil was very well known in the water space for his tireless fight for sensible water management, particularly around the impacts of the Basin Plan on irrigated agriculture and across rural communities. Neil was always generous with his time and with sharing information, and he was always up for a chat about water. Personally, I had a great many chats and informative conversations with Neil over the years. A former citrus grower in Barham, Neil's passion for water ran so deep that he co-authored a book, *High And Dry*, and was in the process of collaborating on another one. Neil was always about identifying the problem and looking for a practical and collaborative solution. He was passionate about protecting the health of our rivers and striking a balance between the environment and irrigation to ensure a sustainable future for agriculture and our communities. Neil's decades of historical knowledge of the river and the operation of the system will be sadly missed.

MINI-MOS COMMUNITY FUN RUN

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:09): On Sunday I had the absolute pleasure of joining with members of my local community for the running of the fortieth Mosman Mini-Mos Community Fun Run. Although it was a chilly and wet start to the morning, nothing was going to stop our determined runners. I thank all the runners, volunteers and members of the community who attended to raise money for Mosman Public School and its chosen charity this year, the Be Centre Foundation. Congratulations to our two-kilometre run female placegetters, Aurelia Stewart, Ava Kennard and Esther Jenner, and our male placegetters, Harrison Thomas, Harry Nicholson and Sam Hewitt. Congratulations to the female placegetters in the five-kilometre run, Imogen Howard, Emma Walton and Poppy O'Brien, as well as our male placegetters, Cameron Sutherland, Angus Hammersley and Seb Page. I give a special congratulations to the female placegetters in the 10-kilometre run, Rebecca Lowe, Sophie Brown and Alex Barnes, and the male placegetters, Ed Goddard, Jack Green and Tom Giles. They were very fast. Congratulations to the Mosman Public School community, the many thousands of people involved and the entire Mini-Mos team for arranging such an amazing event, complete with a wonderful school fair with rides, stalls and fundraising for our community.

COOGEE PENGUINS WINTER SWIMMING CLUB SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (16:10): I give a huge congratulations to the Coogee Penguins Winter Swimming Club, which has celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary. After 75 years of cold Sunday mornings down at the Ross Jones Memorial Pool on Coogee Beach, one might expect the long-time members to have grown as cold and bitter as the weather they swim in, but the Penguins never fail to create a warm and inclusive family environment for anyone who comes along to take the plunge. Winter swimming is a staple activity of the Eastern Suburbs. Penguins, Eskimos, Splashers and Icebergs—there is a winter swimming club for everyone. I give a special shout-out to the Emperor Penguin, Mick McMahon; club president, Todd Mison; vice-president, Gemma Lumley; and secretary, Christine Devine; along with every member and volunteer who has contributed to the success and longevity of this great club. Happy seventy-fifth birthday.

MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCATE JONO MOSLEY

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (16:11): I recognise an outstanding member of our community, Jono Mosley of Engadine. In May, Peter Elwin, an aged-care resident suffering dementia, got lost in the Royal National Park. Local police were searching for the man, with no luck. Jono did not know this man; however, he went searching for him and miraculously found him after walking a kilometre into the Royal National Park and then a further 30 metres into thick bushland. I commend Jono for his kindness and community spirit. At the beginning of June, Jono began a push-up challenge to raise awareness and funds for mental health. He has committed to performing 3,139 push-ups, which represents the number of lives lost to suicide in 2020, with an initial goal to raise \$8,000. He completely surpassed that, with \$20,000 raised, and has now set a goal of \$25,000. I congratulate Jono on his achievement and sincerely thank him for his amazing contribution to the community and to mental health.

ARMENIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF AUSTRALIA

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (16:12): On Thursday 16 June 2022 I had the pleasure of meeting with Mr Michael Kolokossian and Ms Arineh Izmirlian of the Armenian National Committee of Australia [ANC] to discuss issues relevant to the Armenian community in Fairfield. Armenian youth have a keen interest in politics and the Australian democratic system, and we discussed the youth outreach programs the ANC has in the pipeline. We also chatted about the work of the Armenian Resource Centre in the community. The centre services the Armenian community and provides not only assistance with visa and travel documents but also has expanded its

operations to include mental health assistance and domestic violence support. I thank Michael and Arineh for taking the time to update me on the ANC's work, and I thank the ANC for its continued support to the Armenian community in Fairfield.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST RECIPIENTS HAWKESBURY

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (16:13): I congratulate four residents of Hawkesbury and one resident of The Hills who were named in the Queen's Birthday Honours list this year. They include Hawkesbury's very own chess master, Mr Brian Jones, of North Richmond. He was made a Member of the Order of Australia for his considerable contribution to chess. Mr Jones has been playing the game for nearly 70 years, and his passion has taken him around the world and seen him receive awards from the International Chess Federation and the Australian Chess Federation. I was pleased to see the Medal of the Order of Australia awarded to Ms Marjorie Clark of Wilberforce for her service to community history. Marjorie has been a great volunteer with the Australiana Pioneer Village, which reopened a couple of weeks ago, after the floods. I put something about it on Facebook and 20,000 people viewed it. Hopefully they will all visit. It is an amazing place. Mr Dennis Mitchell and his wife, Margaret Mitchell, of Ebenezer; Ms Muriel Picton of Tennyson; and Mr James Butler were also awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST RECIPIENT JENNIFER JONES

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (16:15): I congratulate Jennifer Jones, who was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the general division in the Queen's Birthday Honours for her lifelong service to children's and family health nursing. Jennifer has been a registered nurse since 1976 and a clinical nurse consultant from 1990, and is a family partnership coordinator with the Child and Family Health Nursing Service. Her professional experience includes working as a clinical supervisor to midwives for Far West Area Health Service, the Royal Flying Doctor Service and the Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation, and in the operating theatres and emergency department at The Children's Hospital at Westmead. As part of her extensive nursing career, Jennifer was the clinical coordinator of children's and family health in services for displaced persons from Kosovo and East Timor as part of the Australian Government's Operation Safe Haven. She worked as a nurse and researcher in Dili at the children's and family health clinic. Her expertise in nursing is recognised by her appointment as a lecturer and honorary associate at the University of Technology, Sydney. She is a worthy recipient of this award.

LAWN BOWLER NATASHA VAN ELDIK

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (16:16): Today I am excited to announce a local legend who is taking the lawn bowls world by storm: Natasha Van Eldik, who will make her fourth Commonwealth Games appearance at the 2022 Birmingham games. Natasha will join the Australian Jackaroos squad in July as the eighteenth person to compete against the world's elite lawn bowlers for her chance to win her third Commonwealth Games gold medal. Natasha will accompany the Jackaroos next month in the UK to play in a series of matches against other countries before taking to the games to compete in the women's triples and fours, in efforts to defend Australia's 2018 Gold Coast games title. With a résumé to rival any other in lawn bowls, the 31-year-old has made over 330 international appearances for Australia and was the first woman to win three singles titles at the Australian open held on the Gold Coast this year. Natasha's journey to selection for the 2022 games followed a series of camps held over the past 12 months, including tours of the United Kingdom and events at Mount Tamborine, Queensland, which cemented her position on the side. Congratulations and best wishes for the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

PRINCIPAL'S SCHOLARSHIP AWARD WINNER BELINDA GIUDICE

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (16:17): I offer our community's and my personal congratulations to Belinda Giudice, the Principal of Prairiewood High School, on being awarded a Harvard Graduate School of Education 2022 principal's scholarship. Prairiewood High School has had a difficult few years, which included being part of the hard COVID-19 lockdown in western Sydney. However, under Ms Giudice's leadership the school has achieved outstanding 2021 HSC results, the best results in the school's history. A tribute to Ms Giudice's leadership is that she has maintained a dedicated focus on learning as the school's core business while providing students with wellbeing and support. The benefit Ms Giudice will receive from the educational program at Harvard University will not only have a lasting impact on further enhancing her leadership skills as an educator but will also positively impact on her students, the school and the wider community. I thank Belinda Giudice for her outstanding service and dedication to our community. I am excited to witness what more she will achieve after completing this scholarship.

SPORTS COACH ANTHONY KELLY

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (16:18): I recognise sports coach Anthony Kelly, Mr "Kung Fu" Kelly, for breaking another one of his 53 Guinness World Records, being the first person to secure

25 separate sport coaching qualifications. Mr Kelly is also the world's fastest catcher, catching paintballs, arrows and high-speed tennis balls, awards for which hang proudly in his home at the New England Martial Arts Centre. Mr Kelly says that martial arts qualifications are some of the most difficult to achieve. By investigating other sports, he has understood more about human body movement, becoming a better athlete for himself and the teaching of others. Helping athletes improve in the best ways possible many years ago spawned a passion to gain certifications in all sports, and the quest continues for Kung Fu Kelly. I congratulate Mr Kelly on breaking yet another Guinness World Record. I commend him for his passion for helping sportspeople through the benefits of exemplary coaching.

OURIMBAH CREEK LANDCARE

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (16:19): Ourimbah Creek Landcare recently received \$100,000 from the Environmental Trust, which will support positive environmental outcomes in the Ourimbah Creek riparian zone rehabilitation program at Palm Grove. I am pleased by the support this dedicated group of volunteers will get from this grant for their work to protect and rehabilitate this important ecosystem. I recently visited the site and met with all the volunteers: Colette Livermore, Tony Voller, Ray Galway, Inka Bathram, Ian Playford, Brian Patterson, Kay Voller and Robyn Nutley. I commend all of the volunteers for their incredible work in taking care of the environment in such a selfless way by restoring and protecting such a significant environmental site.

BAGALA BROS AUSTRALIA

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (16:20): I congratulate Bagala Bros Australia, a family flower grower located in Horsley Park in my electorate. It has recently been listed as a finalist in the 2022 Sydney Markets Fresh Awards for Flower Grower of the Year. Its rose farm has been maintained for two generations over 40 years. Its quality rose varieties are grown in a year-round production facility using hydroponics and are the source of many cut flowers locally, nationally and internationally. Bagala Bros can be found selling at Sydney Flower Markets, in Homebush. The Sydney Markets Fresh Awards recognise best practice and innovations in fresh produce, flower growing and retailing. Bagala Bros Australia is competing against three other finalists to be crowned the flower grower of the year at the awards night on 29 June 2022. If it wins, it will be showered in recognition and all due awards, including an interview with journalist Chris Bath. I along with the rest of the Horsley Park community will have my fingers crossed in hopes for Bagala Bros Australia's win.

WORLD PARA SWIMMING CHAMPIONSHIP PARTICIPANT TIM HODGE

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (16:21): I congratulate Tim Hodge from Auburn Swim Club on his outstanding performances at the World Para Swimming Championships in Portugal last week. Tim broke a 14-year standing world record in the men's 200-metre individual medley SM9 event on the second night of the meet, shaving 17/100th of a second off Paralympic legend Matt Cowdrey's former record set at the Beijing Paralympics. It was one of three medals he took home from the world championships, also winning gold in the mixed 4 x 100 metres relay and bronze in the 100 metres backstroke S9. This is in addition to two silvers and a bronze he took home from the Tokyo Paralympics last year. The Para-Dolphins took home seven gold, 15 silver and nine bronze medals at the world championships, becoming the first ever Australian travelling swim team where every eligible athlete brought home a medal. I give congratulations to Tim, the Para-Dolphins and the team at Auburn Swim Club on his fantastic performances. I wish them all the very best for the Birmingham Commonwealth Games next month.

ATHLETE HARRY KEATS

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (16:22): Harry Keats from Bowral is just 12 years old but is already achieving great things with his running. The Berrima District Sports Awards committee regularly nominates a sportsperson of the month to acknowledge some of the talented athletes across the region. Harry Keats was named the junior recipient in February of this year, following his successful outing at the regional Little Athletics championships, where he placed first in the 200-, 400-, 800- and 1,500-metre events. Harry then placed first in the under-12s 400-, 800-, and 1,500-metre events at the Little Athletics State Track and Field Championships in March. With these State victories under his belt and the wind at his back, Harry went on to run in the Australian Track and Field Championships at Sydney Olympic Park, where he won a bronze medal in the under-14s 800-metre race, with a personal best of two minutes and eight seconds. Little Harry has done well with his incredible achievements so far. I wish him every success in his athletic endeavours in the future.

NEUTRAL BAY PUBLIC SCHOOL PAMPERED POOCH PARADE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:23): I spent a "pawfect" Sunday this week with the Neutral Bay Public School community and members of the Neutral Bay Club as a judge at the inaugural Pampered Pooch Parade. It was one of the toughest roles I have had but also one of the best. The event was the shared vision of Liz Henry, the Neutral Bay Public School P&C president, and Peter Lewis, the general manager of the Neutral Bay

Club, who wanted to bring the community together to raise funds for Neutral Bay Public School in a safe, fun and social way, and they did. I acknowledge the Neutral Bay Public School P&C, which was instrumental in pulling the whole event together, and Liz Henry, Elizabeth Barnett and Rachel Thompson in particular. I acknowledge Peter Lewis from the Neutral Bay Club, as well as the outstanding effort of the members of the Neutral Bay Club, the paw patrol, who were selected from the bowls committee and were given the rather onerous task of organising human and dog contestants alike. Congratulations to everyone who entered and competed on the day, particularly to over 350 members of our community, human and animal, who attended to help raise funds for Neutral Bay Public School, along with their sponsors. It is safe to say that, after such a successful event, plans are already underway for next year's parade.

LIFELINE TOUKLEY

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (16:24): I congratulate the new Lifeline shop in Toukley on a successful opening and on currently trading as the best performing of Lifeline's four Central Coast shops. Lifeline Toukley is run by volunteers, and Lifeline centres give their proceeds from the shops to help fund the 13 11 14 service and services such as free face-to-face counselling. Lifeline calls are up 25 per cent since floods and COVID. Lifeline offers counselling to people aged 16 or older and does not charge for its counselling services. Lifeline also offers free financial counselling. I acknowledge the manager, Noelle Kelly, and the volunteers for the great job that they do in our community.

DAVID AND MELISSA LOWELL

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (16:25): I congratulate Mr David and Mrs Melissa Lowell on their contribution to Bundarra through the Bundarra General Store, an historic icon servicing the community continuously since 1902. I acknowledge the support the Lowells have provided for Bundarra Central School, the local show, campdraft events and many community groups. The store provides a valuable Centrelink access point and the Australia Post pick-up mail point, without which the locals would have to travel to Armidale or Inverell. I commend Mr and Mrs Lowell for their active support of Bundarra.

NSW PUBLIC SCHOOLS DANCE ENSEMBLES

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (16:26): I congratulate Jamie Byrnes of James Fallon High School, who received the Tom Bradley Encouragement Award for a New South Wales State dance ensemble. The award was presented on 3 June at Griffith. Jamie, a year 11 student, has been acknowledged two years in a row and was selected from 274 Riverina participants from public schools across the region. James Fallon High School was one of 15 public schools taking part in the event, which provided an opportunity for students of all ages and calibre to shine. A special mention must be made of year 12 students Samara Sergi of James Fallon High School and Sophie Dawson of Albury High School, who have also been acknowledged in the NSW Public Schools dance ensembles. It is an outstanding accomplishment for locally talented students. I say well done to Jamie, Samara and Sophie for putting their hearts and souls into dance.

BEAUTY POINT PUBLIC SCHOOL FESTIVAL OF LIGHT

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:27): Recently I joined the Beauty Point Public School community for their inaugural Festival of Light. The night was a great success where the wider Mosman community came together to raise money for Beauty Point public. So far, \$20,000 has been raised, which is an incredible effort, and I thank everyone who attended alongside me and my children to support Beauty Point Public School. I acknowledge the year 4 committee that organised the event and all the volunteers who manned stalls. I give a special thankyou to the school's P&C Association—Lauren Scott, Phillipa Quinn, Alex Buckley, Seema Manguzha, Jen Pole, Alexandra Mowday, Bernadette Facer, Jess Ozbay, Audrie Purcell and Lauren Adlam—for its efforts. I recognise the principal, Marion Walsh-Gay, and the work of all the staff and teachers, as well as David Murphy Residential for its support as this year's major sponsor. The crowds were dazzled by the spectacular laser show and the Vivid-esque window light displays created by the students. The festival featured the usual carnival rides and slides, a range of food and game stalls, and live music from some of the school bands. It was a great variation on the historic fireworks night. I congratulate all on a successful evening.

Private Members' Statements

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST RECIPIENTS VAUCLUSE

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (16:28): I congratulate my eastern suburbs residents who have been acknowledged in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours List. The Order of Australia identifies selflessness, excellence and a commitment to service as the characteristics that recipients must embody. Awardees come from diverse walks of life and backgrounds and have served in many different ways, from medicine to community service to business. I congratulate the 17 recipients from the Vaucluse electorate. In alphabetical order and with

no comment on their relative merit, I first mention Rose Bay resident Dr Racheline Marlene Barda, OAM, for her services to the Jewish community of Sydney. Dr Barda is a lecturer at the University of Sydney in the Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies and has been a volunteer guide at the Sydney Jewish Museum for 25 years.

Rose Bay resident Måns Carlsson, OAM, was honoured for his services to the sustainable investment sector. He is a board director and chair of the Responsible Investment Association Australasia's Human Rights Working Group and a member of the Australian Government's Modern Slavery Expert Advisory Group. He is a valued resident and one I work with closely in relation to matters in the Watsons Bay area where he and his family are residents. Vacluse resident Ian Denton, OAM, was honoured for his service to secondary education as a teacher and head teacher of mathematics, and Bondi resident Professor Basil Donovan, AO, was honoured for distinguished service to biology and data science, research and tertiary education. Professor Donovan leads the Sexual Health Program at the University of New South Wales Kirby Institute and is a sexual health and public health physician.

Vacluse resident Professor Peter Gerangelos, AM, was honoured for his significant service to tertiary legal education, particularly to constitutional law and to professional organisations. Professor Gerangelos is a professor of constitutional law at the University of Sydney Law School, fellow of the Australian Academy of Law and legal practitioner of the Supreme Court of New South Wales and the High Court of Australia. Betty Klimenko, AM, was honoured for her significant service to motorsports and to charitable organisations. Betty established the Saunders Family charitable program along with her sister Monica Saunders-Weinberg. Rose Bay resident Alan Landis, OAM, was honoured for service to the decorative and fine arts. He is a life fellow of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, past president and member of the Australian Antique and Art Dealers Association and a founding member of the Silver Society of Australia and the Australiana Society.

Bellevue Hill resident Gilla Liberman, AM, was honoured for her service to the Jewish community. Gilla has dedicated over 40 years to WIZO, the Women's International Zionist Organisation, which supports Jewish women and children. Bondi resident Leslie Loble, AM, was honoured for her significant service to public administration and to education. Leslie is a recognised leader of public purpose reform and a fellow of the Paul Ramsay Foundation. Bellevue Hill resident Professor Rebecca Mason, AM, was honoured for her significant service to tertiary education, and to professional associations. Professor Mason is a researcher at the University of Sydney and deputy director of the Bosch Institute. She is internationally recognised for major contributions to the field of vitamin D research. Bellevue Hill resident Derek McDonnell, OAM, was honoured for his service to cultural heritage, particularly to literature. Derek is co-founding director of Hordern House Rare Books in Sydney, and has worked with the State Library of New South Wales, the Historic Houses Trust and the Australian National Maritime Museum since 1991.

Rose Bay resident Brian Myerson, OAM, was honoured for his service to community health, particularly organ donation. He founded ShareLife, an organisation that advocates for and shares information on organ donation. Dover Heights resident Miri Orden, OAM, of the National Council of Jewish Women was honoured for her 15 years of service to the Jewish community. I often meet Miri through her leadership role at the Jewish Folk Centre in Woollahra. She also founded Our Kitchen Hand, a skills-building program, with the support of JewishCare and Our Big Kitchen, to encourage community participation for people with disability. Dover Heights resident James Pozarik, OAM, was honoured for his service to photography. James, better known as Jimmy, is a volunteer at the Sydney Children's Hospital, Randwick, and photographer for the foundation since 2012.

The late Carol Raye, AM, was honoured for her significant services to the performing arts as an actor and producer. Point Piper resident Alan Rydge, AM, was honoured for his significant service to event hospitality and the entertainment industry. Alan is chair of Event Hospitality and Entertainment, and has been chairman of Greater Union since 1980 and chair of Rydges Hotels since 1987. Finally, but not least, of course, Vacluse resident Shira Nina Sebban, OAM, was honoured as a writer and as a member and volunteer refugee advocate of Supporting Asylum Seekers Sydney. She also serves as a guide at the Sydney Jewish Museum. I warmly congratulate each of the recipients I mentioned, and their families, on the awards. They have made a unique and exemplary contribution to our State and the nation and, on behalf of the Vacluse electorate, I warmly thank each of them.

STATE BUDGET AND BANKSTOWN ELECTORATE

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (16:33): I take this opportunity to speak in response to the Government's twelfth budget in this Chamber since it was elected in 2011. Once again, it is very clear to my constituents that the Liberal-Nationals Government has a blatant disregard for the Bankstown community. It is very disappointing to see the lack of funding in the 2022-23 budget for vital infrastructure in my electorate. I note with great concern, of course, that the Government has splashed quite a bit of money across the State at this time, which it is doing in preparation for its own marginal electorates at the next election.

In 2019 the Government made a particular promise 10 days prior to the State election that I will continue to hold it to account for—that is, a brand new \$1.3 billion hospital for the communities of Bankstown and East Hills. Yesterday I noticed in the budget papers that to date \$10 million has been spent on the new Bankstown hospital. But there is no new hospital. No site has been earmarked. There is not even a glossy brochure to show any details or information about the hospital. What we have is a line marking in a budget that says the money is there. Some \$10 million has already been spent and the \$109 million allocated to date has been rolled over from the last budget into this budget. What has the \$10 million has been spent on to date? Today I lodged that question to the health Minister in writing. I have continually asked the Minister and the Government what has happened with that announcement.

There is no doubt that the announcement was a big clincher in 2019. Huge amounts of pamphlets were produced telling us there was to be a new hospital. It was all over the material of the then candidate for East Hills, now member for East Hills. On the day that it was announced, all that material was letterboxed and direct mailed into the electorate of East Hills. Every resident in East Hills and Bankstown needs to ask where is this new hospital? Where will it be built, and why do we have nothing to show for the \$10 million that has been spent to date? I will continue to ask those questions. We do not have a critical services plan or any final vision on where it will be located and precisely what the \$1.3 billion will be spent on.

I have concerns about many other projects. Clearly, yesterday we saw that the Sydenham to Bankstown metro will be delayed by one year, which begs the question of what will happen to reinstating the services west of Bankstown. To date we have been promised that by 2024, once the metro is up and running, there will be a partial restoration of services west of Bankstown. It is clear from the budget yesterday that the Government has finally admitted it has absolutely overspent with the metro. It is well behind schedule. A 12-month delay in that project most likely means that the restoration of partial services west of Bankstown will also be delayed. Today I also put that question in writing to the Minister for Transport so that a response will be provided formally to Parliament to explain precisely what will happen to the services west of Bankstown because of that 12-month delay.

That is a significant delay to an infrastructure project such as the Sydenham to Bankstown metro. Clearly, the Government has decided to redirect its money. Yesterday the Government made \$37 billion worth of announcements. That is more than Anthony Albanese and Scott Morrison announced at the Federal election. The amount of money announced yesterday was extraordinary. Given that 3½ years ago the Government made an announcement to provide a new hospital to our community, who could believe it? I will continue to hold the Government to account, particularly on the issue of the hospital and services west of Bankstown.

STATE BUDGET AND MULGOA ELECTORATE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (16:38): It is a privilege to speak on the 2022-23 New South Wales budget, which will deliver a bright future for New South Wales. I am especially pleased to see that the budget has a strong focus on families and western Sydney. Both make up the backbone of the New South Wales economy, and I am proud to represent the electorate of Mulgoa in western Sydney in this place where the budget has delivered some of the most vital measures to ensure that families, small businesses and women will get ahead, and where children will get the best start in life. In my electorate, critical pieces of infrastructure, such as Mamre Road, Mulgoa Road and the new M12, all received funding boosts in the budget and will be essential to families and their livelihoods. As the Western Sydney Airport continues to be built, my community is witness to one of the biggest transformations in western Sydney in the State's history.

The aerotropolis will bring jobs, homes, infrastructure and growth, which are vital to the people who will soon depend on it to raise their families in the best State to work and live. I pay special attention to the critical investment that has been made to a once-in-a-generation reform that will help unlock women's ability to bolster the State's economy and give children the best and brightest start to life. Reforms such as universal pre-K and more affordable preschool will help increase women's participation in the workforce. It will help to increase economic activity in New South Wales by up to \$17.1 billion and help families bring home up to an additional \$4,440 in household income. It will increase New South Wales Government revenue by up to \$3½ billion to help pay for the essential services that we all rely on.

After boosting families, the budget goes even further by boosting communities in western Sydney. One of the greatest investments ever to be made in western Sydney is the WestInvest Fund. Some \$5 billion will be allocated to local communities to fund critical projects necessary to improve their local communities. The program gives funding to eligible community groups, local councils and other non-government organisations to fund new facilities, amenities, parks, shared pathways, sports fields and so much more. If it is a critical community project, the WestInvest Fund is there to deliver the essential funds that communities in my electorate need.

I make special note of the investment that the budget makes to boost the budgets of families and ease the cost of living. Families and households in my electorate are set to benefit from a \$1.3 billion investment for the Brighter Beginnings affordable preschool initiative as well as mobile preschool and long day care to provide fee relief for families with children across the community. There will be \$520 million spent over two years to deliver the new toll rebate scheme, where every quarter eligible non-businesses and small businesses will receive a 40 per cent rebate for every dollar spent on tolls once they reach a minimum of \$375. That saves New South Wales drivers up to \$750 a year. Some \$193 million has been allocated to the Back to School Payment Scheme from the start of 2023, providing \$150 for every New South Wales schoolchild to offset the cost of school supplies.

Measures such as those will deliver a brighter future for families across my electorate and New South Wales. Our children will get the best and brightest start to life. Families will get the critical investments necessary to improve their local communities and ease the cost of living so that they can achieve their aspirations. The budget unlocks the power of women and enables them to bolster the New South Wales economy, moving our State from good to great. It also enables them to achieve their own personal ambitions and aspirations. We can always be better. We can always improve, and this budget makes great leaps to deliver results for the families of this State. The budget is full of ideas. It is full of bold innovation and the courage to deliver a brighter future for our communities.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST RECIPIENT GEORGE NICOLAIDIS, OAM

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (16:43): Recently Blacktown City Council honoured former mayor and councillor George Nicolaidis, OAM, with the key to the city. His distinguished service to the community spans more than three decades and was recognised at a ceremony with his family; Mayor Tony Bleasdale, OAM; CEO Kerry Robinson; and former alderman, George Perrin. George Nicolaidis was born in Egypt to Greek parents and migrated to Australia in 1949. He was first elected to council in 1965. George was one of the first postwar immigrants to serve on a local council in Sydney. He served on council from 1965 to 1983, 1987 to 1995 and 1999 to 2004. He was also elected mayor from 1974 to 1976.

George's experience of migration and his dutiful engagement with public life gave him a wealth of knowledge and community service for the betterment of his community. His service as councillor is notable for his constant advocacy for infrastructure development, including much-needed improvements to local roads. He is also known for his important work in both the Rooty Hill Progress Association and the Mount Druitt Historical Society. His work towards the preservation of the city's heritage is particularly evident through his extensive historical photographic record over the decades, which has been made available to all online via the Blacktown City Libraries' Blacktown Memories site. His photographs capture local places rendered wholly unfamiliar to much of today's audiences, thanks to the vast expanse of time.

I was fortunate in my time as a fellow former councillor and deputy mayor of Blacktown City Council to have been the instigator in the restoration of The Manse, the oldest surviving building in Mount Druitt, which the New South Wales State heritage inventory notes as most probably being constructed in the 1880s. George advocated for and was of great assistance to the successful restoration of The Manse. Today The Manse serves as a community museum and is where the Mount Druitt Historical Society is based. It also serves as a fitting home for a portion of George Nicolaidis' photographic work. Whether as an elected member or a resident of the area, George's passion for Mount Druitt is to be commended. We all celebrate when someone is bestowed with such an honour for their exemplary civic engagement. It is a cause for even more cheer when the recognition has gone to a true local. I congratulate George.

STATE BUDGET AND NORTH SHORE ELECTORATE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:46): While we are all doing our best to move on from the past couple of challenging years, we do face a raft of new concerns. In this time of global conflict and geopolitical instability, cost-of-living pressures are biting household budgets. The people of New South Wales have shown that they are deeply resilient and able to navigate any challenge. That is why the Government has committed to a range of major policy reforms in its budget to build a brighter future for New South Wales. In releasing the budget, we have laid out a trajectory that will secure a better way of life for generations of New South Wales families. We are building that future with a focus on a once-in-a-lifetime transformation to our education system.

We are also delivering the single largest economic and social reform for women's choice, workforce participation and financial security in a generation. Women have been left behind for too long. I have been fortunate to work with the expert panel on women's economic opportunities to help ensure that women are at the heart of our budget. Female founders and entrepreneurs will be empowered to launch their own businesses and women-led startups, thanks to our \$12 million venture capital fund named after the legendary Carla Zampatti. We are increasing women's workforce participation and opportunities by investing in technology and training in order to empower their return to the workforce, and we are overhauling child care across New South Wales through a

\$5 billion reform, which will increase accessibility through ensuring supply and affordability and will return choice to women.

This once-in-a-generation economic reform will support more women to enter the workforce or take on more hours, driving down the gender workforce participation gap. This is not just good social policy. Increasing female participation in the workforce is crucial for economic growth and it will turbocharge the New South Wales economy. The Government is also investing in affordable fertility treatments, increasing support for domestic violence survivors, tackling the stigma of menopause and giving it the health funding that it needs, and supporting parents through perinatal mental health initiatives. We have backed in our commitment to ensure safe cities and safe workplaces for everyone.

We know that access to quality education can transform lives. That is why we are delivering the largest investment in public education infrastructure in the history of New South Wales. Our youngest learners will have the opportunity to thrive throughout their lives, with \$5.8 billion to fund the introduction of universal play-based pre-kindergarten learning for all New South Wales children. Evidence shows that access to early education is the building block for lifelong success, and we are ensuring that no child will miss out. The investment in families on a scale never seen before in Australia will provide a strong educational foundation and deliver intergenerational results for our kids and our economy. I know, having two small children in early learning and preschool, that caring and supportive early childhood educators are crucial to the wellbeing and development of our children. So the Government is backing up this commitment with a \$281.6 million workforce package to attract, support and retain the best early childhood workforce for New South Wales.

We are investing in a range of different infrastructure across our education system. In my community of North Shore, we already have major school upgrades underway. Construction is already occurring for a major upgrade of Mosman High School. It is the first time in more than 30 years that we have seen a major upgrade for the school. Works to undertake a major upgrade of North Sydney Demonstration School are also underway. Demolition has occurred and building will commence soon. We have also fully funded the major upgrade of Neutral Bay Public School. We acquired and have demolished the house that was located in the middle of the school grounds and have turned that area into green open space—grass—providing a 40 per cent increase in play space on an incredibly constrained school site. The designs are out today for the school community to provide feedback in order to make sure we get it right. I am really excited about that upgrade proceeding.

The Government is also taking action to ensure that the great Australian dream of home ownership is open to everyone in New South Wales. This is incredibly important for my own community of North Shore, where house prices are very high and a lot of young professionals are trying to get onto the housing ladder. It can take at least two years on average for people to save up for stamp duty alone on their first home. The Government will now offer a choice to first homebuyers purchasing a home of up to \$1.5 million to pay either an annual property tax or up-front stamp duty. We have a scheme to ensure that single parents, key workers and older singles can have funding to help support them invest in homes. Too many people are locked out of the housing market. The \$780 million shared equity trial will ensure that they can buy their own homes. The Government's record of strong financial management enables us to fund major reforms to secure a brighter future for New South Wales families.

NORTHERN RIVERS FLOODS

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (16:52): I have five minutes to put on the parliamentary record the impact that the floods of February and March have had on my electorate of Lismore and, indeed, across the Northern Rivers. These floods, particularly the one on 28 February, were like no other. They were catastrophic and have left our community reeling. The impact has been physical, economic, emotional and environmental, and it continues to this day and, I know, for a lot longer than our community would like. But that is the reality of the situation that we are in. I will talk to the devastation and the trauma but also to the community strength, because our community has shown remarkable strength during this time. I have said that we have been broken in some ways but we are not beaten.

Four months in, there is so much to do and so much not done. Terms that we usually associate with disasters not on our shores such as "humanitarian disaster" and "internally displaced populations or people" now apply across areas in my community. Another term, "human security", has taken on more meaning with homes uninhabitable, people spread far and wide, jobs gone, businesses unable to stand up, students not in their schools and local shops, goods and services simply not there. The lives of everybody who woke up on the morning of the floods have changed completely, including the things we do, the social networks and the usual shopping.

I went to the Big W opening the other day, and I thanked Big W for that. We were so excited. We all went shopping—even Minister Cooke, who was there. We were in there shopping; everybody was. Even some of my friends—my community is very diverse—said, "I never thought I'd be so excited going to a multinational corporation shop buying cheap goods that I don't want." But there were comments like that. They are not all cheap

goods; they are great goods, and I bought some good things. I am just trying to describe what is going on in the community, and the strength. I thank all the businesses that are standing up, because it is incredibly difficult but incredibly important. Communities need an economy, and ours is really battered and is just slowly inching up.

In March 3,600 houses were deemed uninhabitable—1,400 in Lismore alone. It does not mean that people will not go back into them, but they were deemed so then. In Lismore alone, 3,000 businesses were impacted. South Murwillumbah was the same, and in some places the whole town block was impacted. The Connected Learning Centre at Murwillumbah and the TAFE in Lismore were gutted. The Back Home grant was welcomed. It was \$20,000, and the State went it alone on that. The Federal Government agreed about two weeks later to stump up \$10,000. I have said that we need \$50,000, and we still need \$50,000. Queensland got a package for \$50,000 with the then Federal Government. I know that is still in play and I am still working on it, as are others. We have had the coldest winter since the thirties, and we still have people in tents or temporary accommodation going back to their houses with very little power—just two power points. It would be great if there was something we could do to make them warmer—even those gas heaters we see outside restaurants in the city. But we also need tradies to help us. Businesses are reeling.

The washing machine replacement program came out, and I am critical not of the program itself, which is a good program, but that the Government has picked one whitegoods supplier in our area. It is applied for online and the suppliers are not all local. That happened during COVID and we took it up, but it would have been preferable to allow people to pick their own few providers who were selling whitegoods in our area. I heard the Treasurer saying in question time earlier today that the Government prides itself on being the party of choice. I know I digress a little, but there was no choice there. My community need choices as we rebuild. At least 1,300 people remain in emergency accommodation. I will continue this contribution at another time.

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (16:57): I recognise the comments of the member for Lismore. I thank her for bringing to our attention what her community are still battling with, and it is important that is on the record in a private member's statement. I appreciate her comments.

TRIBUTE TO ROSS SMITH

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:57): On 4 October 2016 the Waterloo community lost one of its most powerful voices with the sudden death of Mr Ross Smith, who was my friend and a proud member of the Alexandria branch of the ALP. Most importantly, Ross Smith was a tireless campaigner for the Waterloo public housing community, lending his voice to tenants who felt trapped in the very system that was supposed to provide a safety net for protection against society's ills. On 13 May 2022, at the heart of the Waterloo housing estate, I joined a gathering of housing officials, community workers, activists and tenants—most of whom would have considered Ross Smith a friend—for the unveiling of a memorial bench to honour his memory. Almost five years after his untimely death, Ross Smith's work to protect the rights of the Waterloo public housing community continues.

In January 2016 the Liberal Party announced its Future Directions for Social Housing policy. Ross Smith saw the proposal for what it was—the liquidation of public housing land for developers. We call it privatisation; those seated opposite me call it asset recycling. Ross was one of the first and strongest voices against the Future Directions policy. His objection to the Liberal policy was simple: Selling public housing stock to developers under the guise of renewing aging public assets will reduce the number of public housing placements, both in real and in aggregate terms. Ross pointed to the experience in other jurisdictions—most notably in London, where the sell-off of public housing assets to rebuild aging public housing stock led to a reduced number of homes for tenants. That means the thousands of applicants on the waiting list for public housing assistance or waiting to transfer to a new property lose out.

Ross argued that once the contracts are signed and the developers begin the demolition of public assets, the units that were originally set aside for social housing will be sold off to private buyers under the guise of protecting the returns on investment. Those conversations equate to my view. That position, which some have described as hard line, reasserts the obligation of the Government to invest in the refurbishment of aging public housing stock. Therein lies the gulf dividing the Labor Party and the conservatives: Labor sees it as an imperative of any responsible government to invest money to secure the social safety net, and that is public housing. The words of the late Ross Smith have just as much significance now as they did all those years ago. One need only look at the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's own Gateway determination report, where the Liberals justify increases in height limits, densities and capacities to a level that would ensure a profitable return to any developer as an enticement to purchase the site.

Never mind the fact that Waterloo is only minutes from the CBD, where hundreds of thousands of jobs are located or that they will have not two but three railway stations within 10 minutes' walking distance. Never mind that Waterloo Estate is within five kilometres from Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, the Prince of Wales Hospital,

St Vincent's Hospital and the Sydney Dental Hospital. Never mind that the University of Sydney and the University of Technology are within 20 minutes' walk and the University of NSW is a 20-minute bus ride away. Those institutions are vital in supporting low-income households so that their children may access opportunities and have every possibility of becoming contributing members of the community. They ensure that aged and disability support pensioners have access to vital health care.

With the privatisation of the Waterloo Estate, the Government is auctioning to the highest bidder our ability as a community to support those who live on the margins—to ensure children who grow up with the assistance of the State do not themselves enter the cycle of low-income subsistence. There is no better trumpet for the legacy of Ross Smith than the Perrottet Government's own determination report. Now that the consultation period is over, it is time for the Government to draw a line in the sand and decide that it will not kick out 3,000 public housing tenants, handing over public housing land to private developers for profit, but instead provide it for those who need it.

Business interrupted.

Public Interest Debate

SENIOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT COMMISSIONER TO THE AMERICAS

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (17:02): I move:

That this House calls on the Government to halt the appointment and commencement of John Barilaro as the Senior Trade and Investment Commissioner to the Americas until the completion of the parliamentary inquiry into this appointment.

In moving the motion, I note that the other place has successfully resolved in favour of an identical motion. After almost 12 years, which is almost three full terms, this Government suddenly would have the women of New South Wales believe it finally cares about them. After everything—after all the waste and mismanagement, after 12 years of privatisation and attacks on the cost of living, after all the clogged-up emergency departments, after the chronic shortage of nurses and teachers, and after the declining education outcomes, which are our worst ever—the Government believes somehow the women of New South Wales will be lining up to thank Dominic Perrottet and Matt Kean. They have talked a really big game over the past three weeks, in particular.

There is all this Matt Kean spin. There is a huge spending spree and a debt bomb, but what do they actually do? What does this Government actually do when it comes to women in New South Wales? What is the Government's track record? Putting all the Matt Kean and the Dominic Perrottet spin aside, what is the Government's actual track record? What is its track record of promoting women—highly qualified women? The Treasurer said the Government is "taking proactive steps to increase female leadership". They are the Treasurer's own words. Let us look at that—let us take, for example, the appointment of the Senior Trade Investment Commissioner to the Americas.

It was revealed today that former Premier Gladys Berejiklian offered the role to a very highly qualified woman by the name of Jenny West in August last year. That appointment would seem to make sense on paper. Jenny West is an eminently qualified woman. She was the recipient of a Westpac Women of Influence Award. She is someone who would bring real experience to what is a seemingly significant role, given the \$500,000-plus salary. But what happened to Jenny West? In September she was told she no longer had the job she was offered by the former Premier.

The Government would have everyone believe that it is a pro-women government, but it took the job back from Jenny West and then readvertised it. Who was Jenny West dumped for? Was she dumped for a woman with better qualifications? After all, this is public money that we are talking about, and quite a lot of it, so the people of New South Wales deserve the very best candidate—is that not fair? Who was she dumped for? We now know that the very eminently qualified Jenny West was dumped by this Government, given a taxpayer-funded settlement—because she was offered a job that was then taken away from her—and the position was readvertised and then given to none other than former Deputy Premier John Barilaro.

The position was given to the same John Barilaro who resigned from Parliament to spend more time with his family, costing taxpayers more than a million dollars because an emergency by-election had to be held. Of course we now know that the eminently qualified, upstanding woman was dumped so that John Barilaro could get the position. To make it worse, we believe that identical positions in Tokyo and London went to Cabinet. Did the appointment of John Barilaro, superseding the appointment of Jenny West, go to Cabinet? It did not go to Cabinet—I wonder why that is. The Government's hypocrisy on this issue is laid bare for everyone to see. Matt Kean can lecture all he wants about the private sector needing to have more women sitting on boards but when it comes down to it this Government dumps women from key positions for less qualified men. That is what happened to Jenny West. Prior to the Federal election, the Coalition splashed money around pretending to care about women when it was really more worried about the threat from Allegra Spender.

After 12 long years, this Government thinks it is above public scrutiny. Government members think that it does not matter if teachers and nurses do not get a pay rise but it is okay if their mate is given a position with an allowance that is more than the average midwife earns in a year. That is everything anyone needs to know about this Government. This appointment stinks to high heaven and the people of New South Wales know it. This is an old and arrogant government, a tired, 12-year-old government, and people know it. The Government must be pretty nervous looking at where today's letters to *The Sydney Morning Herald* come from—Newport Beach, Turramurra, Curl Curl. Elizabeth from North Balgowlah sums it up the best. She wrote:

The decision to appoint Barilaro reminds the public of all the worst aspects of the state Coalition. The independent movement in NSW will be invigorated and ready for the March 2023 election.

The Government will wear this decision like an albatross around its neck—dumping an eminently qualified woman for John Barilaro. It is jobs for the boys.

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith—Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, Minister for Tourism and Sport, and Minister for Western Sydney) (17:09): I move to amend the motion before the House as follows:

That the motion be amended by removing all words after "House" and inserting instead:

- (1) Notes the recruitment process for the Senior Trade and Investment Commissioner – Americas, was independent and at arm's length of executive government.
- (2) Notes the recruitment for this role was conducted in accordance with the Government Sector Employment Act and Regulations.

I want to draw out a couple of key points in response to the comments made by the member for Londonderry, because I think it is absolutely critical that this information is on the record. I was a little bit surprised to hear her preamble of almost two minutes about women, the role of women and comments about the budget and the things the Government has been investing in. I did not find that particularly relevant to the motion before this House. But I make the point that the person who makes the decisions about the recruitment process under the Government Sector Employment Act 2013 and regulations, is the CEO of Investment NSW, who is a woman. It was she who made the decision about another woman, so I think the Opposition needs to move past the idea that this is some gender-related issue and people have been overlooked because of their gender. The role of the CEO of Investment NSW is to make a clear determination about who is the best person to represent the State in roles that are their responsibility. It is important to recognise that at the end of the first round of recruitment there was no suitable candidate identified.

I also want to respond to the member for Londonderry's remarks that a candidate was offered the role in the first round, contracted and then that contract was withdrawn so that the job could be given to another individual. Investment NSW advises me, very clearly, that no formal offer was made, or contract issued, to any candidate as part of the round one process. Quite clearly what has happened here is that the CEO of Investment NSW has made a determination, after the completion of the recruitment process, that there is no suitable candidate. Then they moved into a new recruitment process. That is not uncommon practice; it happens regularly in both the public sector and across the corporate world. I would also like to reiterate the remarks I made, and the Premier also made, in question time that there is no lawful mechanism for Ministers or the Premier to direct senior members of the public service—and particularly the Secretary of the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade, who was also the CEO of Investment NSW—who to employ. This was a merit-based, open and transparent process.

Ms Kate Washington: Did the other commissioners go to Cabinet?

Mr STUART AYRES: I acknowledge the interjection by the member for Port Stephens about appointment decisions going to Cabinet. If appointments made in accordance with the Government Sector Employment Act recruitment process are taken to Cabinet for formal endorsement, it undermines the capacity of the public service to be independent of Government. It is very clear here that the Government, and particularly the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade and its CEO, have followed all of the requirements to ensure that we select the best possible people for these roles. They can only make decisions based on those who apply for the role and who have gone through that independent, transparent and merit-based process. I can only think that those opposite are politically motivated because none of the senior trade and investment commissioner appointments has been questioned except for that of the one former politician.

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill) (17:15): I thank the member for Londonderry for bringing this public interest debate to the Parliament because it concerns an important matter. Urgently debating it today is absolutely in the public interest. The appointment of John Barilaro to the position of Senior Trade and Investment Commissioner to the Americas raises many of the key requirements of good government, including transparency and integrity. It is also about merit and following proper, fair processes. It does not take much to uncover that the

appointment fails on all those counts. The appointment of John Barilaro to the position in New York, which pays over half a million dollars a year, fails to pass any of the key tests that ought to be applied when making such an important appointment. Let us make no mistake here: It is a highly paid, plum appointment.

Let us take a look at the process. The senior trade and investment commissioner positions were created by John Barilaro back in November 2020. They were announced by John Barilaro as part of a \$112.4 million package, with each commissioner pocketing a salary of \$450,000 plus potential allowances and benefits of around \$150,000—a pretty good gig if you can get it. The plum new positions created by John Barilaro were advertised in March 2021. The advertising and recruitment cost around \$50,000. In April Investment NSW confirmed:

[Each position has] a structured approval protocol prior to employment. The preferred candidate meets with the Treasurer, Deputy Premier and Premier. If endorsed by all three, a Cabinet appointment form is prepared and added as a Cabinet agenda item. Once endorsed by Cabinet, a contract can then be offered to the candidate for negotiation.

That is right: Investment NSW confirmed that these appointments must be endorsed by Cabinet. We know that by May a shortlist of candidates for the Americas position was provided to Investment NSW; in July interviews were conducted; and the following month the then Premier, Gladys Berejiklian, informed the successful candidate that she had the gig. That person was Jenny West—someone with a wealth of experience in government, trade, and the corporate world. Jenny West's roles at Austrade included general manager for trade and investment, and general manager for digital innovation and client services. As Telstra's Australian Capital Territory and New South Wales State director, she ran retail stores and managed the NBN rollout—no small job. At Westpac she was dubbed "one of the key emerging, global female leaders", and in 2013 she won Westpac's Women of Influence award for business outcomes.

So how on earth did we end up with John Barilaro? Let us compare the pair, because if John Barilaro is the answer after a global talent search then what kind of questions are being asked? This is John Barilaro, who suddenly resigned from the ministry on 4 October 2021, who spent the last three months of his career in politics trying to blow up the Government over the koala SEPP and who was so proud of rorting taxpayer funding that he called himself "Pork Barilaro". Let us not forget the time that John Barilaro admonished the Parliament's ethics adviser. Let us be very clear here: Jenny West was certainly a strong candidate. The same cannot be said for John Barilaro.

So why did the Government withdraw its offer to Jenny West—an eminently qualified and successful applicant for the position in New York—and pay her a substantial amount of public money as a settlement? To everyone watching at home, it looks like the fix was in. It looks like John Barilaro wanted something in return for leaving the Parliament and for stopping his disruption of the Government. What is more, it looks like Dominic Perrottet, Matt Kean and Stuart Ayres gave him what he wanted, because Jenny West was sacked, the Government re-advertised the position and then, miraculously, there was the new commissioner—John Barilaro. No-one quite knows how he got there but everyone knows that it stinks.

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)
(17:20): I speak in strong opposition to the ridiculous motion put forward by the member for Londonderry, whose letterhead, might I add, looks very much like an attempt at being a Liberal. I understand why she would want to be one, particularly in the week that this Government has delivered such an incredible budget for the people of New South Wales. The best that members opposite can come up with is a motion about something they clearly do not understand. I cannot say how strongly I speak in support of the Government's amendment to the motion, which calls on the Government to halt the appointment and commencement of Mr Barilaro as the Senior Trade and Investment Commissioner [STIC] to the Americas until the completion of a parliamentary inquiry into his appointment.

The Government does not support the motion for many reasons. One is that it calls on Executive Government to interfere with and intervene in the employment of a public servant. If members opposite were intelligent enough to understand it, I would say it more quietly and slowly for them. But it will not happen, so I will put it on record in the event that more intelligent people might care to reflect on it in the future. By calling on the Government to halt the employment of a public servant, the motion put forward by the member for Londonderry suggests proper process was not followed in the recruitment for this position. The Government rejects, in the strongest possible terms, the suggestion that the appointment of Mr Barilaro was a unilateral decision of the Premier or any other Minister of the Crown. It has been said multiple times throughout the course of today—and was re-articulated just now by the Minister—that the Government's amendment will put on public record that this recruitment, like the recruitment of any other senior public service executive, was independent and at arm's length of Executive Government.

As members have heard, senior trade and investment commissioners are employed by the Secretary of the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade. I would have thought that those opposite would have had respect for and confidence in the ability of such a senior and well-respected female public servant. They bang on about

that but never support women in such positions. I could not expect more because they did not support their own leader, who was a woman. The recruitment for the position was conducted in accordance with the Government Sector Employment Act 2013 and regulations. Independent and external recruitment firm NGS Global was appointed by the New South Wales public service to undertake the recruitment process for the roles. NGS Global assessed all applications and provided a short list of candidates recommended for interview. No questions have been raised regarding that process, except in the case of Mr Barilaro. Those opposite are hypocrites; I cannot expect much more from them.

The STIC Americas role was advertised publicly in *The Australian Financial Review* and on the "I work for NSW" website on 17 December last year. Mr Barilaro applied for the role as a private citizen and was shortlisted for interview by NGS Global. The interview panel consisted of the CEO of Investment NSW, the NSW Public Service Commissioner, the managing director of trade and investment at Investment NSW, and an independent, external panel member. At the completion of the recruitment process—including interviews, due diligence, reference and background checks—Mr Barilaro was ranked highest and recommended for the role. That, and only that, is the reason why Mr Barilaro was appointed to the position. The Government's amendment is sensible, unlike the motion, and puts on the public record that the recruitment of Mr Barilaro as a public servant was the result of an independent recruitment process and in accordance with the Government Sector Employment Act and Regulation. I strongly support the Government's amendment and reject the motion.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (17:25): At the heart of this motion lies, to some extent, the Ministerial Code of Conduct. The code of conduct states:

It is essential to the maintenance of public confidence in the integrity of Government that Ministers exhibit and be seen to exhibit the highest standards of probity in the exercise of their offices and that they pursue and be seen to pursue the best interests of the people of New South Wales to the exclusion of any other interest.

Essentially, the question before the House is does the code of conduct apply here? John Barilaro left Parliament; it does not apply to him. It applies to those on the other side of the Chamber. It is incumbent upon them to meet the standard that they are seen to pursue the best interests of the people of New South Wales to the exclusion of any other interest.

Government members were asked some very simple questions today in question time. Did these matters go to Cabinet? Did the other trade commissioners' appointments go to Cabinet? Regardless of whether the Minister was pursuing the best interests or was seen to be pursuing the best interests of the people of New South Wales, he has had every opportunity to explain to them in a transparent manner that he followed the process in this appointment of trade commissioners that he had followed in every other appointment. He has been asked to explain that in this Chamber. Did the other appointments go to Cabinet?

This is indicative of the questions that people in New South Wales are asking and to which they want answers. Did the former Premier, as has been reported in the papers, offer Ms West a job? It has been reported that the former Premier did and that Ms West's name had been circled, and she has been given a payout. Clearly everyone knows that she was offered the job, yet Government members will not tell us that she was offered the job. They will not say, "She was offered the job, but we changed our minds and we decided to go with someone else." They will find a loophole to not say what people are asking them to say—that they be seen to be pursuing the best interests of the people of New South Wales. That is the problem with this Government.

Government members should answer the question and be transparent. They should just own up, because sometimes it is the cover-up that is the problem, not the thing that has been done. It is the things they do afterwards to not answer the question. Government members should answer the question, because we need know: Was John Barilaro in that Cabinet room when the decision was made that that woman would not get the job? That is not reflecting on when he applied for the job. The question was: Was he in the room? That is the question to which people want an answer. Was the Minister in the room when there was a discussion that Ms West was not going to get the job and that it was going to be readvertised? All the Minister has to do is get up in this Chamber and clearly outline, in response to the questions that have been asked, whether he was there. Was he in the Cabinet room? Was John Barilaro there?

The Minister was asked a question today about whether he asked the Premier if the appointment of the Senior Trade and Investment Commissioner to the Americas should go to the Cabinet. Did he go to the Premier and ask him, "Should we take this one to the Cabinet, like we took the other four or five? Or have we found a loophole where we can say that it is a government sector employment thing and, therefore, we can find a loophole and not take it to the Cabinet?" Did the Minister go to the Premier and ask him that question? Did the Minister ask him, "Should this go to Cabinet, like the others?" That was the straightforward question the Minister was asked today. He did not answer that question in this Chamber. The Ministerial Code of Conduct states that we want Ministers not only to pursue the best interests of the people of New South Wales but also to be seen to pursue

their best interests. That is what the Ministerial Code of Conduct is all about. The Government's failure to be transparent and to bring that information to the people has put it in this position. The motion should be supported.

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (17:30): I speak in support of the Government's amendment to the motion moved by the member for Londonderry. The motion moved by the member for Londonderry is as follows:

That this House calls on the Government to halt the appointment and commencement of John Barilaro as the Senior Trade and Investment Commissioner to the Americas until the completion of the parliamentary inquiry into his appointment.

The Government does not support the motion as originally drafted for many reasons, but mostly because it calls on the Executive Government to interfere with and intervene in the employment of a public servant. For this reason, the Government does not and will not support the motion moved by the member for Londonderry. The Government's amendment is sensible and reflects that the recruitment of Mr Barilaro as a public servant was the result of an independent recruitment process and in accordance with the Government Sector Employment Act and regulation.

Senior trade and investment commissioners are senior executives employed by the Secretary of the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade under the Government Sector Employment Act 2013 and the Government Sector Employment Regulation 2014. On this side of the House, we believe in an impartial and nonpartisan bureaucracy; that is why this recruitment, like other recruitment for public sector roles, did not go to Cabinet for approval. These positions are not statutory or political appointments. I remind members that it would have been inappropriate for Cabinet or a Minister of the Crown to endorse or approve the recruitment of a senior trade and investment commissioner as a public servant.

The Government rejects, in the strongest possible terms, that the appointment of Mr Barilaro was, as quoted in media outlets, a "captain's pick" or a "unilateral decision" of the Premier or any other Minister of this Government. Mr Barilaro's appointment as a senior trade and investment commissioner followed a lengthy and competitive global search process managed by a specialised external recruitment talent firm. At the completion of the recruitment process—including interviews, due diligence, reference and background checks—Mr Barilaro was ranked highest and recommended for the role. By calling on the Government to delay this appointment pending an inquiry, the motion asks the Government to intervene in the appointment and employment of a public servant. That is highly inappropriate. It is not the place of elected officials to interfere in the engagement or employment of public servants, and to call on the Government to do so is highly unconventional. For this reason, the Government does not support the motion moved by the member for Londonderry and has moved a sensible amendment to the motion.

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (17:32): In reply: I note from the contributions from the Government and its amendment that there are probably even more questions than originally thought, which furthers the reason why this matter should be halted until after a parliamentary inquiry has gone through due process and established why a half-a-million-dollar position—a plum position—was awarded to the former Deputy Premier. The Government's response seems to be that he is a public servant, the Government does not interfere in the appointment of public servants, and the appointment of public servants does not go to Cabinet. But the Government cannot seem to answer the question about whether the appointments for Tokyo and London were noted by Cabinet, which is nonsensical. The Government has not denied that they did not go to Cabinet. Government members have not said, "No, they didn't go to Cabinet." In fact, the Minister could not respond to that question today during question time or during this debate. The Government has not addressed that key issue.

What is different about this appointment to the Americas? The difference is that the fix was always for John Barilaro to get this half-a-million-dollar appointment and the Government worked it out so that he could. Gladys Berejiklian wanted to give it to Jenny West, who is eminently qualified, and then that proposal was withdrawn. The Minister said in here that she was not offered the job. That is even more concerning. Why was she given a payout of taxpayers' money if she was not offered the job?

We desperately need a parliamentary inquiry. Why would the former Deputy Premier be appointed before we have the answers? This is public money and the appointment must be delayed. There are too many questions this 12-year-old Government has left unanswered about this critical appointment. Government members think they are a law unto themselves. This is what happens with old, arrogant governments. They think they are above reproach; they think that they cannot be questioned; they think that after all this time sitting in the plush Government offices, sitting on that side of the Chamber, they are above questioning. They are not above questioning because we are talking about public money—half a million dollars and an expense account that is more than the salary of key workers, who at the moment cannot afford to buy lettuce to feed their families. We need this inquiry, and we need this appointment to be halted in order for the inquiry to take place.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The member for Londonderry has moved a motion, to which the member for Penrith has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes42
Noes39
Majority.....3

AYES

Anderson, K
Ayres, S
Clancy, J
Conolly, K
Cooke, S
Coure, M
Crouch, A
Davies, T
Dominello, V
Elliott, D
Evans, L
Gibbons, M
Griffin, J
Gulaptis, C

Hancock, S
Hazzard, B
Henskens, A
James, T
Kean, M
Layzell, D
Lee, G
Lindsay, W
Marshall, A
O'Dea, J
Overall, N
Pavey, M
Petinos, E
Preston, R

Provest, G
Roberts, A
Saunders, D
Sidgreaves, P
Sidoti, J
Singh, G (teller)
Smith, N (teller)
Taylor, M
Toole, P
Tuckerman, W
Upton, G
Williams, L
Williams, R
Wilson, F

NOES

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

Finn, J
Harris, D
Harrison, J
Haylen, J
Hoenig, R
Holland, M
Hornery, S
Kamper, S
Lalich, N
Li, J
Lynch, P
McDermott, H
McGirr, J

Mehan, D (teller)
Mihailuk, T
O'Neill, M
Park, R
Parker, J
Saffin, J
Scully, P
Smith, T
Voltz, L
Warren, G
Washington, K
Watson, A (teller)
Zangari, G

PAIRS

Bromhead, S
Perrottet, D
Speakman, M
Stokes, R

Tesch, L
Minns, C
Chanthivong, A
Barr, C

Amendment agreed to.

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

The House divided.

Ayes42
Noes39
Majority.....3

AYES

Anderson, K
Ayres, S
Clancy, J
Conolly, K

Hancock, S
Hazzard, B
Henskens, A
James, T

Provest, G
Roberts, A
Saunders, D
Sidgreaves, P

AYES

Cooke, S	Kean, M	Sidoti, J
Coure, M	Layzell, D	Singh, G (teller)
Crouch, A	Lee, G	Smith, N (teller)
Davies, T	Lindsay, W	Taylor, M
Dominello, V	Marshall, A	Toole, P
Elliott, D	O'Dea, J	Tuckerman, W
Evans, L	Overall, N	Upton, G
Gibbons, M	Pavey, M	Williams, L
Griffin, J	Petinos, E	Williams, R
Gulaptis, C	Preston, R	Wilson, F

NOES

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

PAIRS

Bromhead, S	Tesch, L
Perrottet, D	Minns, C
Speakman, M	Chanthivong, A
Stokes, R	Barr, C

Motion as amended agreed to.*Private Members' Statements***STATE BUDGET AND WOLLONGONG ELECTORATE**

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (17:51): Yesterday the Perrottet Government delivered its budget for the year ahead, the last before the March 2023 election. There are elements of the budget that have been welcomed by many stakeholders. There is no point trying to pretend that all elements of the budget were poor. However, there are elements of this budget that are shockingly bad. Over the last couple of weeks the Premier and the Treasurer have been on a spending spree that would make a Kardashian blush. The result? Yesterday's budget included \$71 billion in new spending. That spending spree will stick around for a while too, with the budget deficit for the coming financial year increasing to \$11.3 billion, about \$4 billion worse than expected. Over the next few years gross debt is set to double from a little over \$90 billion in 2020-21 to more than \$182 billion in 2025-26. Staggeringly, the interest bill on that debt will hit nearly \$6 billion a year. If Wollongong residents wonder why their priorities are pushed off into the never-never, it is because the interest bill on our debt will be around twice what the New South Wales Government spends on TAFE each year and more than it spends on its police force.

This highest taxing Government is still number one in the tax collection stakes, with average tax revenue to rise by 2.8 per cent a year over the next four years and tax as a proportion of gross State product remaining above 5 per cent over the forward estimates. In addition, the Government is loading on a new tax in this budget, a forever tax on the family home of first homebuyers, and there are plans to expand it to all homes if the Government gets the opportunity. This is the Perrottet dream tax. By contrast, when Labor was last in office, having delivered the best ever, debt-free Olympics, we managed the economy through the global financial crisis and delivered 15 out of 16 budget surpluses, with gross debt in New South Wales at \$22.5 billion and the tax take of gross State product only 4.6 per cent.

I touch on some of the progress and some of the lack of progress in this budget on issues in Wollongong. Pressure has been building around our health system in the Illawarra for years. I have raised the cause and result of those pressures in this place before. A little over a year ago, through a bipartisan negotiation with Illawarra MPs, commitments were made for an integrated network of health—a new Shellharbour Hospital, upgrades to Wollongong and Bulli hospitals, a new Warrawong Community Health Centre and a new ambulance station in Fairy Meadow. Yesterday's budget had no indication of the time lines and provided no financial commitment to either the Warrawong Community Health Centre or the Fairy Meadow ambulance station, which is incredibly disappointing. The time line for Shellharbour Hospital has been extended by a year and is now expected to be completed in 2028—some 13 years and three Premiers after the promise was first made. The Government has made a commitment to employ more health professionals. I urge it not to ignore the Illawarra's health needs anymore and to provide a reasonable allocation for additional staff.

[Interruption]

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell): Order!

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Mr Temporary Speaker, you can let the peanut gallery go. The Government cannot defend its land tax. It cannot even say "land tax" in this place. It cannot defend its record in the Illawarra. It will not even come to Wollongong. The Minister responsible for TAFE has tried to sell the West Wollongong TAFE campus. That is the Government's record. In terms of other neglected opportunities, now the Treasurer is telling his colleagues here to keep quiet because he does not want engagement on the land tax.

Mr James Griffin: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: I am happy to go back to my earlier remarks. Over many years I have been pushing for an upgrade of the now 23-year-old Wollongong Entertainment Centre. The push has recently been joined by the Wollongong City Council and Business Illawarra, each of whom is incredibly disappointed at the delays on this upgrade by the current Government. It is a 23-year-old facility without a major upgrade. I am pleased that my lobbying efforts have resulted in progress, with funds committed to the development of a business case and master plan. Now I will continue to push for a good, community-acceptable concept that matches the ambition of our city to attract more events and create more jobs. As the House knows, Picton Road and Mount Ousley have been high on my agenda for a long time. I am pleased that the budget contains funds to improve safety and connectivity along Picton Road and progress for the Mount Ousley interchange, thanks largely to the current Federal Government. I look forward to receiving further details of what this might mean for each project.

Faster rail—the great myth. In 2019 the McNaughton report into faster rail, which included the Illawarra and the South Coast, was commissioned. That report remains secret, of course. No-one is allowed to see it, despite efforts to make it public. I am pleased that there is an effort, some claim, to explore faster rail on the South Coast, because we need it. The big issue that the Government should commit to is to meet its promise—the Treasurer struggles with implementation—to use local steel in renewable energy infrastructure. It should choose the same local steel in transmission infrastructure. The Illawarra has not forgotten that commitment in law. We know that renewable energy generation should be built in the Illawarra, not just sailed into it and unloaded at our port. The Government should get serious about local content efforts because it is about time we got our fair share. *[Time expired.]*

SIR TANNATT EDGEWORTH DAVID

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (17:57): Sir Tannatt Edgeworth David was born in Wales and came to Australia in 1882 to work as assistant geologist surveyor for the New South Wales government. He spent a few years conducting field surveys in outback New South Wales, before being asked to find new coal deposits in the Hunter Valley. After weeks of intensive surveying, he found the Greta seam, which was later described as one of the richest mineral discoveries made in Australia. This yielded over £50 million worth of coal up to 1949.

David became professor of geology at the University of Sydney in 1891, a position he held for more than 33 years. In January 1909 he carried out his greatest achievement as part of the Nimrod expedition to Antarctica, led by Ernest Shackleton. The extraordinary thing is that David was not supposed to be on the expedition. He had helped raise funds for the venture, including securing £5,000 from the Australian Government. David also organised for two of his most talented former students to be part of the expedition, Douglas Mawson and Leo Cotton.

On the day of Mawson and Cotton's departure from Sydney, David went down to the harbour to wish his former students farewell but at the last moment the urge to be part of this historic expedition proved too much and he jumped aboard. Unfortunately, he did not request leave from his job at the university and his wife had no idea he had just departed for Antarctica on an expedition that would last over a year. The crew flagged down the first

ship heading to Sydney and David passed on letters to the university and to his wife explaining his hasty decision and begging to be forgiven. David was welcomed on the Nimrod expedition and was immediately appointed Chief Scientific Officer. Once in Antarctica the 50-year-old David led Douglas Mawson, 27, and Alistair Mackay, 29, as the trio became the first to reach the south magnetic pole. They achieved this after dragging sledges with food and equipment more than 800 kilometres on a very dangerous and difficult four-month journey.

David's involvement and achievements in the 1907 to 1909 Shackleton expedition to Antarctica made him known worldwide. Back in Australia, when World War I broke out David was a strenuous supporter of the war effort and also supported the much-debated campaign for conscription. In August 1915, after reading reports about mining operations and tunnelling during the Gallipoli campaign, David wrote a proposal to the defence Minister suggesting that the Government raise a military force specifically to undertake mining and tunnelling. After his proposal was accepted, David used his advocacy and organisational abilities to set up the Australian Mining Corps, and on 25 October 1915 he was appointed a major in the Australian Army, aged 57.

David contributed significantly as he served on the Western Front, spending his time on geological investigations and using his expertise to advise on the construction of trenches, tunnels and the siting of wells for the provision of pure drinking water from underground supplies. He also gave lectures and produced maps. He was instrumental in mining operations under German lines. The explosion of the Messines-Wytchaete Ridge multi-mine system in June 1917 was the culmination of David's tunnelling work. He was mentioned in dispatches three times, awarded the Distinguished Service Order and promoted to lieutenant colonel.

In 1920 David and his family moved to their final home, Coringah, in Burdett Street, Hornsby. At around this time he established the geography department at the University of Sydney and served as the first president of the Australian National Research Council. He was also involved in local community organisations, particularly the Hornsby RSL Sub-Branch, of which he became the inaugural patron. Prior to relocating to Hornsby, David already had a strong interest in the Hornsby area, having studied the rich geology around Old Man's Valley. This area went on to become Hornsby Quarry and was mined for its valuable blue metal for almost 100 years.

In another world first, Sir Edgeworth David was the first person to write and lecture publicly about the serious impacts of global warming, including via a series of articles published in *The New York Times* in 1932. This deeply worried him up to his death two years later. David collapsed at his desk while working at the university. He died of lobar pneumonia a few days later on 28 August 1934, aged 77. He was accorded a State funeral by the Commonwealth and New South Wales governments. After a service at St Andrew's Anglican Cathedral, he was cremated with military honours.

Over his life David received many tributes, including a knighthood in September 1920. A 1924 article in *The Home* listed David as one of the "seven greatest living Australians". In 1938 Hornsby Shire Council renamed Junction Road, Hornsby, to Edgeworth David Avenue, in recognition of his contribution to the local area. In addition, a number of places have been named in his honour. Two of these are Edgeworth David Base in Antarctica and the suburb of Edgeworth in the Hunter. In 1968 he was honoured on an Australia Post stamp. Throughout his life, Sir Edgeworth David actively encouraged women to achieve all they were capable of, particularly in the field of geology. It was no surprise when his daughter, Margaret McIntyre, in 1948 became the first woman elected to the Parliament of Tasmania as well as being awarded an OBE.

ST SAVIOUR'S CATHEDRAL, GOULBURN

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government) (18:02): I speak on the St Saviour's Cathedral in my electorate of Goulburn. St Saviour's Cathedral is the mother church of the Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn. The cathedral, school hall and parish registry encompass a dynamic, culturally significant landscape within the history of Goulburn. The landscape commenced with approval for development of the site in 1836 and subsequently construction of the first church in 1939. The diocese was proclaimed by Queen Victoria in 1863, making Goulburn Australia's first inland city.

St Saviour's Cathedral is on the New South Wales State Heritage Register, the National Trust of Australia Heritage Register and the Register of the National Estate. Design and construction of the cathedral commenced in 1874 and the main building was completed and consecrated in 1884. The cathedral was designed by architect Edmund Blacket in the Gothic Revival style. The Anglican Church Property Trust Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn, on behalf of St Saviour's Cathedral, Goulburn, was awarded a Caring for State Heritage and Community Heritage grant as part of the 2021-2023 New South Wales Heritage Grants program. An amount of \$120,000 was awarded for the restoration of the great east window of St Saviour's Cathedral. This funding was also matched by the cathedral's National Trust Heritage Restoration Appeal Fund.

The project includes urgent conservation work on the heritage fabric and wall below the great east window of the cathedral as well as stabilisation work and repair of the window. Water ingress to the fabric of the cathedral

has caused movement of the window and cracking of tracery surrounding this historic facade. The restoration work will prevent continuing degradation and will preserve the historic stained-glass window, made in 1885 by Heaton, Butler and Bayne, London, for future generations. I am pleased that the New South Wales Heritage Grants program has been able to assist the conservation and celebration of this unique facet of Goulburn's heritage that is St Saviour's.

Across New South Wales, the 2021-23 funding round included three grant categories: Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Grants, Caring for State Heritage Grants, and Community Heritage Grants. A total of \$5.9 million was awarded to 231 applicants. Furthermore, the Caring for State Heritage Grants, which the cathedral benefitted from, assists to manage, interpret, conserve and activate items listed on the State Heritage Register across New South Wales. Some 154 applications were received in this category, with 51 being approved across the State totalling \$2.95 million. I am also pleased to say that the 2023-25 funding round is expected to open in late 2022.

This is wonderful news as the cathedral has even bigger plans ready. The magnificent golden sandstone building is already visually stunning. But Edmund Blacket also originally included in the design a stone spire above the tower and a copper-clad, timber-framed flèche or lantern above the central crossing. The cathedral community and concerned constituents, alongside Michael Fox Architects, have drafted a proposal to complete construction of the cathedral by erecting the spire. They have obtained estimates for the construction of the spire and lantern based on the available original Blacket design and documents. This includes estimates from traditional stone and stonemason artists, together with structural advice from specialist engineers.

Constructing the sandstone spire will be a tremendous task. Furthermore, the design also includes construction of the copper-clad, timber-framed lantern. It is estimated that site establishment, scaffolding, crane hire, seismic stabilisation and stonework—all, of course, in accordance with the cathedral's original Blacket design plans—will cost approximately between \$5 million to \$7 million. I support this project and will continue to advocate for it to receive any funding opportunities to assist the spire to be delivered and support history in the making.

COOGEE ELECTORATE PUBLIC EDUCATION

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (18:06): Earlier this month I held a community town hall to hear from my community about the state of public education in my electorate. I was joined by Prue Car, Labor's shadow Minister for Education. We heard from teachers, students, parents and carers. Not only do I thank Prue for coming out and listening to the concerns and issues in my electorate, I also thank the hundreds of people who turned up to our community town hall to voice their concerns. Overwhelmingly, we heard that our schools are not being adequately or effectively funded. That was the overall message. We heard that schools are asking parents to supply soap. Emails and letters are going out to parents in my electorate asking them to supply soap for toilets. I have heard about art supplies; that was the first time I heard about soap.

We heard about the implications of teacher shortages in my electorate and how classes sizes are being shoved together. This is happening. We heard about the exponential wait times for kids to see counsellors. In some of our schools the wait time is between four to six months, which is absolutely abhorrent. We heard—I already knew this—that amounts of money provided by the Community Building Partnership [CBP] fund are going to school infrastructure. They are not for the "nice to haves"; they are for things like getting school toilets fixed. I have signed off on CBP funds for that. I have signed off on CBP funding to have a library upgraded and to ensure that school halls have disability accessibility. This is happening because of the quite deliberate underfunding of public schools by the Government. It is happening to my schools in the Eastern Suburbs. We heard this time and time again during our community town hall. It is absolutely abhorrent. It needs to be addressed.

One of the other things that was clearly addressed, and that we hear time and time again, is that parents and students desperately want access to co-ed public education. In my electorate children and parents do not have that option. We also overwhelmingly heard about the much-needed upgrades at Randwick Girls High School and Randwick Boys High School—upgrades that this Government committed to in 2018. Four years on, they are still in the planning phase on the School Infrastructure NSW webpage. This year \$3.7 million was committed to both schools. That is just over \$1.8 million per school, which will barely provide a lick of paint. While my public schools are getting \$3.7 million for upgrades—which are still in the planning phase despite the commitment from 2018—a car park project at Moore Park has \$50 million committed to it this year, plus a very clear start date and completion date. Was I shocked to see that from this Government? Not really.

That comparison goes to the absolute heart and core of the values of this Government. It would rather fund a car park than invest in the education of our future generations. It would rather invest \$50 million in a car park as part of a \$150 million project—and it has set a clear start date and end date—while major school upgrades that it made a commitment to in 2018 are still in the planning phase. Four years on, both schools do not even get \$4 million between them. It does not care about the youth, education or our future generations in everything it

does. It cares about car parks. It cares about itself. Government members can go out and pork-barrel, but the people in my electorate know the truth. The Government does not care about kids or education. Its values are completely off—you can see it in the budget papers.

KU-RING-GAI HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai—Minister for Skills and Training, and Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology) (18:11): In the historic old Gordon Public School building adjoining the Gordon Library resides the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society. The society has justifiably drawn praise for its research and publications since its creation and inception in 1963. Made up of volunteers, the society's publications delve into local history, built heritage and family history in Ku-ring-gai. Notable works include *Women of Ku-ring-gai* and *Rallying the Troops*, which are several volumes about the veterans and the response to the First World War from the Ku-ring-gai area.

Recently I learned of another interesting piece of local history: the foundations of Killara. Had it not been for the hard work of the society, we may never have known the true depth of that suburb's history. I therefore inform the House of the following. Like many parts of the Ku-ring-gai electorate, Killara is a leafy, historic suburb with an abundance of heritage homes from the Federation to modernist eras. The heritage comprises a unique blend of fine architecture encircled by a picturesque natural environment and is home to many notable residents, past and present. One such resident was James George Edwards, also known as the "Father of Killara". While Mr Edwards was born in Tasmania, his mother returned to her home in Sydney in 1849 when James was only six years old.

Early on James had an eye for the development and wellbeing of Ku-ring-gai. He was instrumental in the construction of many local facilities—from a post office in the grounds of the now Ravenswood School for Girls to the old Gordon Public School. That school operated from 1876 to 1989—with distinguished former students including the member for Pittwater, Rob Stokes—and is now the location of the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society. Notably, James Edwards played an important role in having the Government build the North Shore line, which opened in 1890 and continues to be used this day—a great example of the longevity of visionary infrastructure like the infrastructure that this Government is building. He conceived of the notion of acquiring much of the largely vacant land between Lindfield and Gordon, then subdivided and sold it. Creating Killara was a big task that involved finding the current landowners and conducting negotiations to formalise ownership transfers.

James Edwards negotiated with the railways to have a new station built at Killara, which opened in 1899, and thus began the early foundations of what we know as modern Killara. But his contribution to Killara went much further. James Edwards spearheaded a move to have the land that is now known as Killara Park reserved for public recreation. James was also deeply involved in having land obtained for the building of the absolutely excellent Killara Golf Club and eventually became its second president. The Killara Golf Club and Killara Lawn Tennis Club would not exist today were it not for his efforts. If that was not enough, James Edwards played a major role in the establishment of the Killara Hall, which eventually became the Soldier's Memorial Hall and is now known to the community as the Marian Street Theatre.

James George Edwards' legacy continues to the present day in the organisations and community facilities that adorn the historic suburb of Killara. Importantly, this story is remembered through the efforts of the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society. The 400 members and volunteers that make up that organisation do an incredible job of archiving and maintaining the history of our community. I hope this private member's statement illustrates the importance of the society not just in remembering the past but in the stories that it is able to continue to tell in the present, whether it be about the Marian Street Theatre, the Killara Golf Club or other parts of our local community.

In past years I have joined members of the historical society to mark the anniversary of events like the first ever wireless message in Australia, during World War I, and I have frequently attended its meetings in the old Gordon Public School and participated in the magical mystery tour run by previous Ku-ring-gai Woman of the Year Mrs Jo Harris, OAM. I am pleased that the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society has received many prestigious awards over the years, including the Mander Jones Award. Such praise is a fitting recognition of the hard work of its many members. I thank the Ku-ring-gai Historical Society for supporting our local community.

PARKES HOSPITAL MATERNITY WARD

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (18:16): A reasonable person would assume that our regional and rural health services would develop and improve over time to cater for the growing population, creating a healthier community and increasing life expectancy. Childbirth comes with inherent risks. Even with health intervention, there are mothers and children who tragically do not survive the birthing process. When specialised practitioners

such as obstetricians and anaesthetists are not readily accessible in cases where specialist medical assistance or intervention is required during a birth, the risks of childbirth are significantly increased.

The relatively new Parkes Hospital was built as a state-of-the-art medical facility and was completed in November 2015, and among its features was a fully staffed maternity ward. When I heard rumours circulating in 2019 that Parkes Hospital's maternity ward was scheduled for closure, I found them hard to believe, given that the barely four-year-old hospital's obstetric-led maternity ward was a prominently featured medical service for the district. My subsequent inquiries with the Western NSW Local Health District [LHD] unfortunately confirmed that Parkes Hospital's maternity ward was in fact scheduled for closure due to the retirement of local GP obstetricians and anaesthetists.

According to the LHD, it had been unsuccessful in recruiting for the vacant positions and the cost of locums in those positions was untenable for the longer term. The mining industry has utilised fly-in fly-out workers for a long time, and a solution being considered by this Government to address education workforce challenges in regional New South Wales is a network of fly-in fly-out teachers. If we must use fly-in fly-out medical specialists to maintain our regional health services, then that must be considered a reasonable cost.

Childbirth is a matter of life and death, and the value of a life cannot be measured in a locum staffing budget. The Parkes doctors' retirements were not unexpected and highlighted the lack of workforce and contingency planning by the local health district, which led to the closure of a vital medical service for the growing Parkes community. Closure of the obstetric-led maternity service at the Parkes Hospital is not supportive of a growing regional township whose population is expected to boom, given the jobs created and business development opportunities among several mining enterprises in the district as well as the development of the inland rail hub and special activation precinct.

In spite of the overwhelming community outrage, their petition to Parliament, a protest rally and the lobbying I undertook with the local health district and the health Minister to keep the maternity ward open, it was closed. Expectant mothers of Parkes and surrounding communities have resorted to travelling to Forbes hospital by arrangement or to either Dubbo or Orange for advanced maternity care. In the period following the closure of the Parkes maternity ward, I heard the stories of mothers giving birth in their cars on the side of the road whilst en route to Orange hospital. Occupancy of Ronald McDonald House in Orange is at an all-time high, coinciding with the closure of Parkes Hospital's maternity ward. In the absence of an obstetrics-led maternity ward at Parkes, many expectant mothers from Parkes, Forbes and Condobolin have been referred to the Orange Health Service for high-risk pregnancies.

In the time that has passed since the Parkes maternity service closure, the local health district's solution was to introduce a midwife-led birthing model at the hospital, which commenced in 2021. Midwives are an important element in maternity services, but they are not trained for the many complications that require the specialist skills of an obstetrician—for example, an emergency caesarean section or a postpartum haemorrhage—or for an anaesthetist to administer essential anaesthetic and the crucial monitoring of patients' lives.

Following the rural health inquiry last year, the Government introduced the State's first Minister for Regional Health. Since her appointment, the new Minister has publicly recognised the long-term failure to invest in our health workforce. Given the Government's recent budget announcement to fund a 10,000-strong health workforce boost, I urge the Minister for Regional Health to prioritise the recruitment of obstetricians and anaesthetists to Parkes and to expedite the return of a full and permanent maternity service.

The Government's 2022-23 budget, delivered yesterday, focused on women's opportunities. I keenly noted the budget's Women's Opportunity Statement and, importantly, women's health and wellbeing are contained within it. Also contained in the document are the Government's priority areas for reform. One of the reforms is to support and raise awareness of women's health needs, which the Government has highlighted as being essential for the overall quality of life for women across New South Wales. I hope that is not just another motherhood statement—no pun intended.

If the Government is actually serious, then it must consider the urgent reinstatement of the Parkes maternity ward, which is consistent with the health objectives outlined in the budget's 2022-23 Women's Opportunity Statement. As a First World nation and society, if we are serious about advancing women and providing them with opportunity, then we must start by providing fundamental medical services such as obstetric-led maternity services in our country hospitals. I call on Government members to put their money where their mouth is and expedite the reinstatement of full and permanent maternity services to Parkes Hospital.

STATE BUDGET AND REGIONAL HEALTH

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (18:21): It gives me pleasure to talk about the investment that the Government is making in

health, and there is no doubt that the people of Bathurst would be very pleased with the recent announcement that the Government will be investing \$200 million to upgrade the Bathurst hospital. The community of Bathurst has continued to grow, and the Government will invest in a major redevelopment of the Bathurst hospital as part of the 2022-23 New South Wales budget.

The upgrade will ensure that the community and the wider Central West region will have access to high-quality care, now and well into the future. That is important, because we want people to live in regional communities but also to have access to basic services. We do not want people having to travel out of town or go to other areas for the basic services that need to be provided in the local community. Not every service will be provided in the local area, and there are times when people will need to speak to and meet with specialists to receive the appropriate care that they need. But we want to make sure that we continue to retain and attract specialists in our local areas to provide the health care that is needed. As a father of three kids, I want to ensure that my children have access to quality health care. I want to ensure that my parents, as they continue to grow old in the region, also have access to good quality health care, and that is exactly what this investment will bring.

The funding will deliver more acute inpatient beds, a larger emergency department, increased rehabilitation services, expanded ambulatory and outpatient services and an enhanced perioperative suite. The Bathurst region is growing quickly, and the demand on health services is also increasing. This \$200 million investment in health infrastructure is essential to delivering excellent health outcomes for our community for years to come. I was pleased that the Minister for Regional Health, the Hon. Bronnie Taylor, was there when we made the announcement. We had the opportunity to make the announcement in front of a number of members of the public as well as doctors, nurses and clinicians. They were pretty excited about this announcement. We will be able to increase and expand services into the local area.

Already at the hospital a new MRI facility is being constructed at a cost of \$4 million. That is going to provide better healthcare services in the local region. People will not have to travel from Bathurst to PRP Diagnostic Imaging in Orange for an MRI. They will be able to get an MRI at the hospital and, now that the hospital has a licence, the service will be free for the public. The cost of an MRI is a big impost on some people who want to access that service.

Now that the Government has announced the \$200 million investment, the Western NSW Local Health District, having already done the clinical services plan, will now consult with doctors, nurses, clinicians and the wider public, and there will be opportunities for them to have their say on the options that are being considered as part of the redevelopment of the hospital. This is on top of many other announcements that have already been made by this Government. This Government has already made announcements in relation to attracting more health professionals into the workforce—10,000 new health workers, doctors and nurses. It is expected that around 40 per cent of them will go to regional and rural New South Wales.

The Government has incentive schemes to ensure that where there are vacancies and gaps in the health workforce we can provide opportunities for people to move to regional New South Wales to fill those roles. There are incentives to entice health specialists to regional and rural communities. During COVID a lot of people could not receive the medical treatment they needed, so the Government's \$408 million boost for elective surgery is a huge support. Let us not forget the \$150 million funding for the Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme, which will mean people get more support for travel and accommodation costs. Instead of worrying about those costs, they can focus on their health care and getting themselves better, which is what their priority should be.

NSW TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL 150TH ANNIVERSARY

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (18:26): On Wednesday 25 May 2022 I joined trade unionists from across New South Wales to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the formation of the NSW Trades and Labor Council. The council, known today as Unions NSW, has been a great agent of change, benefitting workers across New South Wales for the past 150 years through its successful advocacy for major reforms in industrial relations, workplace safety, equal pay, bargaining and the right for workers to organise in the workplace.

The council was formed in 1871 in the wake of the ongoing struggle for an eight-hour working day. The aims of the council revolved around working hours and conditions and the role of working-class people in creating a moral society in New South Wales. Over the ensuing decade the council consolidated itself as a powerful force in disputes between capital and labour. The newly formed council also made a significant contribution to the founding of the Australian Labor Party. The council was a driving force in founding the Political Labor League in 1891, which was the precursor to the Australian Labor Party in New South Wales. Throughout the twentieth century the council made a significant impact and successfully—

Mr Adam Crouch: Point of order: As loath as I am to interrupt the member for Prospect, private members' statements are to be used to discuss issues relating to a member's electorate. The member for Prospect is two minutes into his speech and he has not mentioned his electorate once. I respectfully ask that the member be reminded that private members' statements should be used to raise issues relating to his electorate.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell): I thank the member for Coogee. The member for Prospect will please continue.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: He is not the member for Coogee. I have lost over a minute of my speech. I will not finish my speech because of that. I was to go on to talk about the large trade union membership in my electorate—

Mr Adam Crouch: You haven't mentioned it yet. You are wasting more time.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: —which was the next paragraph, and I was interrupted. I ask for the clock to start again.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell): Please continue, member for Prospect, with your time.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: Mr Temporary Speaker, I will challenge that.

Mr Adam Crouch: Good luck.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: That is not fair. For the member to get up and to interrupt like that and cause me to lose a full minute in the middle of a private member's statement—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell): The member for Prospect will please continue.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: No, I won't. I am not going to continue. I am going to take this to the Speaker because I cannot believe that you would go along with this.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell): I understand, member for Prospect.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: I get up and I am talking about trade unions in New South Wales, and you have gone and done this. It is absolutely appalling.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell): If your speech is finished and your comments are finished, we will move to the next speaker. The member for Murray has the call.

Ms Anna Watson: Disgraceful.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT: It is an absolute disgrace—including you. You should know better.

Mr Adam Crouch: Yes, I know the standing orders, unlike you.

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN PLAN

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (18:29): Ten dollars for a lettuce, \$26 for a kilo of beans, \$8 for a capsicum and, the crime of all crimes, cabbage in your KFC burger instead of lettuce. Just think about that for a moment. This could be the reality we face if the Government continues to strip water away from irrigated agriculture under the guise of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan. This could be very much what we face. Where is our food going to come from if we do not prioritise growing it here in Australia? Do we have to rely on importing staple foods in an ever-increasing tumultuous overseas climate? The taking of a further 450 gigalitres of water away from productive agriculture under the basin plan will put at risk the future of staple food production for our nation, while significantly impacting Murray and Murrumbidgee irrigators, their communities, the environment and the New South Wales economy.

To put it into perspective, 450 gigalitres is lot of water. It is almost one Sydney Harbour. It is also enough to grow 3.6 million tonnes of rice or 1.2 million tonnes of wheat. I ask again: Where will our food come from if it is not grown in Australia? The food shortages we are currently experiencing will only get worse and will be the new norm. Agriculture underpins the success of our nation, small business, rural towns and our communities. It is already under threat from labour issues and high input costs, including diesel, chemicals and fertiliser. The southern basin has already given up the majority of water under the basin plan, and there is simply no more water left to give without impacting the viability of family farms and communities. The original premise of the basin plan was to protect the environment and our communities, socially and economically, and yet our rivers are in crisis.

The success of the basin plan is based on taking a volumetric amount of water from the system rather than clear environmental outcomes. The Murray River upstream is imploding under delivery pressures to send huge volumes of water downstream to South Australia. Unseasonal high flows are destroying the river environment,

eroding banks and causing loss of important habitat. We are losing century-old trees as they fall into the water. The Barmah Choke has lost 25 per cent of its delivery capacity over the past decade. The Murray River is now nothing more than a delivery channel to send copious amounts of water out to sea. We cannot keep taking water from a system that has nothing left to give. The Darling-Baaka River regularly ceases to flow because of the over-extraction in the northern basin. A key principle of the basin plan is a connected river system, yet New South Wales is proposing licensing volumes for floodplain harvesting above the legal limit and threatening future connectivity. This is putting additional pressure on the Murray system.

From where I am sitting, it is not looking good for irrigated industries like dairy, fruit, vegetables and fodder production. Nobody wants to acknowledge the fact that an additional 450 gegalitres is undeliverable and requires the Murray, the Lower Darling, the Murrumbidgee and the Goulburn rivers to be in flood, again threatening agricultural production in the low-lying central Murray region. Instead of focusing on taking more water from productive agriculture, we should change the narrative and look at the environmental opportunities and biodiversity that irrigated agriculture can and does support on farm. It should never be an argument of farming versus the environment. Both are interconnected. Every day we are a day closer to the next drought, and we must push the New South Wales and Federal governments to look for alternative solutions, rather than continuing to take more water away from rural communities. Other countries have realised the importance of agriculture and staple food production, and it is time we did that here in Australia.

Personal Explanation

UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (18:34): By leave: I apologise for my unparliamentary comment. I respect this Chamber and the Chair. It was not directed that way. It was said in anger, and I apologise for it.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell): We thank the member for Prospect and accept the apology.

Private Members' Statements

AUBURN ELECTORATE TRAFFIC CONGESTION

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (18:34): I speak about traffic movements and congestion in my electorate. Previously I have spoken about the Premier's comments in this Chamber about how much better Parramatta Road performs since the Government put in place the M4 widening and the M4 tolls. I do not know how he gets away with it. This Government fails to read any piece of data put before it. To put it in some kind of perspective, when the Government talks about what it is doing in western Sydney, members need to listen to what it is doing in the electorates of Auburn, Parramatta and Granville. The latest electorate profiles sent to all members show that the top four most populous electorates are Sydney—as everyone would expect—followed by Auburn, Parramatta and Granville.

The Parramatta electorate has moved from sixteenth to third essentially because it will take in a lot of my electorate. The reality is that housing and dwellings have been crammed into those three electorates. The important characteristic of those electorates is they all traverse the Parramatta Road corridor. When the Government widened the M4, its own reports said that the widening would have an impact and that introducing a toll on the widened roadway, where it had previously not been—the point between Church Street and Centenary Drive, or Homebush Drive as some call it—would impact other roads. The Government's January 2021 M4 widening performance report states:

The M4 Motorway between Church Street and Homebush Bay Drive is experiencing about 50,000 less trips per day since the introduction of a distance-based toll in August 2017.

The Government reintroduced performance reports. Its performance report shows that 50,000 vehicles have come off the widened M4 onto other roads. They are only moving on to one road, and that is Parramatta Road. The traffic figures show a reduction in crashes on the M4 Motorway since the widening and the introduction of the tolls between Church Street and Homebush Bay Drive. In contrast, Parramatta Road, along the same section, has seen a 24 per cent increase in crashes. That is the reality. Yes, accidents have decreased on the M4 widening. Why? Because those 50,000 trips have gone onto our road. Modelling done by the City of Sydney states:

Traffic flows on parts of Parramatta Road will increase by over 20 per cent as vehicles avoid paying the toll on the M4 and M4 eastern extension. This finding is consistent with the WestConnex Delivery Authority's own assessment presented in the M4 Widening Environmental Impact Statement and with traffic flow impacts observed when the M4 toll was removed in 2010.

That is also reflected in modelling done for the M4. There is every reason for this Government to know that Parramatta Road was already at capacity and is now over capacity. The effect on weekday traffic volumes on Parramatta Road to changing toll scenarios is astounding. On every level—whether it is a.m. peak, inter-peak or

p.m. peak—Parramatta Road traffic volumes have increased. In fact, one of the significant increases has been westbound on Parramatta Road during the a.m. peak. Traffic that would normally come in from the markets and other areas and go onto the toll road is now using Parramatta Road. The traffic heading west in the morning has increased by 30 per cent.

At the same time, we are seeing a huge explosion of dwellings in our electorates. The Sydney electorate is at the top, followed by Auburn, Parramatta and Granville. They are now the most populous electorates in Sydney. When the Government talks about investment in western Sydney, I urge members to listen to whether Auburn, Parramatta and Granville are getting that investment. The answer is no. The reality is no. It is not good enough to just build a bridge across the river for the light rail. The light rail must be built. There is no money for that investment in western Sydney.

TRIBUTE TO SHARYN ANDERSEN (CULLIS)

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors) (18:39): I acknowledge and pay my respects to the late Sharyn Andersen (Cullis), who passed away peacefully on 10 June this year at age 69. I was deeply saddened to hear of Sharyn's passing. She was a dedicated environmental activist within our local community who devoted her entire life to advocacy work and conservation efforts within the southern Sydney region. As a founder of the Georges River Environmental Alliance, Sharyn showed dedication and commitment in her mission to protect local flora and fauna. She oversaw many projects, including advocating for the protection of some of our community's most wonderful natural spaces, like the Georges River, Oatley Park and Myles Dunphy Reserve. Those local assets are gems of the St George region, and Sharyn always played a large role in ensuring that they remained healthy and vibrant.

Sharyn was also dedicated to protecting the local koala population and other native animals through her involvement in Save Sydney's Koalas as vice-president. Sharyn fought fearlessly to enact real change within the community. I was proud to fight alongside her to establish the Dharawal National Park—a sacred 6,500-plus hectare site spanning from the Georges River to the Illawarra. It protects a range of diverse native species and remains an invaluable asset to this day. Sharyn was extremely passionate about the local environment, but she was also a warm and brilliant leader. She led the charge during her time as principal of the Georges River Environmental Centre and remained an active member of the alliance and the Georges River Combined Councils' Committee—also known as Riverkeeper—until her passing.

For those reasons, she was recognised on Riverkeeper's honour board in April this year alongside Kim Wagstaff—another environmental activist who does fantastic work in the local community. That was due in part to her contributions towards the Streamwatch program, which oversees the testing and monitoring of local waterways to ensure that our local river systems remain healthy. Sharyn's years of commitment and advocacy inspired many others in the community to take a stance on environmental conservation. We are thankful for environmental advocates like Sharyn who impress upon the next generation the need to care for our environment. Conservation issues will continue to arise in the future, so it is important that the next generation of community leaders are ready to take on the challenge and stand up for the local environment.

We are so dependent on the environment to support and sustain us, so the work that activists do within our community benefits not only the local ecosystem but also the St George region as a whole. Sharyn was a firm believer in those principles. I am sure that members of the local community will continue her trailblazing work. I send my condolences to Sharyn's husband, Phillip, who I saw two weeks ago; to her daughters, Tamzin and Kirsty; and to all who knew her as a campaigner and friend. I acknowledge Sharyn's incredible legacy and contributions to the local community in the St George region and our wonderful environment. For that contribution, on many occasions she was awarded a St George community award. In fact, recently I wrote to the Minister for Environment and Heritage to acknowledge her wonderful contributions and bring them to his attention. Sharyn will certainly be missed. May she rest in peace.

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly—Minister for Environment and Heritage) (18:44): With the indulgence of the House, I also acknowledge the passing of Sharyn. I thank her for her efforts in the St George area, and for her work in conservation and in ensuring that that beautiful part of the world remains beautiful.

AUTHOR KAREN HENDRIKS

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (18:44): Every day I am amazed by the achievements of locals from my electorate. It is an absolute privilege to learn about those achievements and have the capacity to bring them to the attention of the Parliament. Today I will read a letter that I received recently from a local Shellharbour resident and children's author, Karen Hendriks. It is a very touching letter. She wrote:

My name is Karen Hendriks. I'm an emerging, Shellharbour children's picture book author. I write heartfelt stories that give hope and empowerment to children.

Currently, I have three picture book stories out in the world – *'Go Away, Foxy Foxy'; Feathers* and *Home*. *Foxy* is used in local schools due to its engaging language and clever plot. *Feathers* was read by The Duchess of York on her YouTube channel and was shortlisted in the international Rubery Book Awards in 2021. *Home* is a picture book resource on the Australian Refugee Council's webpage. It's a powerful and moving book about losing a home, finding a new one but never forgetting where you came from. It's a story that's close to my heart.

I would like you to close your eyes and imagine that you are in a snowy mountain village with your family. There's a knock on the door and soldiers tell your family that you must leave immediately and can only take what you can carry. You will never be able to return home. Where will you go and how will you stay safe?

This happened to my mum as a small baby, my grandmother and great grandmother, they were Sudeten Germans. They walked from a small village called Wunschendorf in Czech back to East Germany. Eventually, my Mum's family came to Australia. This is the inspiration for *Home*. I have a heart locket from the village that has been passed on to me from the women in my family. My heart locket is a character in *Home*.

With what's happening in the world at the moment, *Home* is a story that showcases strength, resilience, hope, change, freedom and bravery. Children need to know that no matter what happens there's always hope. The peace dove appears at the end of the book.

I have a primary school teaching background and the schools that are already using *Home* are finding it to be a valuable teaching resource. The illustrations are by Alisa Knatko who lives in Saint Petersburg, Russia. This is not far from where my family came from. *Home* has a very European look and feel. The images are striking and powerful. Faceless soldiers show that no one wins in war. I would like to end with some words from *Home*.

Just like Papa had promised, we were home for Christmas. Mama's baked tortes sat upon the table. I loved my school and playing in the sunshine with my friends. And now when I open my heart locket, it beats with two drums. One for a village lost and one for my new free home.

I thank you all for your time today and do hope that *Home* will find its way into our state's schools. *Home* is a moving picture book with a powerful message.

Kind Regards

Karen Hendriks.

I congratulate Karen on her achievements. It has been a pleasure to learn about her inspiration and motivations for writing *Home*. I too hope that *Home* finds its way into our State's schools, because it is a story that needs to be shared far and wide. I will make sure that the education Minister receives a copy of Karen Hendriks' book for her consideration.

MANLY LAGOON FRIENDS

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly—Minister for Environment and Heritage) (18:48): I acknowledge the outstanding work of Manly Lagoon Friends, which has been newly formed by the wonderful Queenscliff resident Mel Koeman. Manly Lagoon Friends is focused on advocating for the preservation, regeneration and sustainable management of the Manly Lagoon ecosystem and its catchment creeks. It is working to educate the community on the value of Manly Lagoon and to inform the community about any management actions and decisions that face the lagoon. For the benefit of members, Manly Lagoon is an asset of the Manly electorate that is enjoyed for its natural beauty. People go there of a weekend and during the week to enjoy its wonderful proximity to the beach, to have a stroll or to go kayaking. At the eastern end of the lagoon there is a fantastic playground that is enjoyed by local families with kids, where they can play, ride bikes or walk the dog.

The aim of Manly Lagoon Friends is to foster enthusiasm for community custodianship of the lagoon in the present day and into the future so that all can enjoy the great beauty it has to offer to both those who live in Manly and those who are just visiting. Key focus areas for Manly Lagoon Friends include taking a community-minded approach to flood risk management, mitigation and response; monitoring the lagoon's water quality through regular testing of algae abundance and water clarity; managing urban effects on the lagoon such as local construction, industrial zone monitoring and playing field maintenance; and the regeneration and maintenance of surrounding riparian habitat.

Manly Lagoon Friends is working on a number of projects, including a bird count survey, floating wetlands and various public art installations. It sees collaboration with government as an important part of its operations, and I look forward to supporting the group with various grant applications, information and support where it can be provided. Manly Lagoon Friends recently held a clean-up day, which it is proposing to run on Sundays of each month. It ran one recently on 18 June. The day was a great success, with volunteers of all ages coming along to help clean up litter and waste from the waterway and its surrounding reserves. The group did this all the way from Lakeside Crescent, at the lagoon's western end, to where it empties at Queenscliff Beach, on the eastern side.

Manly Lagoon Friends is planning to hold various sporting association events, community forum events and annual fundraising events to encourage people right throughout the community to become conservationists and to foster enthusiasm for ecological custodianship. As the member for Manly and, in particular, as the environment Minister, I look forward to working with Manly Lagoon Friends well into the future. I commend the group for its work and for coming together as like-minded, community-minded people. In particular, I commend

Mel Koeman for a fantastic, community-based initiative that goes to the heart of environmentalism and conservation. I look forward to seeing all the great work that Manly Lagoon Friends goes on to do.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (18:51): I congratulate the member for Manly on his work with Manly Lagoon Friends. We both represent metropolitan electorates, where it is a great challenge to nurture and maintain biodiversity so that people can derive much pleasure and recreational benefit from it. The member talked about Manly Lagoon Friends. For reasons of the harbour and water purity at Rose Bay Beach, I formed a similar group and work collaboratively with them. They are long-term projects that take dedicated effort on the part of local members working with councils and local community groups, who understand that there must be certain patience—and also impatience—to get a good environmental outcome.

In my case, it has been about improving the water quality at Rose Bay Beach. Three years since we formed the working group with council, residents, Sydney Water and Transport for NSW—there is probably another government organisation involved as well—we finally achieved a Beachwatch score in the last round that showed the water quality had improved from poor to good. It has taken at least three agencies of government, a council, a local member and councillors to make that happen, but it can be done. I have every confidence that the member for Manly will also work well, as he always does, with his local groups as a custodian and care for the biodiversity we have in metropolitan areas of Sydney.

Community Recognition Notices

TRIPLE U FM INITIATIVE FOR YOUNG MUSICIANS

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales congratulates local Shoalhaven community radio station Triple U FM. The station has launched a fantastic new initiative to offer local musician and songwriters an opportunity to develop their song writing and recording skills and to be part of a new radio program. Funded by a grant from the NSW Department of Communities and Justice, 'Young Sounds of The Shoalhaven' will give five Shoalhaven artists aged 12 to 24 the opportunity to work with local producer and musician Paul Greene to help fine tune a new song or piece of music they have written, record it and release it as part of an EP. Closing date for applications is 31st July 2022. Congratulations and well done to Triple U FM President Peter Lavelle and producer/musician Paul Greene on putting together such a worthwhile initiative for young people in the Shoalhaven.

DR JON PHIPPS OF KIAMA DOING THE PUSH UP CHALLENGE

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges former Kiama General Practitioner Dr Jon Phipps. Now retired at 83, Dr Phipps is using part of his daily exercise routine to raise money for mental health. He has signed up for the Push Up Challenge to do 2,400 push ups in 24 hours and is hoping to get support from the local community. The funds raised will go to the Push For Better Foundation which aims to engage and educate people in mental and physical health and raise awareness of the mental health issues impacting Australians. Dr Phipps has always been active, keen on long distance running and says the push-up challenge is nothing compared to his bike ride up Cape York 20 years ago. He is also writing his first book, a science-fiction docu-novel on climate change and space travel. Congratulations and well done to Dr Jon Phipps of Kiama.

WERRI PROGRESS HALL UPGRADES COMPLETED

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges the junior Gerringong ballet and dance academy following the recently completed upgrades at Werri Progress Hall. Werri Progress Hall, with its beautiful location right on the beach, has benefitted from a much-needed recent make over which should attract more people to use the Kiama Municipal Council owned and operated community facility. A total of \$85,000 was spent on the upgrade project, which included: replacing the roof and damaged cladding, removing asbestos, restoring the floor, installing reverse cycle air-conditioning and installing a new kitchen, and a fresh coat of paint inside and outside. Melissa Prestedge, of Gerringong Ballet and Dance, whose junior students have given the upgraded hall their seal of approval said that the new layout gives more space and looks much better.

MS ROSANNE BERRY

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance)—I acknowledge and congratulate Ms Rosanne Berry, for her service to The Entrance community. Ms Berry, the Principal and Licensee of Berry Reality, is a true professional who is kind, caring and compassionate. Ms Berry goes above and beyond for her clients and is always happy to assist when all other avenues have been exhausted. Ms Berry has supported a number of local residents who have found themselves in the unfortunate circumstance of being evicted from their properties for reasons beyond their control. The Central Coast is facing a housing affordability crisis from hiked up rent increases to exorbitant house

prices. Ms Berry's honesty and integrity should be praised and on behalf of our community, I wish to sincerely thank her for valuable service. Thank you

CANTERBURY BANKSTOWN TENNIS ASSOCIATION 100TH BIRTHDAY

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I take this opportunity to congratulate the Canterbury Bankstown Tennis Association [CBTA] on its centenary celebrations, which the Association celebrated recently at the Bankstown Sports Club. Over the last century, the Association has provided an encouraging and inspiring environment, where all players from grassroots to professional can develop their love for tennis and grow their skills on and off the court. Through their committed and talented committee and team of volunteers, the Canterbury Bankstown Tennis Association has been able to deliver tennis for all age groups and successfully run various tournaments and initiatives, whilst initiating the NSW State Closed Championships. The CBTA's longevity is reflected with the Association's standing as the second oldest Hardcourt Association in NSW and provided the following members to the board of Tennis NSW; George McKerihan, Max Wilton, Bruce Snell, John Starr and Ian Campbell. I congratulate Canterbury Bankstown Tennis Association President and Grants & Sponsorship Officer, Roger Pitt, Senior Vice President and Governance & Promotions Officer, Linda Wright, Vice Presidents Noel Baker and Dennis Nolan, and former executive Committee members on celebrating their centenary and for promoting tennis in our local community.

CEDARS OF LEBANON FOLKLORIC GROUP "2022 CONCERT"

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I was delighted to attend the Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group 2022 Concert at The Bryan Brown Theatre on 11 June 2022. This year's concert was particularly special, given it marked the Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group's 45th Anniversary. Congratulations to the Group on this impressive milestone! The event was an opportunity for members of the Lebanese Australian community and the wider community to come along to share the rich traditions of the Lebanese culture. I thoroughly enjoyed the folklore, music, dance, arts and crafts of Lebanese Australians on display. I acknowledge group founder Elie Akouri, who is a passionate promoter and advocate of traditional Lebanese folkloric traditions, all the talented performers from the Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group and Antiochian Folkloric Dance Group. Since establishing the Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group in 1977, Elie has worked tirelessly to ensure these traditions continue to be showcased to a growing audience. Once again, I congratulate the Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group on its 45th Anniversary, particularly Elie and his team, and look forward to attending their Concert again next year.

BANKSTOWN/SOUTH WEST DIVISION LUNCHEON

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—Congratulations to Bankstown/South West Legacy Division on their successful Appreciation and Changeover Luncheon held on Friday, June 17 at Bankstown Sports Club. The event was held by the Legacy Division to extend their thanks to all the volunteers, businesses, clubs and schools who have supported them and helped enable their important work in providing essential services to the families of our many brave servicemen and women in our community. For almost a century, Bankstown Legacy has tirelessly worked to support those who have made great sacrifices for our country. Their crucial work is made possible by the generosity of their dedicated volunteers (legatees), who are worthy of the highest accolade. Congratulations to Alan Rawlinson, Chairman of the Bankstown/South West Division for his exceptional work in supporting Legacy and in coordinating the event. This Luncheon was particularly special as it was Alan's last event as Chairman. Alan has been the Chairman of the Bankstown Legacy Division for 11 years, and we are all thankful for his efforts. I extend my congratulations to Geoff Steen on his new role as Chairman. I am proud to offer my continued support to the Bankstown Legacy Division.

CAMPBELLTOWN SENIOR CYBER SEEKERS

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)—Technology—particularly computers and the internet—have moved incredibly quickly in the past two decades when it comes to advancements. Keeping up can be difficult for the most computer literate people. However, for some of those from older generations who did not grow up with laptops and iPads, navigating their way through this new digital age can be even more challenging and frustrating at times. That is why we are so fortunate in Campbelltown to have the Campbelltown Senior Cyber Seekers. Located at 12 Lithgow Street, Campbelltown, the organisation have done a tremendous job supporting people throughout our community in terms of boosting their digital literacy. I have been fortunate enough to witness the incredible dedication and passion of the Campbelltown Senior Cyber Seekers team first hand. Their patience and determination to help others is nothing short of wonderful. I would encourage anyone elderly residents throughout Campbelltown who want to brush up on the digital literacy, to contact the Campbelltown Senior Cyber Seekers. To the team at 12 Lithgow Street, Campbelltown, I say thank you for all that you have done – and continue to do – for our community.

ANNIVERSARY OF SETTE GIUGNO

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—On 5 June 2022, I had the privilege of attending the Anniversary of the Sette Giugno Commemoration Service, hosted by the Maltese Community Council of NSW at the Maltese Bicentennial Monument in Civic Park, Pendle Hill. "Sette Giugno" is the Italian translation of "7th of June". It is a Maltese national holiday celebrated annually and holds great significance in the Maltese community. On 7th June 1919, the riots caused by an uprising against the British administration in Malta led to the deaths of 4 men and the injuries of 50 people. Every year, the Maltese Community across the world gathers to commemorate the victims and to honour their sacrifices. The men killed in the riots were: Lorenzo Dyer from Vittoriosa, Giuseppe Bajada from Gozo, Emanuele Attard from Sliema and Carmelo Abela from Valletta. Greystanes is home to many Maltese-Australian families, and I feel honoured to represent such a resilient and strong community. I would like to thank President Miriam Friggieri and Secretary Marisa Previtera for inviting me to the service, and I commend them for their continued work in supporting the Maltese-Australian community.

ASQUITH GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS, ANNIKA RIDLEY AND JOHN WIGAN

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy)—Recently two Asquith Girls High School teachers were awarded Pride of Workmanship Awards through Hornsby Rotary Club, after being nominated by their principal Elizabeth Amvrazis. It is my pleasure to also recognize those teachers and their extraordinary work. Annika Ridley is a committed, inspiring, and passionate educator. She has positively influenced the success and passion for drama in her students by providing a diverse range of co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities which enrich their learning and cater to their talents. She coordinates two afterschool Drama ensembles as well as a lunch time Year 7 Drama club. John Wigan Deputy Principal joined the Asquith Girls High School learning community in 2016. He is a driven, creative and inspiring leader who takes on complex agendas within the school with great success. John is a compassionate leader who serves the diverse needs of students and colleagues by his ability to develop trustful and inspiring relationships. His passion and commitment to teaching is highly praised and recognised by the whole school community. The Public Education System is lucky to have leaders such as John and Annika in charge of our children's education.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF HORNSBY RUGBY CLUB'S ANDY WARNER MEMORIAL DAY

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy)—Today I would like to recognise the Hornsby Lions Rugby Club and their 20th Anniversary of their event the Andy Warner Memorial Day. This annual event commenced back in 2002 to commemorate club legend Andrew Warner, who passed away at Waitara Oval after sustaining an injury while playing for Hornsby's first grade. An icon of Hornsby Rugby Club, Andy was an integral part of the club's success as a player. He also achieved success as a coach taking the third-grade team to a premiership in 1999. The 1st of June this year marked the 20th anniversary of Andy's passing. The passion of the Lions ensures that his significant contribution to the club will never be forgotten. Andy was also a serving police officer and always keen to help his community. This clearly is reflected in the positive mark he left on the Hornsby Rugby Club. The Andy Warner Memorial Day, also known as "Back to Hornsby Day", is one of the highlights of the Hornsby Lions' season and always produces a strong turnout of supporters. This year was no exception.

CONGRATULATIONS MICHELLE DAVIS OAM

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—Michelle Davis OAM epitomises resilience, selflessness and extraordinary dedication to community and I congratulate her as one of Maitland's newest recipients of a Queen's Birthday Honour. Michelle's commitment and dedication in establishing the ROADWHYZ – 'Choice and Consequence' program and HOPE Support Group (Helping Other Parents Exist after the loss of a child) after the tragic accident which took her two sons Brandon and Matthew demonstrated incredible stoicism during a time of intense personal grief. As a friend, client and local Member of Parliament, I have always been inspired by Michelle's strength and boundless generosity. Despite her own periods of loss, pain, and illness, Michelle has always put others first. Michelle's ability to bring others together for hope and change, is a mark of her extraordinary leadership. To find that inspiration in a time of grief and loss is testament to Michelle's courage and strength of character. It is an honour to know Michelle and I am so pleased that her efforts have been recognised with this award. Congratulations Michelle on your outstanding commitment to service and change.

CONGRATULATIONS KEVIN SHORT OAM

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—Congratulations to one of Maitland's newest recipients of a Queen's Birthday Honour, Kevin Short OAM, rounding out a long and broad standing contribution to our community. Kevin's long history of service and contribution to Maitland is exemplary in every way, from the many elections in which he fulfilled the role of Returning Officer to the commitment he has shown Maitland's Hockey community for over 60 years. Kevin has played an active role in ensuring Maitland's Hockey community

has continued to thrive over the years, including playing a pivotal role in the construction of the Maitland hockey centre. Kevin's contribution to the Maitland and District Historical Society, Lodge Wallis Plains No. 4 Maitland Freemasons, the Anglican Church and many other organisations speak to his true character as someone who is always willing to be involved in and advocate for Maitland. I have had the pleasure of knowing Kevin for many years now and continue to be inspired by his dedication to our community, determination and resilience. The many ways in which he has displayed his commitment to building and serving our community over the years, make him truly deserving of this recognition.

CONGRATULATIONS RAY FAIRWEATHER OAM

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—Congratulations to Maitland's newest recipient of a Queen's Birthday Honour, Ray Fairweather OAM. Ray's term as the longest serving Maitland City Council Councillor of 35 years, including one year as Mayor demonstrates his love for Maitland. The important role Ray has played over the years and continues to play today demonstrates his commitment to seeing the Maitland community progress, whilst continuing to pay homage to the Maitland of 1820. Ray's humility and commitment shown to getting things done for Maitland is admirable and the Maitland of today is fortunate to have you as one of its long-standing stalwarts. Having known Ray for nearly twenty years, I have on many occasions admired his dedication to community, determination and resilience. After all these years his community spirit remains strong and his selfless service to others and leadership is inspiring. The many ways in which he has displayed his commitment to building and serving our community over the years, make him truly deserving of this recognition.

CONGRATULATIONS TO KYLE BAY RESIDENT MOHAMED HAGE IN QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—Mohamed Hage was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia [OAM] for services to Australian-Arab business, trade and investment relations. The son of Lebanese Muslim migrants who came to Australia in the 1970s, Mr Hage is part of a growing Arabic local community. A local who was born in St George Hospital, Mr Hage completed a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Wollongong and obtained post graduate qualifications in Business. In 2017 he received the Multicultural Community Medal for Economic Participation in the NSW Premier's Multicultural Community Awards. Mr Hage's mission has been to foster trade and investment between Australia and the Middle Eastern region, including delivering and leading the research insights into capital allocations and investment markets to multi-institutional and government clients. He feels it's really important for Australia to look beyond Asia to the Middle East as an important trade partner. He has therefore been influential in assisting the Australian and Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] governments, private and public sectors in generating new economic activities including fostering trade flows and bilateral ties in sectors such as education, health, aviation, agriculture and food, infrastructure and finance.

CONGRATULATIONS TO LOUIS MCGUIGAN IN QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—Louis McGuigan is the recipient of Member of the Order (AM) of Australia. Rheumatologist, Louis McGuigan, has received national recognition for significant service to rheumatology, and to community health. Mr McGuigan who has lived in St George and Sutherland Shire for most of his life, including at South Hurstville, now lives in the Hunter Valley but remains passionate about his work. Mr McGuigan has held several titles including chairman and president of the Australian Rural Rheumatology Committee, chairman of the Committee for Stroke Units Implementation in NSW Hospitals, and has worked in most of the public and private hospitals in St George and Sutherland Shire. He was also a senior lecturer in medicine at the University of NSW and a clinical tutor. His work includes the creation of a series of country clinics, delivering effective new medicines to sick patients who cannot get to metropolitan areas for treatment. Other notable work includes his joint development of a series of crucial services in metropolitan Sydney and in stroke treatment and care initiatives. It's the determined efforts of Mr McGuigan that have made an extraordinary difference to people's health and therefore their lives.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ARNCLIFFE SCOTS BASEBALL CLUB PRESIDENT LAURIE BARNES

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—Laurie Barnes has been awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia [OAM] for service to baseball in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours. Bexley resident, Mr Barnes has been president and head coach of the club since 2006 and is also a director of the Arncliffe Scots Sports and Recreation Club. Mr Barnes assisted in setting up the Baseball Academy in the late 1980s and early 1990s and established Bayside Academy for Junior Development in 2015. He has also been Coach and Selector of Junior Player Development, Cronulla Sutherland Junior Baseball Association since 2015. In addition, he was a delegate, NSW Women's Baseball League, 2013-2014 to help forge a pathway for female players in the sport. Mr Barnes's involvement in the sport of baseball goes back to his school days in Canberra in 1965; he was playing cricket but not enjoying it when it was suggested that he try baseball. This led to a lifetime love and commitment to the sport. Thank you, Laurie, for your dedication.

WATCHING THE BORDER REGION SPIRITS SOAR

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate the following constituents who have been awarded the Order of Australia Medal on the Queen's Birthday Honours this June 2022 for service to the Albury Wodonga Community. Cr Steve Bowen, Albury's Deputy Mayor, has demonstrated his love for our community over many decades as an Emergency Service Worker, volunteer and rural advocate. He lives by what he terms the 'Boomerang Theory' - which gives him a purpose to get up every day and lend a hand. Steve operates a highly regarded and successful DJ and entertainment which saw him inducted into the Hall of Fame last year at the Albury-Wodonga Business Awards. Stuart Dye has been recognised for saving many lives or assisting with recovery through his role as a skilled diver. Stuart has been with the NSW Rural Fire Service and served as Captain of Albury and Border Rescue Squad. Congratulations Steve and Stuart for your ongoing commitment and contribution to the community of Albury and surrounding border towns.

MORE BALLET , MORE PERFORMANCES FOR BORDER

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to acknowledge Beth Docker from Albury, a Murray Youth Performing Arts ballet teacher who has now opened the Albury Wodonga Youth Ballet on the Border. This wonderful program aims to provide a more professional pathway for dance students in our region to make dance a career or to take their talent further and perhaps to perform internationally. Ballet requires a lot of discipline and dedication and for those between the ages of 10 - 19 years, it can provide them with a good introduction and preparation. Beth began dancing at a very early age, with a dream to become a professional ballerina. Her dancing career has taken her to Sydney's Tanya Pearson Classical Coaching Academy, Melbourne's City Ballet, to New Zealand and she was accepted for a position at the Marais Dance School in Paris. Beth, I well done on your accomplishments - you are an inspiration to our young dancers on the Border.

ART EXHIBIT WITH 'WOW FACTOR'

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate sisters Pam Fredericks from Corowa and Joan Asmussen from Albury, who will be displaying their works of art in a joint exhibition in Canberra. Their exhibition called 'Siblings – Botanical Inspirations' will be displayed at the National Botanical Gardens. The exhibition is a celebration of nature. Ms Fredericks' art is in the form of decorative colours of mosaics of Australian Flora, whilst Ms Asmussen's art involves recycled woven fibre creations of indigenous plants, using beautiful and distinctive flowers such as kangaroo paw, casuarina, red hot poker, pine needles and tree material. The sisters' creativity derives from previous years of being school art teachers. Pam and Joan... thank you for your love of art and using your skills to create wonderful pieces for public display.

ILLUMINATE WOLLONDILLY FESTIVAL OF ART & LIGHT

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—Illuminate Wollondilly Festival of Art and Light, the much-loved festival, returned in May this year, bringing much needed tourism dollars to the local area and plenty of joy to locals. The festival was truly fantastic, held over three days beginning on Friday evening with the Picton Botanic Gardens transforming into a glowing fairyland, with hanging lights, illuminated sculptures and a lantern display whilst guests attended the Long Table dinner staged under a magical setting in the Avenue of Trees. On Saturday, there were live performances from local artists, street stalls, light and fire dancers, local dance groups, rides for the children and light projection displays on our iconic buildings in Picton. As fireworks lit up the sky and locals were dazzled, Missy Lancaster, as local Country artist, sang her hit Heatwave to close the night. Sunday was a relaxing day on a picnic rug listening to the swing and jazz performers. The festival is the largest event on Wollondilly's calendar, organised by Wollondilly Shire Council with the support of many local partners, sponsors, and volunteers who helped bring the event to life.

STARS OF THE HIGHLANDS – DANCE FOR CANCER

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—The Southern Highlands in my electorate of Wollondilly bought the star power to the 5th annual Stars of The Highlands fundraising event, all for the very worthwhile cause of raising money for the Cancer Council. On the 14th of May, Cancer Council hosted their 5th year of Stars of The Highlands, an incredible night of dancing and fundraising for cancer research. Ten Highlanders donned their dancing shoes, kicked up their heels, and took to the stage at the Mittagong RSL Club after less than ten weeks of intense dance lessons. The evening was a wonderful success, raising an impressive \$130,152. Each of our local stars was partnered with a professional dancer and competed for audience votes and judges' scores. Congratulations to the Judges Choice Awards winning duo – Penny Webb with Dancer Partner Madison Teerman from Industry Dance Co Tahmoor. We know that coping with cancer is challenging, and getting the right support and information is crucial. The funding raised will support people in the Southern Highlands who are battling cancer. Thank you to everyone who participated and attended.

WOLLONDILLY WOMEN IN EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2022

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—On Saturday 14 May, I had the pleasure of attending the Wollondilly Women in Excellence Awards at the Menangle Country Club. Like so many events this year, it had to be postponed due to flooding, so it was with pent-up excitement that the attendees came together that evening. The Wollondilly Women in Excellence Awards is about celebrating, recognising and awarding excellence, outstanding leadership, community contribution and role models within the Wollondilly Shire. It was a night of grand celebration for the many wonderful women in my electorate, who were recognised across a range of categories. A special congratulations to Wollondilly Woman of the Year, Carole-Anne Priest! Other worthy winners across a range of different categories were honoured on the night, including: Kate Symons, Debbie Roberts, Rebecca Trompp, Jody Casey, Nicole Speakman, Thi Ha Dao, Alicia Davis, Katrina Langhorn, Sharon Robertson. Congratulations to all the nominees and finalists and thank you to the event organisers for putting on a terrific evening.

MOLLIE BUCKLEY

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—A researcher at Charles Sturt University's Wagga Wagga is working to make the retirements of racehorses happier. Mollie Buckley is a Bachelor of Equine Science graduate in the Charles Sturt School of Agricultural, Environmental and Veterinary Sciences, who is conducting Honours research to address the current lack of knowledge about what makes retired racehorses successful in their new post-racing careers. Ms Buckley has launched a survey of former and current owners of retired racehorses as she works to identify physical and behavioural attributes shown in retired racehorses, both thoroughbred and standardbred that are enjoying a successful post-racing career. Ms Buckley's survey will investigate what it is that can make retired racehorses, which she says have a reputation for being "highly strung" and difficult to manage, as well as the challenges owners face due to physical and/or behavioural limitations. The survey will also explore details about the current discipline the horse is involved in, whether that be competitive or recreational, and will also explore information and experiences regarding education (both ridden and groundwork), housing and management behaviours, and demographics. I commend Ms Buckley for her efforts to improve the lives of our retired racehorses.

HUNTER REGION INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—On Wednesday 1 June, Bishop Tyrrell Anglican College sent a team to compete in the Hunter Region Independent Schools Basketball tournament, which this year was held in Broadmeadow. Over the course of the day, the girls played six. They got off to a strong start, and went on to show several teams that they were not a team to be trifled with—taking on Macquarie College on the main court and going head to head with Newcastle Grammar School in an incredibly close final. Ultimately, the team of Scarlett, Isabel, Eva, Mikayla, Bhanavi, Amy, Millie, Deetya and Harriet, carried the day and came home champions. Bishop Tyrrell's name is on the competition shield for the first time since its inception in 2007. Team coach Sue Hunt has commended the team for their superb defensive play, and has said that each player gave their best on the court and deserved the achievement of a place in the final. My congratulations to Mrs Hunt and to the girls on this epic win, and a special acknowledgment goes to "player of the day" Scarlett, who led the team and shot the majority of the baskets.

MAROBA AGED CARE

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—At Newcastle University's 2021 Employability Excellence Awards, Maroba Aged Care Facility was inducted into the Work Integrated Learning Hall of Fame. Since 2012, Maroba has provided dynamic work-readiness placements for students across speech pathology, and other allied health programs benefit of students, residents and their families, staff and the wider community. Even during the pandemic, Maroba welcomed students' involvement in online sessions with residents, which not only helped them master important telehealth skills but was also a vital morale booster for elderly residents. For leading their team to this recognition, I offer my congratulations to Viv Allanson, Chief Executive Officer; Tracy Walker, General Manager, Operations; and Louise Adnum, General Manager, Corporate Services. I would also like to recognise Maroba's board, led by chair Sharon Smith, and their operational team: Linda Winn, Ann Power, John Zammit, Silvana Peters, Rachel Hollis, Christine Davis, and Rhys Dintino. This program does so much to help train the next generation of aged care practitioners, brightens the lives of residents and enriches our community. Good on Maroba for this well-deserved acknowledgment.

ROBYN BENNEY

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—National Volunteer Week is a chance for us to recognise the extraordinary, and often unacknowledged, role of volunteers in our community. One example of the extraordinary spirit of volunteerism and community-mindedness that characterises so many in the Wallsend electorate is Robyn

Benney, whose weeks are often packed with volunteering for a number of organisations. For 18 years Robyn volunteered in the canteen at St John's Primary School in Lambton, starting when her first grandchild began attending the school. Though all her grandchildren have now moved on from primary school, Robyn remains a fixture of the St John's community. When Robyn is not volunteering at St John's Primary School, she spends time at Ronald McDonald House, the Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service and the Hunter Medical Research Institute. She was inspired to help others after suffering a tragedy at a young age. After her sister died from leukemia, Robyn's mum founded the Maitland Cancer Appeal, raising thousands of dollars for cancer research. Robyn says that volunteering means you get back more than you can ever give. I absolutely agree, and I congratulate Robyn and thank her for her extraordinary work.

ANNA NOON

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)—In a time of rising living costs and expensive fresh produce, I'd like to acknowledge the efforts of Anna Noon from Wakefield who has created a 'seed library' for Lake Macquarie residents. The seed library is a community-led initiative which encourages people to share fruit, vegetable, herb and flower seeds. The idea is that participants borrow seeds to plant and leave a portion of their crop to go to seed. Those seeds are then harvested and dried before they're returned to the library for others to grow. Anna was looking for a project that would increase community participation in outdoor activities and enhance community wellbeing, and had noticed seed libraries in other places. She wondered why Lake Macquarie didn't have one and decided to do something about it. Each week Anna and her team of volunteers spend hours sorting and processing seeds for the library which now contains seeds for more than 50 plant species. Those efforts were publicly recognised recently during the 2022 Lake Mac Awards where Anna received the Environmental Leader Highly Commended Award. I congratulate and thank Anna for her contribution to the local community.

DENNIS BLANCH

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)—I would like to acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of Dennis Blanch from Rathmines in fostering the growth of the visual arts scene in Lake Macquarie. Last year, while we were living with the challenges of the COVID-19 health pandemic and the closure of many businesses and community facilities, 76-year-old Dennis decided to open his home to create a local artists' collective. Dennis devoted countless hours transforming his home into a workspace and studio where both emerging and established artists could meet free of charge and where he could help them create wonderful works of art. One of Dennis's great joys in life is to mentor young artists, especially in the emerging field of mixed media involving digital art and traditional art forms. His students hold Dennis in high esteem for his ongoing dedication to keeping Lake Macquarie's art scene alive in the community, especially during such a challenging time. These efforts recently saw Dennis named as a finalist for the 2022 Lake Mac Arts Leader Award in recognition of his outstanding demonstration of leadership skills and contribution to the arts. I congratulate and thank Dennis for his contribution to the local community.

MORISSET HIGH AGRICULTURE STUDENTS

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)—I would like to acknowledge the work and dedication of Morisset High School's agriculture students in Years 9 and 10, along with their teachers Peter Hillard and Ali Peacock who raised some very special poultry. Three Hy-Line Brown chickens were selected as entrants to the poultry section of this year's Royal Easter Show, specifically in the egg laying competition. The teenaged students spent weeks arduously caring for and preparing the birds for the big event. They tagged, weighed and cleaned the chickens, while also monitoring and adjusting their diet to increase their protein levels leading up to the show. They trimmed their flight feathers and had to identify the three fittest birds from dozens of chickens to enter the competition. While their finicky fowl didn't win any prizes, as they chose to start laying eggs the day after the competition, the excellent work that went into preparing the birds should be recognised and praised. Sometimes a job well done is the best reward, and simply having Morisset High School represented at the Royal Easter Show is a great accolade for the school.

COAST & COUNTRY PRIMARY CARE

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I would like to thank Kathy Beverley from Erina Respiratory Clinic. The clinic provides a centralised service to people that require COVID-19 testing and vaccinations. In July last year Kathy became the CEO of Coast and Country Primary Care who run the clinic. To step into such a demanding role during a pandemic and provide a consistent and high-quality service is worthy of recognition. In addition to COVID-19 testing facilities and vaccinations, Coast & Country Primary Care run after hours GP clinics, assist with NDIS applications, run a mobile health clinic for people experiencing homelessness, nutrition, and mental health services and more. Thank you to Kathy and the rest of the Coast & Country Primary Care team, for working tirelessly to maximise outcomes for patients across the Central Coast.

PETER BURFITT

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. One outstanding volunteer who was acknowledged is Peter Burfitt who has done 32 years of service to the RFS, being awarded a Long Service Medal 2nd Clasp. He joined the 'Gosford Communications Unit' in 1989 and in 2015 joined the Matcham/ Holgate Brigade, in the Terrigal Electorate, where he remains a dual member. Peter has previously been honoured for his service to the RFS including a Premier's Bushfire Emergency Citation in 2020. During his combined memberships he has held a range of positions including Communications Deputy Captain and Communications Senior Deputy Captain as well as Training Officer, First Aid Officer, Maintenance Officer and Brigade Community Engagement Officer. Peter is a 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.

HEAL COUNTRY

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)—I wish to recognise the Heal Country Gandangara NAIDO Exhibition 2022. As part of National Reconciliation week, the exhibition was held in the Liverpool City Council Library. The portraits were co-created by Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council and photographer Robert Camerier. The Exhibition opened to public viewing on 1 June and is to continue until 30.6.22. The portrait photographs are impressive and compelling.

CANLEY VALE HIGH SCHOOL – PIVOT PROGRAM

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—I commend the efforts of Canley Vale High School and Fairfield City Police Area Command for their involvement in youth crime prevention. Recently Canley Vale High School Police Liaison Officer, Constable Clarke from Fairfield City Police Area Command visited students in Years 8 – 11 to talk about the PIVOT program. PIVOT is a youth crime prevention program that informs young people of the dangers that they could face in their everyday lives e.g violence, gangs and weapons. This program goes a long way towards raising awareness about youth crime so that our young people can make the right choices.

FAIRFIELD HIGH SCHOOL – SEU BOCCIA TEAM

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—This year, the SEU Boccia Team at Fairfield High School took part in the School Sport Unit 2022 Boccia Schools Knockout Competition. I congratulate the SEU Boccia team on receiving 1st place in this competition – a wonderful achievement that they can be very proud of. The team won all of the games they played and they have now progressed to the final stage of the competition where they will represent their school at the State Finals at Sydney Olympic Park. I congratulate the students once again on such a fantastic achievement and I thank teachers and staff who provided support to the students both on the day and in the lead-up to the competition.

ANDY ELIAS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—I wish to congratulate Fairvale High School Year 9 student Andy Elias for achieving first place in The Nan Manefield Young Writers Award in the 13-14 year age category for his poem "Elegy for the Unseen". This is a tremendous achievement and I commend Andy for the time and dedication he put into his winning entry. Andy was awarded a certificate, prize money and an invitation to an online Writing Masterclass with judge and award-winning Australian author, Sue Whiting. I congratulate Andy once again and I look forward to seeing more of his literary successes in the future.

BRETT AUSTINE

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—Today I acknowledge Brett Austine on being named the Lake Mac Sports Leader of the Year at the 2022 Lake Mac Awards. The Lake Mac Awards celebrate the amazing accomplishments of local athletes, artists, environmentalists, volunteers and ambassadors, and recognise the contributions they have made to the local community. Brett is a former World Champion Trampoline Gymnast and a key figure in the Hunter sporting community as he trains, judges and mentors athletes in gymnastics and diving, helping them reach their goals to compete at state, national and international levels. Brett also coached Jessica Pickering, who was a member of the Australian Olympic Team that attended the recent Tokyo Games. It is clear that Brett has made a great contribution to the local community over the years and should be very proud of what he has achieved. I congratulate Brett on being named the 2022 Lake Mac Sports Leader of the Year.

JANICE MCKAY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—Today I acknowledge Janice McKay on being named the Lake Mac Senior of the Year at the 2022 Lake Mac Awards. The Lake Mac Awards celebrate the amazing accomplishments of local athletes, artists, environmentalists, volunteers and ambassadors, and recognise the contributions they have

made to the local community. Janice is a Clinical Psychologist, who in the midst of the pandemic authored a children's book called Villony Virus Comes to Town, to help children and their families cope with the changes to their lives that were brought on by the virus. It is clear that Janice has made a great contribution to the local community during such a difficult and unforeseen time and should be very proud of what she has achieved. I congratulate Janice on being named the 2022 Lake Mac Senior of the Year and thank her for the work she has done to support the people of Swansea.

ERIKA ENDERBY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—Today I acknowledge Erika Enderby of Valentine, who has been selected to represent Australia at the Junior World Orienteering Championships in Aguiar da Beira, Portugal next month. The World Championships will run from 9 to 17 July, with competitors from right across the globe taking part. At just 15 years of age, Erika is the youngest member of the Australian team, and was selected after finishing 2nd in the 2022 National Orienteering League. Erika stepped up to the Junior Elite in 2022 and finished the national series with a win, two second places and two third places. I know that Erika has been working hard to prepare for the Championships, with her and her sister Mikayla also competing in the European Youth Orienteering Championships in Hungary as part of her preparation. Erika is an outstanding young athlete and I congratulate her on being selected in the Australian team.

BRAD DE LOSA

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police)—I would like to acknowledge the achievements of local timber sports axeman Brad De Losa who is taking his talents to the world stage. Brad has booked his ticket to Vienna in June to try his luck for the 2022 Stihl Timbersports World Trophy after taking home the Australian Trophy win in Adelaide on March 5. In the past, he's won that World Trophy on three previous occasions, so to get another one would be certainly the icing on the cake for Brad. Chopping his way through his goals, Brad has been training four to five days per week including swimming, lightweight training and chopping blocks at home where he can also have a complete run through of the events, simulating what we'll be doing on the day. I know that the entire Lithgow community will be behind Brad and I thank everyone for sending him their best wishes as a result of what can be described as a Herculean effort.

PLAYERS THEATRE INCOMING COMMITTEE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—The iconic Players Theatre in Port Macquarie recently held their Annual General Meeting to induct the incoming Management Committee and to celebrate the past 12 months of delivering amazing theatre productions to audiences of the Hastings community. The Players Theatre in my electorate has a rich history of showcasing first class drama and theatrical entertainment, staged over five to six productions each year including the biannual Festival of One Act Plays, all beautifully set in the boutique style venue seating up to 225 people per performance. I congratulate the Committee led by the Incoming President Steve Harris and re-elected Vice President's Jenny Gould and Daniel Parlevliet. Greg Frank will remain as Secretary along with Treasurer Stuart Symons. The Committee is also excited to welcome new recruits, Daniel Miller, Kate Meredith, Michelle Bowen and Sam Porto. Much gratitude is extended to the stalwart committee members; Amie Frank and Paul Bishop for retaining their positions. To all who contribute to sound and lighting, costume, makeup, playwriting, onstage performance and training I thank you. When visiting the Port Macquarie-Hastings please drop into the Players Theatre enjoy the best of the Hastings local talent in theatrical production.

MELISSA STREATER

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I recognise local Indigenous artist and proud descendent of the Wiradjuri Nation Melissa 'Mel' Streater for returning home to her grass roots to educate and share her extraordinary talents in visual arts and story telling through brush to canvas. Today I am thrilled to speak about the local contribution Mel Streater is making in cultural awareness and language through the ancestral practice of painting. Mel returned to Port Macquarie or "Guruk" in Birpai language after a stint in Sydney to reconnect with country and undertake a TAFE course in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Arts. Inspired by her indigenous heritage Mel began to further her education in Wiradjuri language, noting the overall sense of identity, belonging and connection to her people when learning new terminology. Mel's passion and love of culture has laid a foundation for the development of Braenchild Collective which is a multidisciplinary studio specialising in design, illustration, research, strategic communication, education and facilitation, partnered with three talented individuals. The cover of Artwalk 2022 features Mel's artwork with the theme 'Nyiirun girranggang ginyaanggang biladiyn' meaning 'we are most alive and happier because of the river', Gathang language of the Birpai Nation.

KARATE NATIONALS SUCCESS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—It is always a pleasure to announce the successful students at the Mid North Coast Karate School in Kew who continue to triumph at State and National competitions against the best in martial arts in the country. I congratulate all the award recipients for their inspirational efforts at the Goshin Ryu National Championships in Sydney. Sensei Shaun Budai - 1st Team Kumite, 3rd Team Kata and 3rd Men's Open Kata. Sempai Anissa Hilton - 1st Team Kumite, 2nd Ladies Open Kata, 2nd Ladies Open Kumite, 2nd Veterans Kata, 3rd Team Kata and 3rd Veterans Kumite. Sempai Nathan Bain - 1st Team Kumite, 3rd Team Kata and 1st Men's Open Kumite. Sempai Jay Iveli - 1st Kumite and 2nd Junior Open Kata. Sempai Sam Hilton - 1st Team Kumite and 2nd Kumite. Jackson Smith - 2nd Kata and 2nd Kumite. Eric Millgate - 2nd Kumite. Flynn Collins - 1st Kumite and 3rd Kata. Liam Urbanica - 1st Team Kumite, 1st Kumite and 3rd Kata. Addison Williams - 1st Kata and 1st Kumite. Adam Williams - 3rd Kata and 3rd Veterans Kumite. Kellie Eggins - 2nd Kumite. Kaos Chaffey - 2nd Kmuite. Oliver Dean - 2nd Kumite. Congratulations to all!

RUNNER-UP FOR COOLAMON CENTRAL SCHOOL

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—I take this opportunity to extend a huge congratulations to 8 students in years 5 and 6 from Coolamon Central School who came runner-up in the Da Vinci Decathlon hosted by the Riverina Anglican College in Wagga recently. The Da Vinci Decathlon saw Bella Bond, Aaliyah Coleman, Imogen Crocker, Reagan Crocker, Cooper Graham, Lachlan Johnstone, Denzel King and Emelia Quinn compete in 10 disciplinary subjects of engineering, mathematics, code breaking, art and poetry, science, English, ideation, creative producers, cartography, and legacy. Coolamon Central School's team came first place in English, science, mathematics and ideation which placed them a very close second behind Moama Anglican College. The Da Vinci Decathlon is an academic competition designed to stimulate the minds of school students through a variety of challenging tasks. Bella, Aaliyah, Imogen, Reagan, Cooper, Lachlan, Denzel and Emelia worked collaboratively and efficiently throughout the course of the day navigating their way through all of the challenges presented to them. Congratulations once again to Bella, Aaliyah, Imogen, Reagan, Cooper, Lachlan, Denzel and Emelia on your fantastic second place achievement. You all did your school incredibly proud.

JOSH PURTELL & BRENTON FORSYTH

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—I would like to congratulate both Josh Purtell and Brenton Forsyth, first grade players for the Cootamundra Strikers in the men's Pascoe Cup competition. Over the last fortnight in consecutive weeks, Josh and Brenton have celebrated their 200th game milestones for Cootamundra. Cootamundra Strikers' coach, Mick Godbier has praised both players for their outstanding contributions to date for the club. Mick described the occasion by praising Brenton's discipline this season and for his invaluable experience over the previous few years. Similarly, Josh was praised for his quality on the pitch, playing a key part in the Striker's performances. I would like to again congratulate both Josh and Brenton for their significant milestone of playing 200 matches. Their dedication to the Cootamundra Strikers over many years is an accolade not many individuals ever claim. I also wish the Cootamundra Strikers all the best for the remainder of their season in the Pascoe Cup.

CY RAMERIZ – SCHOOL BASED TRAINEE OF THE YEAR

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—I take this opportunity to extend a huge congratulations to Narrandera TAFE student and local, Cy Rameriz on winning the School Based Traineeship [SBAT] of the year at the Southern Region Excellence Awards. Cy was a School Based Trainee employed at Narrandera Shire Council during 2020/2021. Cy attended work one day a week, TAFE one day a week and attended school at Narrandera High School for the remaining days. As part of Cy's traineeship, he completed a Certificate II in Business Administration at the Narrandera TAFE campus. Cy was taught by Narrandera TAFE Business Administration teacher Alison Warren. Cy along with his family, teacher and peers travelled to Wollongong for the awards ceremony where he was presented with the TAFE NSW Southern Region Trainee of the Year Award. The Southern Region comprises of both the Riverina and Illawarra Regions. During Cy's school-based traineeship, he was able to gain hands on industry experience, a qualification from TAFE NSW and could use this qualification as part of his HSC. I congratulate Cy on this magnificent achievement and wish him all the very best in his future endeavours.

INVESTITURE CEREMONY

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast)—I would like to congratulate and acknowledge Mrs Leonie Fleming and Mrs Ann McDonald two local residents who attended Government House, Canberra recently to receive Australia Day Awards at an Investiture Ceremony from the Governor General David Hurley. At the ceremony Mrs Fleming, resident of Ulladulla officially received her Order of Australia Medal for her services to

aged welfare and education. This must be a very exciting and special time for Mrs Fleming as her mother also received an OAM in 2003. And Mrs Ann McDonald accepted her late husband Allan's Posthumous Order of Australia Medal for his service to the community, when you reflect on the work Mr McDonald did for his community it's easy to see why he was named in the Australia Day honours list. What a great ceremony to present these two Order of Australia Medal's to two very deserving recipients. What a pleasure it is to have locals be awarded for their hard work and dedication to their community, again congratulations and best wishes to you both.

MELANIE BRIGGS

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast)—I would like to acknowledge and congratulate Melanie Briggs who has been honoured with a special award, she was announced as Midwife of the Year for her work to improve First Nation's maternal and infant health at the 2022 HESTA Australian Nursing and Midwifery Awards. Ms Briggs is the first Aboriginal-led Maternity model of care in Australia she is also the director and founder of the Binjilaanii. Melanie is a senior Midwife at Waminda South Coast Women's Health and Welfare Aboriginal Corporation. Her tireless work and support makes her extremely deserving to be the 2022 Midwife of the Year, her outstanding and hard work makes us women very grateful to have a great midwife to support us. I would like to again congratulate Melanie Briggs for this award your tireless work to improve First Nation's maternal and infant health is incredible and very appreciated by all women.

HASNA AHMAD – QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—I extend my warmest congratulations to Hasna Ahmad on her recent recognition in the Queen's Birthday honours list. Hasna was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for her work in the community. Hasna arrived in Australia in 2003, unable to speak English. Shortly after arriving she enrolled in English classes at St George TAFE. This sparked her appetite for learning, and she completed several courses including a Diploma in Early Childhood Education and a Diploma of Community Service. When her son started kindergarten, she became a member of the P&C and later became president at Wiley Park primary school and Punchbowl Public school. She shared many of her ideas with the principals on how to assist new arrivals to understand the education system. She has continued her work in the humanitarian field and works tirelessly to help new arrivals and refugees. As she told me: 'I always meet new people and give them hope and support when they miss their home countries. I am lucky to work with great leaders in the education system who work very hard to support families.' Congratulations Hasna on your well-deserved award.

SCHOOL OF THE YEAR - ST JOHN VIANNEY CATHOLIC SCHOOL, GREENACRE

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—It gives me great pleasure to announce that this year Australian Education Excellence Awards 2022, now in its fifth year, awarded Primary School of the Year (non-government) to St John Vianney Catholic Primary School in my electorate of Lakemba. St John Vianney is a small Catholic school with approximately 260 K-6 students from 30 cultural backgrounds. The school was established in 1961 by the sisters of St Joseph and is a vibrant and welcoming community that reflects the diversity of the areas in a positive way. This school is in an area not only of diverse cultures but also of great need. What makes this school special is that the teachers have a strong connection with the community and continue to respond to the needs of the students. Principal, Justin Coupland, winner of the Principal of the Year award, has expressed his gratitude to the school community and acknowledges that having a strong connection to the community and a teaching staff with the same commitment, is the reason why the school received this award. I congratulate St John Vianney Catholic School on this outstanding achievement.

MS MARGARET DENCE AM

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I commend Ms Margaret Dence, a resident of my electorate, for her award as a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to the performing arts in acting. As an actress she has a distinguished career spanning seven decades, with roles in iconic Australian productions such as in the sketch comedy The Mavis Bramston Show as its titular character, in the soap opera Kingswood Country, the sitcom The Sullivans and the dark drama Prisoner Cell Block H. She endeared herself to Australian households for her role as stern school headmistress Dorothy Burke in Neighbours. She was a strong stage performer playing a large number of roles, particularly for the Nimrod Theatre Company. Ms Dence has also had a longstanding involvement with the NSW Actors Benevolent Fund and has also been recognised with the accolade of the 2011 Equity Lifetime Achievement Award in acting. I recognise and thank Ms Dence for her great contribution to the dramatic arts.

DR SARAH HILMER AM

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I would like to recognise and acclaim the contribution of Dr Sarah Hilmer, a resident in my electorate, for her award as a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to clinical and geriatric pharmacology. As well as seeing patients in hospital, Dr Hilmer teaches as a Professor at

Sydney university and undertakes important research in geriatric pharmacology. Dr Hilmer has led the charge in awareness of simplification in medication regimentation in Australia. This has delivered increased prevention of adverse medical events by managing the complexity of drug-disease interactions and drug-drug interactions. Her determination in this field has helped to ensure safer clinical results for medication in elderly patients. In her research she has illuminated the prevalence of drug-related problems in geriatric care in Australia and has advocated for greater understanding and safeguarding patient agency in treatment decision-making. I thank and honour Dr Hilmer for her dedicated service to the field of health care and to elderly Australians.

MR JOHN STONE AO

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I would like to commend Mr John Stone, who lives in the Willoughby electorate, for his award as an Officer of the Order of Australia for distinguished service in Parliament and in public administration. John, whom I'm proud to have met in recent years, had an illustrious career as head of the Treasury during the 1970s and 1980s. With a steady hand as head of the Treasury, he exerted a major influence on the Whitlam, Fraser and Hawke governments. He championed the independence of public service and opposed federal governments' high budget deficits. He then was elected to the Senate as a National Party senator for Queensland and served as shadow finance minister, making Stone the only commonwealth departmental secretary to become a member of the Australian Parliament. Mr John Stone AO cuts a strong figure for pursuing sound fiscal governance and reform in a challenging era for the Australian economy. This honour is well-deserved and I applaud his exemplary service.

BALLINA HOCKEY CLUB YOUNG PLAYERS

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I congratulate two young players from Ballina Hockey Club on their selection for the NSW Hockey Athlete Acceleration Program, which is aimed at supporting talented athletes aged 16-18 to advance their skills to the elite level. The two hockey players are Billy Bradford and Daykin Stanger. Billy Bradford, aged 15, was selected for the NSW Under-18 squad last year to compete in the Australian Championships. Billy has been described as a "dangerous" player – someone who possesses the ability to turn a game on its head and in his favour. He was one of the youngest players to ever be selected for the NSW U-18 side. Daykin Stanger is said to be both a sensational player and an excellent role model when it comes to helping Far North Coast Hockey tutor the junior players. The Ballina Hockey Club stars are ones to keep an eye on in the future and I wish them well in their sporting careers.

JOANNE MCCARTHY AM

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to Joanne McCarthy, who has been appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to the print media as a journalist. Joanne is a Gold Kennedy and Gold Walkley Award winning investigative journalist, whose work in uncovering child sexual abuse in the Catholic Church was the catalyst for the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Over a 40 year career Joanne did not shy away from challenge, including undertaking important reporting into coal mining companies and fighting for women suffering as a result of the pelvic mesh scandal, which also saw her recognised with awards for law reporting, the Graham Perkin Australian Journalist of the Year and with an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Newcastle. With tenacity, professionalism and courage, Joanne confronted people in power and shone a light on injustice. This honour is well-deserved.

LESLEY SALEM AM

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to Lesley Salem, who has been appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for significant service to nursing, and to Indigenous health. Lesley is a talented Wonnarua artist and author who is no stranger to recognition after becoming Australia's first Indigenous nurse practitioner in 2003. In 2015 she was named as the Australian Nurse Practitioner of the Year and has also received the NSW Premier's Award and the NSW Aboriginal Health Award. These awards reflect Lesley's passion and dedication to the health of First Nations people, as well her service on committees including with Kidney Health Australia, the University of Newcastle and as an Indigenous Women's Delegate to the United Nations. Congratulations again, Lesley. This honour is very deserved.

PHILLIP WINNEY OAM

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to Phillip Winney, who has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for his service to veterans and their families. Phil's service has spanned over 30 years, taking on his first RSL Sub-branch executive position with City of Newcastle in 1989. During his time there he held Junior Vice-President, Secretary and President roles before joining the Merewether Sub-branch in 2003. As Merewether merged with the Hamilton and then the Adamstown Sub-branches Phil has continued to serve on the executive, where he has become known for driving member engagement and improving access to veteran support services. In addition to his work with Sub-branches, Phil has also contributed to local Anzac Day,

Dawn Service and Combined Schools Service committees, with his efforts recognised with a Newcastle Volunteer Service Award in 2019. Congratulations again, Phil. This honour is very deserved.

YEAR 12 2022 EMMAUS CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Today I would like to congratulate Year 12 2022 at Emmaus Catholic College for competing in their last athletics carnival in their high school journey. Year 12 is a stressful time for many students, and especially for this cohort who had to endure two years of COVID-19 disrupting their education. Despite this, they have persisted, they have worked hard, and they deserve every ounce of praise for their work. The athletics carnival, held on 10 June 2022, was a great day to have fun in the sun and keep active in the midst of their important studies. I would once again like to congratulate Emmaus Catholic College's Year 12 2022 and wish them the best of luck in their end-of-school and post-school lives.

AMANDA REID & NICHOLAS BEZZINA

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Congratulations to new parents, Amanda Reid and Nicholas Bezzina, whose daughter Everleigh Elizabeth Bezzina was the first baby born in the new Nepean Hospital Clinical Tower on June 7th 2022. First-time parents, Amanda and Nicholas said that the milestone only made the day more exciting, with hopes to share this sentiment with Everleigh as she grows older. Ms Reid said her daughter will be able to look back and have this to share with everyone. The birth was also momentous for all the staff and midwives involved, who have worked so tirelessly throughout the design and development of the birthing suite. Little Everleigh was the star of the show, with all the midwives cheering outside just waiting to see her. Congratulations to Reid-Bezzina Family! I wish you all the best for a healthy and happy 2022.

DEBBIE O'CONNOR

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—I wish to acknowledge local Glenmore Park resident and talented businesswoman, Debbie O'Connor, in celebrating 20 years of success for her business, White River Design [WRD] named after her hometown in South Africa where most of her family still live. Debbie moved to Australia in 2000 after marrying her now husband, David O'Connor. In 2002 when she was five months pregnant, her boss at the time told her that they would not be giving her maternity leave. However, Debbie persevered and decided to register a business name and freelance for a year while raising her son. Today, Debbie is a published author, a Keynote Speaker and the Vice President of the Penrith Chamber of Commerce. She has won Penrith Businessperson of the Year twice and was named Mulgoa Woman of the Year. At the celebration, Debbie shared that WRD was sponsoring 20 African children from the local community to attend the Good Work Foundation program for a year and have committed to sponsoring a child for every new client onboard. Congratulations Debbie on this incredible achievement and thank you for changing the lives of others. I wish you all the best!

MALE SUICIDE PREVENTION WEBSITE LAUNCH

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Thursday 9 June 2022 I was pleased to attend the launch of the Suicide Prevention Australia, Male Suicide Prevention website with my Parliamentary colleagues at The Parliament of NSW. We heard the very moving life experiences of guest speakers at this launch, as well as strategies on how male suicide can be prevented. We were also given a tutorial on how to navigate the website, especially the vital information contained on the webpages. Male suicide prevention is a very important issue which needs more attention in our community. Men are statistically most at risk of suicide as 75 per cent of the 3,000 lives tragically lost every year are men. Data indicates that men who die by suicide have fewer contact with the health and mental health system than the general population. Suicide Prevention Australia are making an important contribution to our community through the creation of this website. They are making suicide prevention more accessible to vulnerable men struggling with their mental health. Congratulations to Suicide Prevention Australia on a successful launch. On behalf of our community, thank you for creating this website to help improve the mental health of our fathers, brothers and sons.

JOE DE BRUYN – AO

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—I would like to offer our community's, and my personal congratulations, to Joe De Bruyn, honorary National President, Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association [SDA] on being made an Officer of the Order of Australia [AO] on 13th June 2022 as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours List. For decades, Joe De Bruyn has contributed to fighting for workers' rights in the retail and hospitality industry as the National Secretary of the SDA from 1978 to 2015. He has served as the honorary President of the SDA since 2015. Joe De Bruyn also made a significant contribution promoting the values of the Catholic Church in Australia. He has been a staunch proponent of Catholic teachings on moral social issues, whilst also spreading the Catholic values of social justice through his leadership of the SDA. Since 2004, he has served as a Trustee on the Board of Campion College, assisting in founding this institution. Congratulations to Joe De Bruyn on being made an Officer of the Order of Australia. Thank you for the contribution you have

made to the trade union movement, our Catholic faith, and our community. You are a truly deserving recipient of this honour.

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER BRETT MCFADDEN - APM

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—I would like to offer our community's, and my personal congratulations, to Assistant Commissioner Brett McFadden on receiving the Australian Police Medal [APM] on 13th June 2022 as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours List. Assistant Commissioner McFadden joined the NSW Police Force in 1988 and commenced general duties at Castle Hill Police Station. Assistant Commissioner McFadden served as Detective Inspector at the Professional Standards Command, Crime Manager at Hawkesbury Local Area Command, as well as Commander at Holroyd, Penrith, Nepean and Fairfield City Police Area Commands. Assistant Commissioner McFadden has been actively involved in the leadership of an extensive range of challenging incidents and events. Most recently, he worked in partnership with cultural and community leaders to provide critical leadership of the Fairfield community through the COVID-19 pandemic. He is an active member of the Task Force Pioneer cadre for the response to terrorist incidents and has been extensively engaged in the development of police leaders through a range of training and mentoring programs. Congratulations to Assistant Commissioner Brett McFadden on being awarded the Australian Police Medal. You are a truly deserving recipient of this honour.

TOM CROUCHER

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I recognise Tom Croucher for his dedicated work as a Councillor on Sutherland Shire Council and for the broader community. Tom has been a life-long resident of the Sutherland Shire. He represented C ward (some of which falls within the Cronulla electorate) on the council from September 2012 until his retirement in December 2021. This included stints as Deputy Mayor and as Chairs of the Sutherland Traffic Committee and the Sutherland Shire Access Committee. Tom has been, among other things, a member the Corporate Governance Committee; Shire Strategic Planning Committee; Shire Services Committee; and Shire Infrastructure and Public Domain Committee; and external groups such as the Georges Riverkeeper Committee and Sutherland Shire Crime Prevention Community Safety Precinct Committee. Previously, Tom worked as a high school maths teacher and as a software developer in a variety of organisations. He has been active in his local church and junior cricket for many years. Tom is also the author of 'Adam: The First Human?', a thought provoking and extensively researched book published in 2019 examining the Genesis creation narrative. I thank Tom for his loyal service to the local community.

YOU'RE KIDDING ME EXPO

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—Charlestown's local community centre, The Place Charlestown, has always been an amazing resource for locals. On Friday, 20 May, the Place hosted the Hunter's biggest children and family expo, the aptly named You're Kidding Me Expo. The Expo was designed to improve accessibility to health, education and family services for kids by connecting families to valuable information about local services that support the learning and development of young children. The day included free 15-minute workshops, car safety checks, a reptile show and more, with families able to access over fifty valuable services and resources. Amongst the many activities and services present on the day was face-painting with Tiny Tutu's; a Petting Zoo facilitated by Penny's Ponies; a visit from Nurse Penny of Sick Happens; local doulas from Newcastle Birth Movement; sustainable and natural baby products from Simply Made By Eliza, Timbernook and Itty Bitty; and Yoga for Mumma. Parents were also connected with important early childhood services, such as child care options, child therapists including speech and occupational therapists, specialist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services, and even a Q&A with sleep expert Natalie Ebrill. A huge thanks to the Place and all the experts involved!

JANELLE SHAKESPEARE OAM

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—The Queen's Birthday Honours recognised 992 outstanding and inspirational Australians in 2022 for meritorious, distinguished and conspicuous service, including Janelle Shakespeare of Whitebridge. Janelle received a medal in the Order of Australia for service to medical research organisations. Along with Lorraine Gardner, Janelle founded Hunter Children's Research Foundation in 1996. HCRF raises funds for important research into children's terminal and debilitating illnesses and is affiliated with the Hunter Medical Research Institute and HNEkidshealth – Children, Young People and Families. Now in its twenty-seventh year, HCRF has raised over \$2.3 million which has funded research grants and fellowships to Hunter-based researchers, in areas like asthma, cancer, cystic fibrosis, diabetes and sleep disorders. With her husband Jeff, Janelle started the JSA Group in 1976, and has helped it to become an enormous success in the years since. Janelle has been a longstanding Rotarian and is the recipient of the Paul Harris Fellow International Rotarian Award. Through HCRF and her business achievements, Janelle has made an extraordinary mark on our local community. Congratulations Janelle Shakespeare OAM.

FERN CREEK LANDCARE

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—Fern Creek Landcare are a fantastic group, committed to preserving and enhancing our beautiful local environment. Previously, they have so successfully taken steps to support squirrel gliders. Recently, to mark World Environment Day, they held a work session to hand-remove Bitou, Lantana and Asparagus Fern regrowth. I would like to particularly acknowledge team leaders, Dan, Jess and Gel, who were noted for their confidence in safely leading volunteer groups through the site, which was a bit treacherous due to recent rains. The team stayed in the uphill section of the site in order to operate safely. In other exciting news, Fern Creek Landcare coordinator Gabrielle Stacey and her predecessor, Peter Dalton, have been announced as speakers at the National Landcare Conference. This is a well-deserved acknowledgment of how their intergenerational partnership in leading the group have contributed to its enormous success in regenerating and caring for the local environment. Enthusiasm and spirits remain high in caring for that little patch of our community, and I commend all those involved in what they have achieved so far. I wish them all the best and can't wait to see what's next.

HERNANI PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence)—I recently had the pleasure of attending the school to help them celebrate their "125 Years of Learning". One of the highlights of the day was the opening of the Centenary Time Capsule which the current and ex-students enjoyed going through, and the school is currently collecting items for their "125 years of Learning" Time Capsule. I offer my hearty congratulations to the School Principal, Jennifer Winkel, and all involved in organising the event, on a wonderful celebration.

ODYSSEY HOUSE

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)—For 45 years Odyssey House has been providing an incredible service to those in desperate need of it. The organisation that focuses on rehabilitation service and programs for substance abuse issues was formed in 1977 by Walter McGrath. A successful businessman, Mr McGrath was ultimately motivated to establish Odyssey House after the death of his son, James, from a heroin overdose. Since its inception, Odyssey House has helped turn the lives on more than 35,000 people around, according to the organisation's website. That is a staggering number of people that Odyssey House has helped for the better. I have been fortunate to witness the great work Odyssey House does as there is a centre located in my electorate of Campbelltown, in the suburb of Eagle Vale. There is also another centre located just north on my electorate in the suburb of Ingleburn, in the Macquarie Fields electorate. There is no doubt that there are so many individuals who are glad for the existence of Odyssey House. There are also a plethora of loved ones who would also feel the same way. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge Odyssey House and its wonderful team.

MARIE SIMONE

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I recognise Marie Simone for her extensive and ongoing community work. Marie represented A Ward (which largely falls within the Cronulla electorate) from 2004 to 2008 and from 2016 to 2021. She fought consistently for better local infrastructure, to secure investment in community amenities and to enhance local sporting facilities. She has been passionate about Cronulla, particularly its tourist potential, and is full of ideas about how to put Cronulla "on the map". Last year Marie was appointed a Dame of Grace of the Sovereign Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, Grand Priory of Australia in recognition of her extensive charitable work. This included the Sutherland Hospital Fundraising Committee since 2000; the Alzheimer's fundraising committee at Prince of Wales Hospital 2006-2008, fundraising for the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute since 2006; fundraising for the Italian Opera Committee 2006-2008, to assist for up and coming opera stars; fundraising for friend and stroke victim Maria Venuti in 2017; fundraising for an autism charity with Senator Hollie Hughes since 2018; and helping to develop an educational program to help children who play sport to become better people "on and off the park".

THE ART OF PUBLIC SPEAKING PROGRAM

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—I have had the honour in recent weeks of attending several Catholic Primary Schools across the Coogee electorate to promote the art of public speaking ahead of the Botany-Randwick Public Speaking competition. I would like to thank St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Coogee, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Randwick, St Anthony's Catholic Primary School Clovelly, and St Margaret Mary's Catholic Primary School Randwick North for having me along to speak to years 5 and 6 about ways to overcome nerves and deliver a great speech in front of a crowd. All the students were given the opportunity to deliver a short, improvised speech in front of their peers about the things that mattered most to them and every single one of them knocked it out of the park, even surprising some of their teachers at how well they handled themselves under pressure. I would like to wish all the students the very best of luck as the

competition gets underway in the coming weeks, I'm sure you all will do a fantastic job and I look forward to seeing who comes out on top come time for the finals.

ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—On 16 June, Marrickville Town Hall was at full capacity for a public forum on the Uluru Statement from the Heart. I thank the Inner West Council and Mayor Darcy Byrne for facilitating the evening, as well as panellists: Linda Burney MP, Minister for Indigenous Australians; Senator Pat Dodson; Dean Parkin, the Director of the From the Heart campaign; and Cheree Toka, who continues to lead the campaign to fly the Aboriginal flag over the Sydney Harbour Bridge year-round. As the referendum draws closer, forums like these will be critical: Individual communities coming together, packing out their local town halls, listening and learning about what their role is in the process of reconciliation and towards delivering the Uluru Statement in full. The inner west has shown that we're ready to step up and play our part and I acknowledge Clr Byrne's commitment that Inner West Council will train 1,000 local residents to campaign for the "yes" vote. It's only by every community doing the same, right across our diverse nation, that we will finally act on our responsibility as Australians and deliver Voice, Treaty, Truth.

DR SHIRLEENE ROBINSON AM

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—I would like to congratulate Summer Hill's own Dr Shirleene Robinson who has received recognition in this year's Queen's Birthday honours list, appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia. Dr Robinson has been honoured for her dedicated advocacy for the LGBTQI+ community and for the marriage equality campaign. Since 2012, she has fulfilled numerous working roles for Australian Marriage Equality. This included working as the group's national spokesperson and then board director from 2015 to 2018. As a reputable Australian historian and public commentator, Dr Robinson has used her work in academia and public policy to empower the LGBTQI+ community in incredible ways. Dr Robinson currently stands as the president of Sydney's Pride History Group and continuously uses her platform to shine a spotlight on the stories of marginalised voices in the community. Most recently, her co-curation of the pop-up museum exhibition 'Serving in Silence' highlighted the service of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex people in the Australian military throughout history. Thank you to Dr Robinson for her tireless efforts in the field of LGBTQI+ advocacy as well as her significant literary and academic contributions. Once again, congratulations on this well-deserved honour.

MARRICKVILLE RED DEVILS: 75 YEARS

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—The Marrickville Red Devils Football Club are marking the 75th anniversary of their club this year, following delays to celebrations in 2021. In response to a growing appetite among the Marrickville community for a local soccer club, the Marrickville Football Club was formed by Bruce Livingstone and Arthur Ireland in 1945. The club officially registered in 1946, entering under 12 and under 14 teams into the Canterbury and District Soccer Football Association [CDSFA]. The club has produced a star-studded list of alumni, including no less than Australia's most well-known Socceroo in Tim Cahill. More recently, two ex-Devils have gone on to play at the Western Sydney Wanderers: Tass Mourdoukoutas, who plays in defence, and Nathanael Blair, who was signed just last week as a striker. In its 75 year history, the Marrickville Red Devils Football Club has come to be one of the largest community sporting clubs in the state, with over 2000 registered members. And in true Marrickville spirit, the Red Devils have led the charge on inclusive sport, fielding all abilities teams and running the "Kick on for Women" program. Congratulations to everyone at the Marrickville Red Devils on this significant milestone.

LETECIA KEARNEY – PRIMARY HEALTH CARE NURSE

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise Letecia Kearney for her career in nursing, currently working with a specialist provider of rural and remote health services. Letecia loves working with people and she practices the kind of nursing where she brings people together over food and laughter giving the underlying health messages and support people need to practice wellness. Letecia travels hundreds of kilometres on her weekly visits and finds the work hugely rewarding. In recent years she has encouraged communities through droughts, floods, plagues and COVID. Nursing in rural communities requires diversity and Letecia knows she is often the lifeline that gives people hope through her guidance as an experienced nurse. I congratulate Letecia for her successful nursing career and the impact that she has had on hundreds of lives. I commend Letecia for her commitment to healthier communities.

JANETTE HOLMES - EDUCATOR

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise Janette Holmes of Armidale, a dedicated career teacher raised in Armidale, educated in Armidale and returned to Armidale Secondary College after working in schools across the region. Interestingly, Janette's first teaching appointment was at Guyra Central

School and presently she has been appointed as relieving Deputy Principal at Guyra Central School where her natural enthusiasm and engagement has made her popular with students and families. Janette has proved herself loyal not only to country schools but to the Northern Tablelands, bringing excellence to students in the bush. Janette is a complete role model with her professionalism, her home life, and her community and family activities. I congratulate Janette on her appointment as the relieving Deputy Principal at Guyra Central School. I commend Janette on her commitment to education for students in our country schools.

ISABELLA MACINTOSH – RURAL YOUTH AMBASSADOR

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise Isabella MacIntosh of Warialda High School for her selection in this year's Rural Youth Ambassador program. The program is run by the Country Education Partnership with the support of the Department of Education. Over 12 months Isabella will work with other ambassadors online about issues important to rural young Australians while developing personal leadership skills, problem solving, and learning about the agricultural sector. This year's cohort comes from NSW and they will establish a theme for the year that is based on their experiences of growing up in a rural area which is then shared with government, education sectors and key stakeholder groups. Isabella will travel to Adelaide and regional centre forums to network with other Ambassadors, gaining a wider geographical awareness. The opportunities for self-development, linking, contributing, and supporting her community are endless. I congratulate Isabella on her selection as one of the elite 2022 Rural Youth Ambassadors. I commend Warialda High School, Country Education Partnership, the Department of Education and Country Education Strategy for making this program available and the support offered to rural youth.

DANS DUO

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—Rachael never thought in a million years that she'd have the chance to work alongside her mum, Susan Brassington. Susan is a registered nurse, spending much of her career in hospitals before starting with Dubbo Area Nursing Service, a locally owned and operated business providing in-home care. Rachael, on the other hand, is more of a "numbers person" – but when a job came up in the DANS office, she threw her hat in the ring. That was four years ago now. Rachael says she loves getting to see her family at work every day, and even sneak out together for the occasional pub lunch! Susan loves the fact they have such different roles, yet as a team they get to help make a difference in the community every day! Great work Rachael and Susan, and what a special relationship you both share!

MUDGE LAKERS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—Today I recognise the Mudgee Lakers Under 14 Basketball team. They recently created history by becoming the first Mudgee team to qualify for a Grand Final at the John Martin NSW Country Tournament. Throwing everything they had at each opponent they came up against and causing major upsets along the way, the team fell short as they lost the Grand Final to Port Macquarie 47-35. Over the 7 games, the Mudgee Under 14's collected every loose ball and had to get past a lot taller timber and skilful players, but according to all accounts they relished each challenge thrown at them and did it with a smile on their faces. According to Coach Peter Doran, the team have trained and worked hard on the court over the past 7 months, coupled with their Junior Western League Grand Final win, the result is nothing short of deserved. Congratulations to Josh Watson, Ed Disher, Logan Geddes, Jordan Geddes, Thomas Briggs, Lachlan Doran, Oscar Diprose, Evan Wilson and coaches Peter Doran and Julian Geddes, on an outstanding achievement and a phenomenal season.

MS PAMELA GRIFFITH OAM

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale)—I wish to acknowledge the outstanding contribution made by Ms Pamela Griffith of Bardwell Park in my electorate. Ms Griffith has been awarded an Order of Australia Medal in the General Division of the 2022 Queen's Birthday Honours for service to the visual arts, a wonderful and well-deserved accolade. Ms Griffith is a well-recognised artist whose major works include the landmark first-ever holographic waratah on the NSW Driver Licence, 12 major watercolour paintings that were commissioned to decorate the public spaces of the Family Law Court building at Parramatta, and a number of works in aid of wetland preservation including a significant show at the Perc Tucker Regional Gallery in Townsville. Additionally Ms Griffith is a recognised teacher and public speaker, passing on artistic skills in a number of mediums to the next generation of artists. She has also made valuable contributions to citizen-science by illustrating many books, articles and posters on environmental issues and she is a fellow of the Royal Society of New South Wales and a member of that body's governing Council. I congratulate Ms Griffith on her award of the OAM.

LEXFORD SMITH'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—It is with great pleasure that today I acknowledge Mr Lexford Smith on his 100th birthday which he will celebrate on 13 July 2022. I am sure Lexford will celebrate this momentous occasion accompanied by his closest friends and family. I take this opportunity to extend my sincere congratulations to Lexford and wish him good health and happiness for the future.

DANIEL NICHOLLS

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I thank Daniel Nicholls for his dedicated work as a councillor on the Sutherland Shire Council. Dan represented C Ward (which partly falls within the Cronulla electorate) from 2016 to 2021. Between 2016 and 2018, Dan served as the Chair of the Shire Services Committee, which (among other things) deals with issues relating to ensuring a high quality of life for all members of the community and provides advice and support in the planning and development of facilities. From 2018 Dan served as Chair of the Corporate Governance Committee. In 2019 he became the inaugural chair of the Arts and Culture Sub-Committee. In 2019 he was elected as the Junior Vice President of the Southern Sydney Region of Councils [SSROC]. Daniel has been an active member of the community outside council, previously serving a term on the Sutherland Shire Youth Council and for five years serving on the board of a local musical society. I commend Daniel for his service with the Sutherland Shire Council and to the local community.

TWEED VALLEY HOSPITAL OPEN DAY

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—I wish to congratulate all those involved in the organisation of the massive Open Day for the new Tweed Valley Hospital being built at Cudgen. Over 2000 local residents visited the site last Sunday to walk through the development and see how this wonderful facility is moving towards completion. Health Infrastructure, Lendlease, Kingscliff TAFE, the Tweed Hospital Axillary, medical personnel, Southern Cross and Griffith Universities, were all on hand to answer questions and provide information. It was a remarkable experience for the many interested families across the region who, like me, are looking forward to the day it is officially open and delivering a higher level of health care on the Far North Coast.

COLLEEN COOPER

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government)—Today I recognise the untiring and compassionate commitment to volunteering of Ms Colleen Cooper. Ms Cooper was named the 2020 Senior of the Year and nominated again at the recent Goulburn Mulwaree Senior Festival Awards for 2022. The Festival is held annually to identify and recognise seniors that enrich the Goulburn community with their life skills, wisdom and knowledge. Ms Cooper has demonstrated her unfailing compassion and community spirit through a range of volunteering roles, including the support of Goulburn Workers Club Social Group and the Country Women's Association. The Goulburn region is extremely fortunate and enriched to have community members such as Ms Cooper to meet community needs and assist them to "reconnect" the theme for this year's Seniors Festival. I sincerely congratulate Ms Cooper on this very well deserved nomination.

GWEN WARMINGTON

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government)—Today I recognise the dedication of Gwen Warmington to the Yass Valley Community. Ms Warmington has played a significant and valued role in establishing the Aged Care Services under Gwen Warmington Lodge and the services and assistance provided through the Andalini Special Education Unit for young people. Ms Warmington has also been involved with a number of local councils and community groups and she continues to sell raffle tickets for Can Assist and regularly visits Warmington Lodge residents. I was elated that Ms Warmington was recognised for her tireless work within and for the community at the Australia Day Awards being awarded the Yass Valley Senior Citizen of the Year. I would also like to publicly recognise the efforts of Ms Warmington and thank her for her great sense of community across generations and mindfulness about services that are so vital.

TRACEY FEBO

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I would like to acknowledge Tracey Febo for her hard work and determination to see a Children's Contact Centre established in Griffith. In 2019 Tracey, the Regional Manager of Griffith Centacare, presented both the state and federal governments with a proposal to open a Children's Contact Centre in Griffith. Working in this space, Tracey recognised the detrimental impact that court ordered separation of parents and children was having on the young people involved and their mental health. Adding to the stress on families, the closest Children's Contact Centre is located in Wagga Wagga and is currently experiencing an 18-month waiting list. Tracey has given up her time to continue lobbying for a contact centre in Griffith. She hopes to see a recent submission of the business plan receive the funding and attention necessary to

get it going. I wish Tracey all the best and hope she is successful in establishing a Children's Contact Centre in Griffith.

KEN MASON

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors)—Today I congratulate a local environmentalist and member of the Oatley community, Ken Mason, for his outstanding achievements in his field. Ken recently received a 2021 Environmental Achievement Award for his contributions to conservation efforts within our local community. This was part of the 11th annual St George Community Awards, which I run each year. The Environmental Achievement Award acknowledges Ken's service to the Australian Wildlife Society, of which he was the Vice President for six years. It also recognises his dedication to the local community. Ken was heavily involved in revegetating the garden outside the National Office in Hurstville. Ken is an integral member of the 'Friends of Glenlee Association', who endeavour to protect both the ecosystem and wildlife in the area. He has also been heavily involved in the care and maintenance of one of the most wonderful parks in our local area, Evatt Park. Speaker, it is of utmost importance to celebrate the unsung heroes of our community and give them recognition for going above and beyond in their field. I congratulate Ken and wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

BERNIE DOLAN

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors)—Today I congratulate a member of my local community, Bernie Dolan, who has recently been awarded with a 2021 St George Community Group Award for his volunteering efforts at the St George Men's Shed. The Men's Shed is a wonderful initiative and something I am so proud to have operating in our community. It is run by volunteers who donate their time, providing services and specialised projects. They do this for people with disabilities, as well as community organisations like hospitals, schools and nursing homes. Bernie has volunteered at the Men's Shed for the last 8 years and goes to great lengths to ensure that projects are designed well, fit for purpose and fill a gap in the needs of the community. Some projects that Bernie has undertaken includes therapy tools for the St George and Calvary hospitals, custom ramps for wheelchair access and sensory gardens for special schools. I would like to congratulate Bernie Dolan on receiving this award and wish him all the best in his future endeavours.

TIRZA WINARTA

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors)—I acknowledge and congratulate a member of my local community, Tirza Winarta, for receiving a scholarship. Tirza was recently announced as the winner of an AgriFutures Horizon Scholarship and is one of 20 rural leaders who were selected to receive the award. Award recipients like Tirza will receive \$10,000 across two years, whilst also attending a four-day professional development workshop and completing two weeks of industry placement each year. This will allow recipients to further develop their skills and expand their networking opportunities. Local leaders such as Tirza are so important to our community and I hope this scholarship allows her to gain a better insight into agricultural issues facing our community and state. I would like to again congratulate Tirza for receiving this scholarship and wish her all the best in her future endeavours.

THE POINT PRESCHOOL

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)—I acknowledge our incredible littlest learners at The Point Preschool for producing a wonderful musical called 'The Spectacular Find Saving the Great Barrier Reef'. Located in Oyster Bay, The Point Preschool is a tight-knit community home to curious, competent and respectful learners. A few months ago, the children were playing in the sand pit when Ashton came across an interesting looking item. After months of investigating, the preschool learnt that the object was indeed a coral skeleton which inspired the production of the musical. Children dressed up as sea creatures, made special inventions to save the Great Barrier Reef and all money raised from ticket sales will be donated to The Great Barrier Reef Foundation. I take this opportunity to recognise the amazing teachers, educators and volunteers who made this production possible. I commend Director Catherine Lee, Libby Fraser, Jann Gibson, Jenny Isherwood, Megan Walsh and Eleanor Chidiac. I also acknowledge musician and singer Peter Morgan who accompanied the children and assisted in writing the soundtrack for the play. I congratulate The Point Preschool and the Cockatoos class for producing a spectacular performance.

CRONULLA SUTHERLAND BASEBALL CLUB

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)—I acknowledge Cronulla Sutherland Baseball Club who are the successful recipients of \$5,000 from the NSW Government's 2022 Local Sport Grant Program. Established in 1960 and based at Tom Evans Field in Bonnet Bay, the Cronulla Sutherland Baseball Club are a tight-knit community with a welcoming environment where all players can enjoy the game of baseball. The Club competes in the NSW State Baseball League and the NSW

Women's Baseball League and have developed a strong reputation for the quality of their coaches and players. Through this grant funding, the Cronulla Sutherland Baseball Club will purchase a new zero turn mower to maintain the field to the highest standard and will significantly reduce the time volunteers spend using their current out-dated machinery. Of course, none of this is possible without the dedicated volunteers behind this great Club who work tirelessly to serve our local community. I commend President Mark Philibossian, Vice President Darren Cummings, Secretary and Treasurer Brad MacDonald and Club Development Officer Colin Bowmaker. I thank Cronulla Sutherland Baseball Club for bringing the importance of this project to my attention and extend my best wishes for the future.

COMO COMMUNITY CHURCH

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda—Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading)—I acknowledge Como Community Church, who have received a one-off grant of \$8,466 from the Premier, the Hon Dominic Perrottet MP. Como Community Church is a small presbyterian church that provides a welcoming environment for community members to come together for religious services, education and social activities. Through this funding, Como Community Church will replace their 30-year-old wooden pews with individual, interlocking metal seating to accommodate the multi-use nature of the facility and ensure the safety of all attendees. Of course none of this would be possible without the hard-work and dedication of those behind this Church. I recognise the Ministry Team including Minister Jim Mobbs and his wife Vivienne Mobbs, Jacqueline McGrath and Luke Moorehouse as well as Committee members Sylvia Johnson, Terry Georgeson and Kerry-Ellen Martin for their efforts supporting our community. I commend Como Community Church for bringing the importance of this project to my attention and extend my best wishes for the future.

COLOURSS ATHLETICS CARNIVAL

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—Last Friday at the Risk Public School the much loved and valued annual COLOURSS athletics carnival was held. The carnival brings together students from The Risk, Barkers Vale, Collins Creek and Wiangaree Public schools for a day of fitness, fun and healthy competition. It was fantastic to hear that the day was blessed with abundant sun. It is amazing what the Sun does for us right now. The carnival is a great opportunity for students from our smaller country schools to connect, socialise with each other and build a sense of community. A special thank you to Barkers Vale P&C for running the canteen and to Larry Condon for preparing the fields at The Risk. The winners of the major events were: Overall Points: Barkers Vale PS; Percentage Points: Collins Creek PS; Wilson Relay: The Risk PS. I congratulate all students for their participation as competitor, spectator and supporter. I wish all competitors who made it through to the district finals on Friday August 5 the best in their future races. A big congratulations to all on such a wonderful day.

MERINO WETHER CHALLENGE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I would like to thank and congratulate everyone who supported Richmond River to participate in the Merino Wether Challenge this year. Following the catastrophic floods it was wonderful to see the school continue with the Wether Challenge. A special shout out to Sally Ford HT TAS - VET Coordinator for all her work organising and supporting the students. I am told by all that she brings much love to her role. Richmond River was supported by schools and teacher colleagues from across the electorate and the state. A huge thank you must go to Anne Earney from Condobolin High School who helped to with a plan for Richmond River to compete after they lost access to their school farm. Anne went beyond duty sourcing pellets from Quayle Milling - Quality Livestock Nutrition and hay, to get going once the sheep were returned. I also would like to thank Phil and Hughie from Tenterfield High School and Di Martin from Murwillumbah High School who have cared for the sheep until Richmond River could get them back to school. I commend all who provided such strong support for the Richmond River to get back into the Merino Wether Challenge.

COUNTRY WOMENS ASSOCIATION 100 YEARS BALL KYOGLE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—The CWA has a long history in Kyogle and villages. Starting locally in Horseshoe Creek in 1924 and Kyogle in 1925 the CWA has been a pillar of the Kyogle community. The CWA raise funds for charity, organise community events and are strong advocates for country women and country communities. Their motions often find their way into sound public policy. They are a force to be reckoned with. Members of the Kyogle Branch of the CWA who attended the State Conference and the state wide celebration ball in Sydney, decided it was time that Kyogle had such a ball. It is fantastic to see that they are bringing the idea home with them so locals can celebrate this incredible organisation and the women that make up its membership and have fun. The ball will be on Saturday 16 July at the Kyogle Bowling Club. Recently I saw a picture in Northern Rivers Talking Turkey of Branch Secretary Jean Cutchen, Branch President Lyn Croft and Branch Vice-President Odette Nettleton all frocked up and they looked just fabulous. There is excitement building in the community regarding the upcoming ball.

I commend the Kyogle branch.

NORTH SHORE PAC MEDAL & AWARD PRESENTATION

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—Recently I had the privilege of representing the Minister for Police and Deputy Premier Paul Toole MP at the North Shore Police Area Command Medal and Award Presentation. We recognised the remarkable achievements and outstanding service of those who go above and beyond to keep their fellow community members safe. Policing is often a thankless job and involves putting other before yourselves. I congratulate the following attendees who received an award or medal on the day; Kirsten McFadden, Dan Engles, Jackson Davis, Michele Woods, Royce Scarella, Simon Pearce, Kylie Dodds, Simon Jones, Luke Seage, Jackson Van Den Berg, Goya Hedayat, Anthony Charlton, Chad Kyrwood, Todd Carter, Stephen Smith, Glenn Goulding, Craig Hanson, Gavin Franklin, Scott Macgee, David Misipeka, Macray Matenga, Luke Baker, Lindsay Schubert, Adam Vickery, Tracyanne Kennedy, Mark Cutugno, Mark Pluss, Bayden Nicholls, Alicia Shirley, Ryan Adamson, Dominic Trevor, Louis Barnes, Zaryab Murtaza, Vijay Nagpal, and Hassan Razzaq. Congratulations to you all on your outstanding service and these remarkable achievements.

NEUTRAL BAY SCHOOL OF DANCE DANCES FOR CANCER

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I recognise the Neutral Bay School of Dance which has announced an exciting collaboration to celebrate its 42nd birthday. Neutral Bay School of Dance is joining forces with Olympian Anneliese Rubie-Renshaw to raise much-needed funds for the Cancer Council NSW as part of its 'Stars of the North –Dance for Cancer' event. I have danced myself in the stars of the north event back in 2017 and know first-hand how much of a success this event is to raise money for Cancer Council NSW. One of the school's talented teachers, Sydney Humphries is performing a routine for Anneliese to perform and has spent the last 10 weeks getting her showbiz ready. While awards are up for grabs, the school says the true prize is the ability to raise money for a worthy cause. Good luck to all our 'Stars in the North' who will be dancing this Friday night at Norths in Cammeray, I hope you're all ready to put your talent to the test and dance for cancer.

BOMBALA FIREIES #PUSHFORBETTER

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro)—I commend the fantastic efforts of the entire crew at NSW Fire and Rescue Station 230 at Bombala for their efforts to raise awareness of mental health issues and support services in the region. The crew are again taking part in the push up challenge, an annual event to raise funds for mental health services that support those who need it most. The goal is to reach 3,139 push-ups over 24 days to raise money and awareness. This year, funds were raised for Lifeline, Movember and The Push for Better Foundation. It takes a special person to be a firefighter, be they fulltime, retained or volunteer and this is just another example of the fantastic men and women all across NSW that keep us safe and go above and beyond for their communities. I thank them wholeheartedly. To support the Bombala team, you can head to <https://www.thepushupchallenge.com.au/fundraisers/bombala230frns> to donate to this worthy cause.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 18:54 until
Thursday 23 June at 09:30.**