



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Thursday 11 August 2022

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday 11 August 2022

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

[*Notices of motions given.*]

Announcements

INDEPENDENT COMPLAINTS OFFICER

The SPEAKER (09:37): I refer to the resolutions of this House on 29 March 2022 directing me to join with the President to make arrangements for the establishment of the position of Independent Complaints Officer to expeditiously and confidentially deal with low-level minor misconduct matters so as to protect the institution of Parliament and its members and staff. Following an independent selection process and confirmation by the privileges committees of both Houses, I am pleased to announce that the President and I have approved the appointment of Ms Rose Webb as the Parliament's inaugural Independent Complaints Officer. Ms Webb is a former senior public servant with extensive experience in a regulatory environment, including in the establishment of regulatory bodies. She also has legal qualifications. The joint Clerks are currently finalising contract arrangements with Ms Webb. As soon as those details are finalised, Ms Webb will communicate with the Parliamentary community to introduce herself and advise everyone of how she may be contacted.

I remind members that the role of the Independent Complaints Officer is to receive and investigate complaints confidentially in relation to alleged breaches of the members' code of conduct, not related to conduct of proceedings in the Legislative Council or Legislative Assembly or their committees, including the misuse of allowances and entitlements, other less serious misconduct matters falling short of corrupt conduct, and minor breaches of the pecuniary interests disclosure scheme. The Independent Complaints Officer shall also have the function of receiving and investigating complaints confidentially in relation to bullying, harassment and inappropriate behaviour by members, not related to conduct in proceedings of the Legislative Council or Legislative Assembly or their committees. That may involve referring such complaints elsewhere when sufficiently serious in nature.

Budget

BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS 2022-2023

Debate resumed from 23 June 2022.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (09:50): I continue my speech to outline how the budget delivered earlier this year will affect the electorate of Wyong. I said in my introductory remarks that it was a mixed bag for Wyong: There was some good news and some news that will cause the community some concern. I start with some of the positives and wrap them in a bit of history. In 2010 the former Labor Government began building lifts at Tuggerah railway station. In 2012 the O'Farrell Government cancelled that project. Twelve years later, we have funding in this budget of nearly \$28 million to continue that project. I acknowledge my colleague the member for The Entrance, who is in the Chamber. He has run a very good campaign in his community to make sure that the lifts were put back on the agenda.

Given Tuggerah railway station is one of the major railway stations on the Central Coast, located very close to Westfield Tuggerah, an industrial estate and the SuperCentre at Tuggerah, it is very strange that the project was cancelled in 2010. I would hate to think it was a political decision because, ironically, for the first time in the history of the Wyong electorate a Liberal member was elected, whose first action was to cancel an infrastructure project. It has taken the re-election of two Labor members to get it back on the agenda. The former Liberal member did not last more than one term and that is probably a good explanation as to why—when elected to a marginal electorate it is not good business to cancel projects.

That was not the only project cancelled. At the time there were also plans to construct a multi-deck car park at Tuggerah. The previous Labor Government had upgraded the transport interchange and increased the number of parking spaces. Part of that upgrade included making sure that the base of the car park could sustain a multi-level car park in the future. It has again taken 12 years, but we now have \$1.5 million to continue that planning—planning that began in 2008. Let us not say things take too long under this Government, but it is

pleasing to see that project is back on the agenda. It is much needed. It is a major railway station, and it needs better facilities. The railway station is also part of the precinct that the Scentre Group is looking to develop to add a large number of new residences and more retail and commercial space. The Government has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Scentre Group and the Darkinjung Aboriginal Land Council to hopefully deliver that project.

The budget delivered a bit of a mixed bag for Wyong. During the Federal election campaign the hopeful Liberal candidate for Dobell visited Wyong, together with the Prime Minister and some State representatives, to announce \$420 million to complete the upgrade of the Pacific Highway through Wyong town centre. That was great news. We have only been waiting since 2007, when we started planning for it. We delivered Tuggerah Straight, and we started planning for the next section of the Pacific Highway there. But, once again, a Liberal government was elected and reviewed the reviews that we had already done and slowed everything down. That is a major congestion point on the Central Coast. Since the planning began in earnest in 2007, nearly \$40 million has been spent on planning, replanning and reviewing the project. Finally, there was \$420 million and we all got excited. Then the State budget was delivered and there was \$1 million for more planning.

It is not hard to understand why voters are cynical. Big announcements are made during election campaigns when it said, "Yes, yes, it is going to happen". I welcomed and supported the project. Then the budget was handed down and there was \$1 million. I have been told that is all Transport for NSW asked for. If that is the case, I wonder why such a big announcement was made during the Federal election campaign, unless it was to try to trick voters. But they were not tricked. Federal Labor member Emma McBride had a 5 per cent swing in her favour, despite the promises, because the people of the Central Coast—particularly in my electorate, having had a short experience with a Liberal member—understood that when the Liberals get into power, projects are cancelled. That is a lesson for candidates leading into the next election campaign: Don't promise what you don't intend to deliver and don't promise things that will be delivered two elections later. There is a lot of cynicism about those sorts of promises.

The Government also made a commitment—although there is nothing in this budget—of \$500 million to upgrade the rail line between Wyong and Tuggerah under the Faster Rail project. However, one has to question the value of that project. It is \$500 million, and a billion-dollar commitment in total, for a straight section of track. I am not sure how that will speed up commuter rail. A freight train overtaking loop has been proposed. Again, that project was started by the former Labor Government, which nominated a number of sites for rail loops on the main line between Sydney and Newcastle. They were at Eastwood, Hornsby, Gosford and the last part of the project was supposed to be at Wyong. There has been a change of name and now the project comes under the banner of Faster Rail, but it is really a continuation of the original project to enable freight trains to pull in so commuter trains can pass them. We are glad that the Government is continuing that great program that was started under the former Labor Government, although it has rebadged it.

In this place the Government often tries to perpetuate the myth that nothing happened under 16 years of Labor. It gets on my nerves. That certainly was not the case in my electorate. A new primary school has just been built at Porters Creek and there is funding to finish the project. During the previous 16 years of Labor government four schools were built: Blue Haven Public School, Wadalba Community School, Woongarra Public School and Warnervale Public School. Under 16 years of Labor, four schools were built in my electorate; under this Government, there is one school—and it will be virtually 12 years by the time the project is finished. The area now needs urgent attention in regard to the delivery of secondary education. We have put some options to the Government, which was listening but it suddenly went cold on the proposal for either a new high school with years 7 to 12 planned for Warnervale or dividing the site of Wadalba Community School and adding a senior college. At the moment the school has a K to 6 section and a year 7 to year 12 section. We were proposing a year 7 to year 10 section and then a brand new year 11 and 12 section because the land is available and that would have addressed the needs of that community.

The third option was to look at boundary changes with existing high schools—Gorokan High School and Wyong High School—and to make those changes. As I said, originally the principal at Wadalba was very supportive, the school education directors were having a look at it and the P&C Federation was certainly keen. Sharon Brownley, a strong advocate for the improvement of education in that area—which is where all the new housing estates are going—said that suddenly all communication stopped. That will be an issue at the upcoming election. I challenge the Government to start listening to the community. The irony is that in 2015 and 2019 Labor made a commitment to build a high school. There were petitions and meetings and the community was onside for a high school but the Government delivered a primary school. The community was confused. When the announcement was made I rang the radio station and said, "What sort of school is it?" The station contacted the education department and, for the first 24 hours, we were not sure what was going to be delivered, until we were told that it would be a primary school.

It stunned the local community because it had asked for a high school and not a primary school. However, it is a well-designed primary school so I am not complaining about that. The principal is fantastic and the staff are incredible. We need that kind of infrastructure but it was not the highest priority for the community. Let us listen to the community this time and ensure that provision is made for secondary education in that area. In that vicinity there are eight new housing estates which will House between 3,000 and 4,000 new residents. The current schools, including the independent schools—MacKillop Catholic College and Lakes Grammar—are chock-a-block full. The private sector can see the need for a new school; St Philips Christian College is looking at building a new school at Charmhaven. Unfortunately, the education department does not seem to understand the need or it is being told to pull back because it is not going to get any funding. A lot of people may not know that the Hunter Central Coast had its own asset team which did all the planning for the Hunter Central Coast. This Government has brought all assets under the State umbrella which means regional areas are competing with Sydney for infrastructure, which has put us at a disadvantage.

That is why we set up the Central Coast Education District so that growth areas would get a better deal. It has become harder because we now have to compete with the whole State rather than just the regions for our infrastructure. We need to look carefully at the education facilities that have been provided in the northern growth areas—in my electorate, in the electorates of the member for Maitland and the member for Cessnock, and further north to Port Stephens. The member for Port Stephens has been fighting for a long time for a high school at Medowie. I hope we do not have to fight for as long as she has had to. A disappointing part of the budget, which is a huge concern in my area, is the lack of funding for new social housing. There is funding for maintenance, as there is in every budget, but basically there is no money for expanding social housing. This is problematic because homeless numbers are growing. There is huge pressure on private rental and people are being forced out onto the street.

At the Homeland Caravan Park the owner is "improving the site", but the people who currently rent caravans there are being forced out. They have been given an eviction notice that will take effect in November but they cannot find anywhere to go and they cannot afford to pay the extra rent. Those caravans are not luxurious by any stretch of the imagination—in fact, they are quite dilapidated—but they are paying \$200 a week. The cheapest rent available is between \$300 and \$400 a week but no caravans are available. Some of those people will either become homeless or they will be forced into moving into short-term motel accommodation. When they were given their package to help them transition to new housing, it included a list of phone numbers which were mainly for motels, which is totally inappropriate.

We have been working with housing for two years to get it to intervene and to assist these residents. Its transition team has now gone out to the area but I saw in a statement this morning that while housing is willing to help it is really a problem for council and the developers. It is incredible that even though all these new houses are being built none of them are for social housing. We do not want to go back to the days when social housing was spread throughout the suburbs. However, all these suburbs are being built and there is no provision for social housing. Some social housing is affordable but because of the pressure on rents it is at the higher end of the scale. The people in the Homeland Caravan Park cannot compete in that kind of market. I spoke last night about the anguish of people with disabilities and mental health issues. One gentleman is a double amputee. These people struggle with life in general let alone having to face eviction because their park is being upgraded. The new accommodation that is being provided is out of their price range. [*Extension of time*]

The Wyong electorate benefitted from the regional grants program—the Regional Job Creation Fund. Cordina Food Co. received \$2 million to improve its cooking line; \$900,000 was allocated to establish a beverage manufacturing facility; and FMC Manufacturing received \$360,000 to expand. Under the job creation fund businesses in the Wyong electorate received just over \$3.2 million. Some world-class and innovative industries are locating on the Central Coast.

Recently I was involved in and judged the Business Wyong awards. Spot Go is a cleaning product company that operates out of a machinery shed at Jilliby. It is now putting its products into Woolworths, Coles, ALDI and IGA, and is looking to export as well. It received support during COVID to come up with a new line of barbecue cleaning products, which meant that when a lot of businesses were in trouble, it was able to expand. That is great news and it has done a great job. Several of the other winners were also able to take on employees during COVID and expand their businesses. That is good news. We have innovative people and, with the right support, they can make exciting things happen.

Other important projects relate to housing growth. Central Coast Council famously ran out of money a couple years ago and was suspended. It is getting back on its feet slowly but, under the terms of its commercial loan, it is unable to put in place any new infrastructure for a decade. In a growing area that is of great concern, so I am pleased that \$7.3 million has been provided through the Housing Acceleration Fund for Warnervale Town Centre water and sewerage because private investment cannot go ahead if the public infrastructure is not in place.

Hopefully there will be a retail centre with some commercial offices and more housing in that vicinity. Sewerage and water is absolutely vital. There has also been an upgrade to the water treatment plant at Mardi to make sure there is proper water pressure. A new pipeline was built from Mardi to Warnervale to ensure that the new areas in industrial estates will have proper water and sewerage facilities.

Wyong Hospital has had a major upgrade. We hear about 16 years of Labor never doing anything, but I point out that the second part of the upgrade of Wyong Hospital happened under Labor. There is a big building there that apparently does not exist because it was started in 2005 and finished in 2006 or 2007. It was the first major upgrade of the hospital. Now there is another one. Unlike this Government, which will not acknowledge the fact that other upgrades happened before this one, I acknowledge the fact that that has happened. It is important to understand that governments of all persuasions need to commit to projects in growing communities. In Wyong, that certainly has been the case. In this budget there is another \$12 million to finish that redevelopment. More importantly, \$1 million out of the \$6.4 million will go towards improving the Wyong cancer day unit. That will double the amount of chairs that are available there, and provide more staff and other types of treatment so that people from the northern end of the Central Coast do not have to travel for their treatment. That is good news.

There is \$13 million all up for health. There is another \$583,000 to finish Porters Creek Public School stage one; there is still another stage to come. We also received some money for Wyong TAFE for the first time in 12 years, which is amazing. The last big development was a \$10 million upgrade under the former Labor Government. Now we are getting \$2 million to improve animal studies in Wyong, which is important because in that vicinity there are about 30 horse trainers in the racing industry who employ a lot of people that need specific skills. A lot of people in the hinterland deal with agriculture and animals, so the animal studies facility is much welcomed.

It is mixed news. There is some good news. There are some projects being finished and some being started. We are still waiting for some projects to substantially start, although I am sure the bunting will be the first thing that goes up prior to the election, to say that the New South Wales Government is doing X, Y and Z. The good news is that the people of my electorate are not easily fooled. As was shown during the Federal election, good local members who are advocating on behalf of the community will be rewarded by the voters and they will return. Emma McBride, the member for Dobell, is a really hard worker. She is now an assistant Minister in the new Government and is looking after regional and rural health, and mental health. She will do a fantastic job. She was formerly a pharmacist at Wyong Hospital. I speak to her on most days; she is working so hard to make sure that the new Federal Government is addressing those areas.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (10:15): I welcome the opportunity to speak about the New South Wales budget for 2022-23. The budget shows how the Government is using its financial skill and strength to support families and people throughout our State and to steer us through a challenging period as we come through the COVID pandemic into a period of increased costs of living. The budget delivers on two horizons. It is about delivering for today—providing support, strong services and leadership to meet the needs of families and businesses—but it is also looking at tomorrow. It is delivering the reform we need for our State to continue to lead the nation and continue to grow. The budget has several important themes. The first is really about making sure that we have a strong economy so that we can then invest further in the people of New South Wales. If we have a strong economy, there is more money for services and community amenity and less pressure on households.

The budget also has a significant focus on taking pressure off families and small businesses, which is helping to address some of the real concerns about the costs of living. The third pillar in the budget is about strengthening our frontline services. I will touch on that, particularly around health and education investment in the Albury electorate. Fourthly, the Government is continuing to invest in communities across New South Wales. During yesterday's debate, the member for Mulgoa talked about the previous government expecting people to live in ghetto-like conditions. Over the past decade, the Government's focus has been on making our communities much more livable through investment. The Stronger Country Communities Fund is a strong example of how funding has gone into improving livability and amenity right across our State, certainly in the Albury electorate.

I take the opportunity to acknowledge and thank the Premier and the Treasurer for their hard work, stewardship and leadership across our State. As the Premier said, for a decade the Government has delivered on a vision of reinforcing the State economic foundations, rebuilding infrastructure and establishing services strong enough to withstand unprecedented pressures. I acknowledge what our community has been through over the past four or five years. We have seen the bushfires of 2019-20 and the impact of COVID, and I acknowledge those communities to our north that have been impacted by significant flood events. This budget sets out a transformational road map not just for now but also for the decade ahead, delivering for the people of today and generations to come.

Last week I had the privilege to speak about health to the Country Mayors Association. I acknowledge the mayors and the general managers who were present, in particular, Councillor Ken Keith, Mayor of Parkes Shire

Council and chair of the Country Mayors Association. We touched on a number of things in that meeting. The New South Wales Government has made a significant capital investment in health across the State. The budget delivered a significant \$3,000 bonus for frontline health staff in recognition of their work on the front line during the COVID-19 pandemic. The payment goes to paramedics, midwives, cleaners and all other permanent staff employed by the health service.

We acknowledge the wage increase of 3 per cent and up to 3.5 per cent the following year for public sector nurses, teachers and paramedics. It is interesting to note that Western Australia has followed this State's lead and just the other week committed to a 3 per cent wage increase. I also acknowledge the challenge faced by the Government and the work that it is doing to support our frontline workers, ensuring that that work is balanced against the needs of the budget as well so that we can continue to make investments for people across our State.

The healthcare workforce is under significant pressure, and the \$4.5 billion to add 10,148 health workers is a major cornerstone of this year's budget. It is a record investment to recruit staff in hospitals and health services across the State over the next four years. It is the nation's largest ever health workforce boost that is part of the 2022-23 budget. In the first year 7,674 workers will be recruited, which will help ease the pressure on our health staff and fast-track more elective surgeries for patients. Regional members in this Parliament have advocated for the Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme. I am very pleased that Minister Bronnie Taylor has been championing it as well. The New South Wales Government's investment of an additional \$149.5 million to expand the scheme will benefit more than 45,000 people in rural and regional New South Wales.

Debate interrupted.

Bills

**WATER MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT (FLOODPLAIN HARVESTING LICENCES
COMPENSATION) BILL 2022**

Second Reading Speech

Debate resumed from 19 May 2022.

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (10:23): The Water Management Amendment (Floodplain Harvesting Licences Compensation) Bill 2022 is a vital bill that seeks to protect lower Darling and southern Basin communities whilst saving taxpayers billions of dollars. By stealth, the New South Wales Government has sneakily handed out floodplain harvesting licences to an exclusive club of mostly wealthy corporate northern Basin irrigators. Those licenses contravene State and Federal laws and the volume is illegal. The National Party has gifted those licences to its mates for free and it has changed the law to ensure that those licences also come with a compensable component. It is one of the biggest transfers of wealth from the taxpayer to the private sector we have seen in the history of this State. It is the biggest heist since Ronnie Biggs. My bill stops the modern-day Ronnie Biggs—the National Party—dead in its tracks. It seeks to reverse the National Party's law change in 2013, which provided compensation to be paid to water licence holders if the Government cancels a water licence.

Floodplain harvesting licences are worth approximately \$2 billion. But the value keeps going up. Treasury has not reviewed the issuing of those licences, and a recent inquiry revealed that it had no idea about the value because the New South Wales Government failed to conduct a regulatory impact assessment. It has thrown this State's best practice regulation guidelines out the window. The Government is gifting a number of those licences to foreign companies. However, the Foreign Investment Review Board is not going to review those purchases. There is no oversight. We know that the New South Wales Government has allowed the Chinese Government to own 7,000 megalitres of water in the Gwydir Valley. How many other foreign governments and foreign corporations is it going to allow to plunder our most valuable natural resource? We do not know because the Government voted against my bill for a water register. It was voted down three times to keep water ownership secret. Now we have secrecy around floodplain harvesting licences.

Southern Riverina Irrigators is proceeding with a legal action against the issuing of floodplain harvesting licences. Should it be successful, the New South Wales Government could be liable for compensation to floodplain licence holders. The taxpayers of New South Wales will foot the bill. The new law I am introducing today will stop that. It will ensure that northern irrigators cannot get financial compensation for those floodplain harvesting licences. I am aware that very similar bills are being introduced in the upper House by Mr Justin Field and Ms Cate Faehrmann. This Government is an expert at blocking, stonewalling and delaying bills it does not like. After discussing the matter with my colleagues in the Legislative Council, we have decided that the best way of getting the law passed is to introduce the bill in both Chambers. It is a two-pronged attack to defend our rivers.

A lot of people do not understand floodplain harvesting and why it creates such controversy, so I will explain the context and background. In the early 1990s, State and Federal governments decided that too much

water was being extracted from our river system and that we needed to do something about it. As a result, the New South Wales Government set a legal limit of extraction, commonly called "the cap". All future water take must be restricted at the 1994 cap level. For some bizarre reason, northern Basin irrigators—many of whom are National Party donors—were allowed to massively increase their water storages beyond the 1994 level. In fact, between 1994 and 2020, storages have nearly tripled from around 500 gigalitres to 1,500 gigalitres. But remember, other licensed water users in the south are all metred, monitored and licensed under the cap.

Those storages stop trillions of litres of water flowing across the natural flood plains, preventing water reaching the river system and flowing downstream. Some irrigators have even accessed taxpayer-funded government programs to build dams and store more water without the legally required work permits. That is absolutely extraordinary. The Murray-Darling Basin Plan was implemented to reduce water extraction across the basin. Nobody has a problem with protecting our rivers. We cannot farm if we do not have healthy and functioning river systems. Communities across southern New South Wales have experienced a lot of hardship for the greater good of the basin, contributing 85 per cent of the 2,100 gigalitres of water bought back under the basin plan. At the same time this Government has allowed an exclusive club of northern Basin irrigators to vastly increase their water extraction.

Debate interrupted.

Members

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL VACANCY

At 10:30 the House proceeded to the Legislative Council Chamber to attend a joint sitting to elect a member to fill a seat in the Legislative Council vacated by the Hon. Catherine Cusack, resigned.

At 10:48 the House reassembled.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): I report that the House met with the Legislative Council in the Legislative Council Chamber this day for the purpose of electing a person to hold the place in the Legislative Council rendered vacant by the resignation of the Hon. Catherine Eileen Cusack and that Mrs Aileen Jeanne MacDonald, OAM, was duly elected. I table the minutes of the proceedings of the joint sitting of the Houses of the Parliament of New South Wales to choose a person to hold the place in the Legislative Council rendered vacant by the resignation of the Hon. Catherine Eileen Cusack. I order that the minutes be printed.

Bills

WATER MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT (FLOODPLAIN HARVESTING LICENCES COMPENSATION) BILL 2022

Second Reading Speech

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (10:49): While southern Basin irrigators were monitored and metered within an inch of their lives the northern Basin was given a free ride, impacting downstream communities and the environment with their enormous volume of floodplain harvesting. Until the late twentieth century the Barwon-Darling/Baaka did not dry up. The river rarely stopped flowing. It now dries up for months or years at a time. Water quality is often poor, with frequent algal blooms. Motor neurone disease rates are skyrocketing across rural New South Wales, which is said to be linked to blue-green algal blooms. The annual average flow of the Barwon-Darling/Baaka into the Murray has reduced by 59 per cent since the year 2000 compared to the long-term average flows to the Murray assumed for the basin plan. The Darling's contribution to South Australia's entitlement is reduced, leaving the shortfall to be made up by the Murray River.

Excessive, unregulated floodplain harvesting has contributed to the decline and collapse of the horticulture industries at Bourke, Menindee and on the Lower Darling. It has caused towns along the river, from Collarenebrri to Pooncarie, to run out of water for long periods. It contributes to the low life expectancy of First Nations people born in Wilcannia—37 years for a man and 42 years for a woman. That is a national disgrace in a First World country. Floodplain harvesting also reduces water for irrigation in the Murray River, where general security irrigators spent two years on zero allocation while full rivers flowed past them. The environmental damage is also significant. Floodplain harvesting contributed to fish kills at Menindee and the decline of the Menindee Lakes as a nursery for native fish. It contributes to out-of-season flooding at the Barmah-Millewa Forest, causing the decline of river red gum forest and moira grass.

For those reasons, it is important for floodplain harvesting to be measured, regulated, environmentally sustainable and within the cap. But current plans to license and regulate floodplain harvesting will not ensure water take is within the cap. The New South Wales Government has cooked the books and manipulated the figures

to create a cap scenario based on current volumes of take and storage, not the 1994 level every other licensed and metered southern Basin irrigator operates under. This Government keeps introducing dodgy regulations to legalise floodplain harvesting when Parliament is not sitting. It does so without consulting with downstream communities. The upper House has rightly overturned those regulations on three separate occasions—and today it will again. Last year it hosted an upper House inquiry that attracted 263 submissions, with an overwhelming 78 per cent opposing the licensing. Of the 22 per cent in favour, 65 per cent received a direct financial benefit. But this Government does not seem to care about democracy. It does not care for the needs for downstream and Indigenous communities.

Moreover, in 2014 the National Party water Minister, Kevin Humphries, changed the law to allow irrigators to sell floodplain harvesting licences to the Government for financial compensation. That is disgraceful. Lining the pockets of this exclusive club—many of whom are National Party donors—is unfair on southern farmers, who have already done the heavy lifting for the greater good of the Basin. It is also a recipe for more rorts that will cost taxpayers billions of dollars. Members know that Liberal-Nationals governments are the world's worst hagglers. We all remember the Barnaby Joyce "Watergate" scandal, when the Federal Government paid \$80 million to a Cayman Islands company for non-existent water in the Condamine-Balonne region. The bill ensures that irrigators will not be able to profit off floodplain harvesting licences. There is no justification for compensating these irrigators. Southern Basin water users have had to cop reduced water availability without any compensation. Groundwater users in New South Wales lost huge volumes off their licences and did not receive a single cent. Why the hell is the Government providing compensation to National Party mates in the northern Basin? It is just not fair.

At present, section 87AA of the Water Management Act 2000 provides for compensation payable in certain circumstances for reductions in water allocations. The Act lists "floodplain harvesting (regulated river) access licences" and "floodplain harvesting (unregulated river) access licences" as among the licences eligible for compensation. My bill deletes both those categories under section 87AA, meaning irrigators holding those floodplain harvesting licences cannot seek compensation. The bill also inserts new section 87AA (10A) into the Act to make it clear that a right to compensation for all categories of floodplain harvesting licences is extinguished. Now that the New South Wales Government is in minority, there is a great chance that the bill may pass. If Labor, The Greens, the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party, and Independents support the bill it will become law. This Government needs to stop introducing dodgy regulations while Parliament is not sitting. It should consult with Lower Darling and southern Basin communities and get floodplain harvesting properly regulated. The bill is an important first step. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

ROAD TRANSPORT AMENDMENT (PROHIBITION OF U-TURNS AND 3-POINT TURNS IN SCHOOL ZONES) BILL 2022

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Dr Hugh McDermott, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (10:56): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I introduce the Road Transport Amendment (Prohibition of U-turns and 3-point Turns in School Zones) Bill 2022, following the introduction of a bill of the same name last year. Accidents involving motor vehicles are the leading cause of death and injury in New South Wales, with over 18,000 deaths or serious injuries costing the community over \$7 billion, of which \$3.5 billion involves the hospitalisation of almost 12,000 people. This does not begin to count the emotional and mental trauma of the loved ones or those undergoing rehabilitation due to serious injury. These deaths and injuries are unacceptable and preventable. Children are particularly vulnerable pedestrians. Children are smaller, difficult to see and, at times, can act unpredictably.

Every year children are killed or seriously injured after being struck by a moving motor vehicle. While the majority of those accidents occur on major roads, a significant number occur at low speed, at suburban homes or in non-traffic locations such as shopping centre car parks and slow roads such as school zones or in the proximity of schools. According to data from Transport for NSW, from 2016 to 2020 two children were killed and 112 injured—with 36 of those receiving serious injuries—while walking in active school zones. Those are two deaths, 36 serious injuries and 76 additional injuries too many. The safety of our children must remain a top priority and more needs to be done to improve the safety of our children.

I am pleased to introduce this bill, which amends the Road Rules 2014 by inserting rule 42-1. The object of the bill is to prohibit a driver from performing a U-turn or a three-point turn on a road in a school zone between 8.00 a.m. and 9.30 a.m. and between 2.30 p.m. and 4.00 p.m. For the purpose of the bill, a three-point turn is defined as a driving manoeuvre performed to turn a vehicle around within the boundaries of a road if the road is not wide enough to make a U-turn. A U-turn is defined as the turning of a vehicle in a U-shaped course so as to face the opposite direction. A school zone has the same meaning given by rule 23 (2) of the Road Rules 2014, which is the section of road between a "school zone" sign and an "end school zone" sign. As the Road Rules 2014 currently stand, there is no offence specially relating to three-point turns, nor do any of the U-turn offences in part 4, division 4 of the Road Rules 2014 refer to school zones. That is a significant safety oversight in the Road Rules that must be amended.

I turn now to why the law must be changed. The Road Rules 2014 currently include rules as to the circumstances in which a driver may or may not perform a U-turn. However, those circumstances do not cover all situations involving a school zone. There is also ambiguity as to whether three-point turns could be covered in the definition of a U-turn. For example, U-turns are prohibited when a driver crosses two parallel continuous lines, as outlined in rule 132 (2A) of the Road Rules 2014, which states:

A driver on a road with a single continuous dividing line, a single continuous dividing line to the left of a broken dividing line, or 2 parallel continuous dividing lines must not drive across the dividing lines to perform a U-turn.

That means that if a motor vehicle crosses two continuous parallel lines to perform a U-turn in a school zone, that driver would commit an offence under rule 132 (2A). That would most likely cover the situation where a motor vehicle driver does a three-point turn in front of a school. It is reasonable to view a three-point turn as falling within the definition of a U-turn as there is no separate definition or reference to a three-point turn in the Road Rules 2014. However, it is possible to argue that a three-point turn is not a U-turn because it takes two turns rather than "a turn" or "the turn" of a driver's vehicle to face "in approximately the opposite direction from which it was facing immediately before the turn was made".

Alternatively, a person crossing two continuous parallel lines and using a driveway to perform a three-point turn in front of a school commits an offence under rule 132 (2), which requires a driver on a road with a dividing line to drive to the left of the dividing line except as permitted under rule 134, which enables a driver to cross two continuous parallel lines to leave a road by driving onto or entering in any way. The circumstances in which a driver can perform a U-turn are covered in rule 134. A driver may drive to the right of the dividing line to overtake another vehicle, to enter or leave a road or to move from one part of the road to another. Rule 139 (2) deals with driving to the right of the dividing line to avoid an obstruction. Drivers are also permitted to cross a single dividing line to enter or leave a road.

Debate interrupted.

Business of the House

POSTPONEMENT OF BUSINESS

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG: On behalf of Mr Chris Minns: In accordance with Standing Order 101, I postpone general business notice of motion (for bills) No.1 [Fiscal Responsibility Amendment (Privatisation Restrictions) Bill 2021].

Announcements

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I inform the House that the Speaker has authorised still photographs to be taken of the member for Lakemba from the side door of the Chamber while he delivers his second reading speech.

Bills

CLIMATE CHANGE (EMISSIONS TARGETS) BILL 2021 (SHARPE)

Second Reading Speech

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (11:04): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

It is an honour to lead for the Labor Party in this place to introduce the Climate Change (Emissions Targets) Bill 2021. Addressing climate change is one of the most important issues we face. It is not a question of when we act but how urgently. We only have a small window of time to save our precious earth. There are multiple ways to address climate change and it crosses many industries, including energy generation. I am alert to the energy

crisis we are collectively enduring. Let there be no doubt that this crisis is both a market failure and a government failure. Our vulnerability to massive fluctuations in global gas and coal prices, as well as our aging infrastructure, is due to a failure to adequately plan for more renewables and sufficient storage to capture the energy those renewables provide. The renewable energy evolution by its nature is not a simple act of substitution. We cannot just replace one energy source with another. Getting the mix of old and new energy right is critical to keeping prices low and the lights on.

The bill is designed to deliver an energy evolution that is most practical to the people of New South Wales. People's trust is being tested. The Parliament must create a transparent mechanism to deliver the clean energy and storage that we need now and well into the future. The bill is part of a long-term solution to the current crisis. Legislating emissions reductions targets is common sense and long overdue, and that reform has been embraced by other jurisdictions. Just a couple of weeks ago the Federal House of Representatives passed a similar bill to legislate targets and monitor plans to cut emissions. That measure to deliver certainty was supported by the Business Council of Australia, the Australian Industry Group, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Australian Conservation Foundation, the Australian Council of Trade Unions, the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Minerals Council of Australia.

The bill before the Legislative Assembly was passed by the Legislative Council in November 2021, and I have previously and jointly moved that same bill in the Legislative Assembly, but it has now expired. For more specific details on the bill, I refer members to the second reading speech I delivered on 18 and 25 November 2021. If the bill passes, we can realise the benefits of providing certainty to businesses, investors and the community whilst forging a credible path to net zero emissions by 2050. The member for Hornsby, and Minister for Energy, can rest easy, knowing the legislation provides a framework for a guaranteed pathway to net zero by 2050. It will do so by establishing a net zero commission that will provide an expert-led response to climate change by developing emissions reductions plans that place at the forefront the actions that the Government must take to secure jobs and power prices. It also places at the forefront the economic needs and diversification in local communities that are most exposed to the renewable energy evolution.

What has transpired since I last spoke on the bill is the near-constant reminder of the threat posed by climate change. We all remember the February and March storms and the flooding in New South Wales that emergency service agencies told us was exacerbated by climate change. The science is in. The impacts of climate change are catastrophic and we must act to reverse this trend. The current energy crisis evidences a strong role for government to guarantee reliable and affordable energy. After nine years of Federal neglect, we need to restore faith in government to deliver a capacity mechanism which ensures supply and firming capacity. A net zero commission enables us to simultaneously meet our international obligations to reduce emissions and community obligations to keep the lights on and prices under control.

I look forward to debating this bill: In doing so, I want to pre-empt some bad faith arguments I have heard from the Government. First is the notion that this bill's provisions largely duplicate existing initiatives. The purpose of this bill is not to duplicate but to complement emissions reduction initiatives while legislating foundational targets. When the New South Wales Government announced aspirational targets of net zero by 2050 and a 50 per cent emissions reduction on 2005 levels by 2030, New South Wales Labor gave bipartisan support. These challenges transcend the lifetime of any one Parliament, any one Premier and any one Minister. Community, business and industry need certainty on climate targets.

The concern about the Premier's past comments describing climate change as a gratuitous waste or giving coverage to climate sceptics could be put to rest if the Government supports this bill. This leads me to the second notion I want to dispel: that supporting this bill would not significantly enhance the Government's ability to reduce New South Wales emissions. Modelling in *Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020-2030* implementation update shows that there is not currently a plan to bridge 2030 and 2050 emission reduction targets. Establishing an expert-led commission to bridge the targets will enhance the Government's ability because it will be guided by legislative principles including job creation, economic diversification and skills diversification. This will be done in a transparent way because the independent expert-led commission will report to the Parliament with the Minister required to respond.

Third is the idea that the bill does not set out any requirements to reduce energy costs or ensure energy reliability. This is incorrect. Clause 10 (c) (ii) requires the net zero commission to monitor and review action taken by the Government and sector to address climate change, including its impact and, as the bill states, "on ... the price of energy in NSW". Parliament will receive the data and can hold the Government to account for any action that would adversely affect the price of energy in New South Wales. Regarding energy reliability, legislating targets protects existing initiatives like the Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap required to ensure energy reliability. Fourth is the idea that the bill would inappropriately transfer the Government's policymaking responsibilities to the net zero commission. I again remind the House that policies are still required to be legislated by the New South

Wales Parliament. This bill will depoliticise the process by having policies developed and framed by independent experts.

Fifth is the idea that climate change policy requires consideration of a range of economic, social and environmental factors and government is best placed to balance these matters. The Government has demonstrated that it is not always the best place to balance these matters such as social licence and the need for adequate community consultation in regional areas. Residents in regional places like Wagga Wagga can attest to this. The Government developed its policies on advisement from departments and strikes a balance. The commission will give advice on balanced policies to the entire Parliament for consideration and adoption by the Government and indeed across the Parliament. Sixth is the idea that the existing bodies already fulfil many of the functions that the bill proposes for a net zero commission—in particular the Net Zero Emissions and Clean Economy Board and the Renewable Energy Sector Board—but firstly there is no evidence that either body has met since being announced; secondly, neither body has produced a report so no report will be delivered and tabled in Parliament; and, thirdly, Parliament and the Minister are not required to respond to any recommendations they propose.

Seventh is the notion that the net zero commission would create a risk of contradictory policy output from different New South Wales government bodies. This is a contradiction in the first critique—that it duplicates existing objectives and outcomes from the Government. The Government has claimed that it has taken considerable steps to provide policy certainty. This may be so but legislating net zero provides necessary certainty to domestic and international investors looking to support so-called green jobs and the green growth. Attracting this investment is critical to reaching net zero in New South Wales. If we do not act, New South Wales will get left behind. Contrary to what the Minister may say, New South Wales is not world-leading on climate change. We are not even Australia's leader. Multiple Australian jurisdictions already have taken the step of legislating net zero and the bill before this Chamber is modelled on equivalent legislation in those States.

I am grateful to my colleagues in the other place, particularly the Hon. Penny Sharpe, for their support and leadership in passing this bill on 24 November 2021. However, I was surprised and disappointed that the only people to oppose the bill were members of the Liberal and Nationals parties. It was rank politics and exposed the gulf between words and actions that has frustrated the people of New South Wales about this Government. Thankfully, two members of the Government explained their opposition to the bill which I can now address. The Minister for Finance, and Minister for Employee Relations, the Hon. Damien Tudehope, said:

The Government is opposing the bill not because it may not have merit but because those opposite did not give us a proper opportunity to consider the bill ...

Reiterating the point, the Hon. Damien Tudehope asked that we "adjourn this debate until February next year, to give the Government an opportunity to properly consider it." It is now well past February. In November, in responding to those arguments, I said to the House:

I trust the Government will reverse its opposition to the proposed legislation when it comes to the Legislative Assembly, because by then those opposite will have had time to consider the bill. There will be no excuses left and it will be time to prove politics comes second to an issue as important as climate change.

The clock is ticking and time is up. The Government has had more than enough time to consider this bill and it is time to show its commitment to its own targets. Members of this House know that I am interested in outcomes, not in playing politics. That is why I say to the Government: Work with us so that together we can legislate these targets and bridge the 2030 and 2050 emissions reduction targets.

It is important that as members of Parliament we honour our commitment to our communities, and in particular our children, regardless of the party or crossbench we represent. This bill guarantees a minimum of 50 per cent reduction of emissions by 2030—it is a floor, not a ceiling—and an achievement of net zero by 2050. These are the targets that we must have that are more than just an aspiration. These are targets that we have to achieve. It is incumbent on all of us to ensure that we achieve them. The tide is shifting but it is not shifting fast enough. We know the changes required. We know the challenge ahead. We know how significant this action is and we know why we need to act. We are at a critical juncture in history. Let us make sure we are on the right side of it. I commend the bill to the House.

Second Reading Debate

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (11:17): I commend the member for Lakemba for raising this great topic by introducing the Climate Change (Emissions Targets) Bill 2021. I think there is one thing on which we can all agree: That the challenge of climate change across the world is great and we need to have good measures in working towards how we all make those incremental changes to deal with this challenge ahead. I am afraid, though, that may be where common sense stops with regard to this bill. We cannot support this bill that actually makes it more difficult to implement a good plan—a good practical commonsense plan that we already have in place. In the Upper Hunter we certainly know about climate change. We are aware of the challenges ahead and of

course we feel like we are at the pointy end of dealing with the crisis of climate change. The energy infrastructure at the moment in my electorate is coal generators. We export a lot of coal around the world; we are very aware of the challenge of changing from coal-generated power in the Upper Hunter to renewable energy projects and generated power.

A number of different projects are proposed under the Government's net zero emissions energy road map. There is a great plan to change over to the renewable energy market, to get those projects up and running, to power New South Wales and ensure that places like the Upper Hunter remain industrial powerhouses that move forward in the future. As part of that plan, the Government is looking at different types of energy, including pumped hydro. Muswellbrook Coal has a great proposal for pumped hydro. There are solar farms around Goulburn River and Merriwa and a number of different places are going through planning approvals and the scrutiny of ensuring that those projects are in the right spot. All renewable energy projects are supported, but they must be in the right spot. We have to give community the opportunity to look at the project and to come on board. That is all important.

As the local member I fear that sometimes we get carried away with shoving renewable energy projects down the throats of the local communities. We must stand up, stop, think and make sure it is the right project for the right place. That is particularly true when it comes to wind farm projects. Those projects have caused a lot of angst, but the Government is trying to work with the community on that. I am always concerned with any proposals to speed up projects and roll over the top of the communities that have to deal with the projects in their backyards. The voices of the people must be heard when it comes to renewable energy projects, particularly wind farm projects.

During my investigation of renewable energy projects, I recently met with an organisation that is looking at offshore windfarm projects, which is an exciting future. Those projects are offshore, well and truly beyond the horizon and no-one sees them. They are being designed to work with the Australian coastline, which is very deep. Effectively, those windfarms are chained to the ocean floor. I am excited about the potential of those projects and finding a way to adapt them to the Australian coastline. Overall, New South Wales is powering ahead with its renewable energy program. We are by far ahead of other States in Australia and, I think, by far ahead of the Federal Government's plans. We have a great plan and we are powering ahead to make changes to renewable energy, which will be our contribution to a world that is dealing with climate change.

As much as I agree with the challenge of climate change, I cannot agree with some of the practical and conceptual parts of the bill, which will make it harder to roll out. In many ways it duplicates the existing plan. Duplicating the plan makes it more difficult and transfers a lot of government responsibility to a bureaucratic commission, which is not right. Elected members in this place must make the decisions affecting the community. That is all important and it is a key reason why we oppose the bill.

Supporting the bill would not significantly enhance the Government's ability to reduce the State's emissions. In fact, it could create problems for policy development and implementation. The proposed net zero commission in particular would be an inefficient use of public resources, duplicating many of the functions from the Net Zero Emissions and Clean Economy Board. An organisation is already set up to advise on the implementation and development of strategies to achieve the State's emission reduction objectives; to look at the barriers to the uptake of emission reduction technologies; to develop strategies to attract a low carbon industry economy; and to conduct research in New South Wales because we must adapt technology from around the world for our great State. In exercising its functions the Energy and Utilities Administration Regulation that governs the board requires it to consider the New South Wales Government's 2030 and 2050 emissions reduction targets and to promote economic growth and employment.

The Coalition Government is taking real action on climate change and, unlike the bill, its policies provide a clear pathway forward. Members should remember that when debating this bill. At the moment New South Wales is projected to reduce emissions by between 47 per cent and 52 per cent compared to 2005 levels by 2030. That is a significant target and there is a plan to achieve it. I am proud of the work being done to achieve it. Climate change policy requires the consideration of all sorts of economic, social and environmental factors. This Government is best placed to balance those matters in the interests of New South Wales. We cannot hand that all-important responsibility off to a commission. Members in this House must make those decisions. If bad decisions are made that could impact our economy and the people in the Upper Hunter. That concerns me the most about the bill.

Stage one of the net zero plan is the foundation for this Government's action on climate change. The plan will attract more than \$37 billion in investment and create more than 9,000 jobs, primarily in regional New South Wales, and more jobs will emerge in the flourishing green hydrogen industry. The Government's hydrogen strategy is expected to create up to 10,000 jobs in regional New South Wales over the next decade. There is no better place for a hydrogen economy than in the Hunter Valley and the Upper Hunter. [*Extension of time*]

The Upper Hunter is looking into hydrogen. It has the infrastructure, the water and the people. I am excited about a future in hydrogen to power our economy, our businesses and manufacturing, and I am excited for it to be an industry that we can export overseas. Huge opportunities are available. I think the Premier just travelled to Japan, which is ready for our hydrogen and is keen for Australia to use the resources it has on hand. Japan is excited about the availability of renewable energy, particularly solar, and being able to turn that into something that countries like it can use daily. Australia can export that product and potentially become global leaders with its resources, like ports, rail and energy markets.

There is a great road map ahead as part of the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap. Our strategy is to transform our electricity system into one that is cheap, clean and reliable. The Government's road map will reduce New South Wales electricity emissions by 90 million tonnes by 2030, while keeping the lights on and the prices down. That should be the target for any government in this place. New South Wales has become the leader in low-emissions industries, thanks to an unparalleled \$1.05 billion Net Zero Industry and Innovation Program. The Government is co-investing with industry to reduce carbon emissions and develop the technologies and industries that will underpin our State's prosperity into the future.

To that end, the Government is also taking steps towards decarbonising our transport sector. Our electric vehicle strategy will help make New South Wales the best place to buy, own and run electric vehicles anywhere in Australia. I thank the Minister for the number of discussions I have had about making sure that we have the charging infrastructure in place so we can adapt to this changing vehicle market. I note that the Minister, and member for Tamworth, is in the Chamber. We are working hard to make sure that the New England Highway will be an electric vehicle super highway. We hope that one of these days people can drive to the area in their powerful electric vehicles, go bush or maybe even drive all the way to the music festival. That is the future that is on our doorstep and we encourage the infrastructure to be built for that.

We have policies in train to rapidly scale up the use of low-emission materials in the construction industry. The Government is investing more than \$4.8 million to speed up the transformation of the State's built environment towards net zero emissions as part of the New South Wales Government Net Zero Buildings initiative. We have the New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service Carbon Positive Plan, a policy under which our National Parks and Wildlife Service aims to become the first carbon-positive national parks agency in Australia. The bill proposes a Net Zero Commission that would be inefficient and inappropriate in terms of transferring what I think is the responsibility of both sides of the Chamber. Therefore, the Government cannot support the bill. Climate change policy and the actions we need to address those challenges should be taken by government. They should not be done by a commission.

Thankfully for the people of this State and this planet, we have the New South Wales Government and we can all be proud of the plan we have going forward to halve our State's emissions by 2030 to help us achieve net zero by mid-century, while having affordable power. The lack of detail and clarity in the bill means it does not properly consider energy affordability and reliability. In contrast, the Government is focused on reducing the cost of living and the cost of doing business. Coalition Government polices span the width and breadth of our State's economy, and the suite of nation-building climate strategies is hard at work generating economic opportunities across New South Wales, while reducing the State's emissions. Public reporting is already in place, including the State of the Environment report. The people of New South Wales and members in this House can rest assured that New South Wales is travelling on a pathway to net zero. But the Government cannot support the bill.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (11:33): I am delighted to speak in support of the Climate Change (Emissions Targets) Bill 2021. The objects of the bill are to establish principles to guide actions to address climate change that must be taken into account by the New South Wales Government in developing and implementing government policy; to set 2030 and 2050 targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in New South Wales; and to establish the Net Zero Commission to monitor and report on progress towards the 2030 and 2050 targets. The bill sets out guiding principles relating to action to address climate change; establishes greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets for New South Wales that must be met by 2030 and 2050; and requires the New South Wales Government to take the guiding principles and the 2030 and 2050 targets into account in developing and implementing Government policy.

The bill also establishes the Net Zero Commission and provides for its membership; sets out the functions of the Net Zero Commission, including developing and reviewing a net zero plan; monitors actions taken by the New South Wales Government and makes recommendations to the Minister administering the proposed Act; and requires the New South Wales Government to respond to reports and recommendations from the Net Zero Commission. As my colleague the member for Lakemba said, the bill represents in the clearest possible terms NSW Labor's commitment to real, whole-of-government action on climate change. It represents an enormous point of differentiation between the current Government's words and a future Minns Labor Government's actions.

Currently, the New South Wales Government is not required by legislation to meet its carbon emissions target. That is why it is so disappointing that the previous speaker, the member for Upper Hunter, indicated that the Government will not support this important bill. There is nothing to compel it to do anything about climate change, and doing nothing about climate change is what it has done for most of the 12 years it has been in office—certainly the first decade. Indeed, the Premier has expressed views that put these targets in doubt. In 2015 he said, "An example of gratuitous waste is the almost religious devotion of the political left to climate change." The Premier said in 2016, "If you question man-made climate change, you are not a sceptic." More recently, in 2021, he implied he only signed up to net zero because it involved no additional policy changes. In other words, this is why we need the bill—because there are no additional policy changes.

The Premier also said, "In terms of net zero, we didn't have to change one policy setting to achieve that aim." In other words, the Government was claiming credit for what the market was already doing. That statement—which was rebuked immediately by his Treasurer, and Minister for Energy—is an accurate description of what the Government has done over the past 12 years. The Government has a purely aspirational target. Recently, when the Federal Government introduced its 43 per cent reduction—not target—the absolute minimum that will be achieved, the Federal Liberal and National parties voted against it. Not only that, Senator Hollie Hughes, the Federal Opposition spokesperson on these matters, is calling for nuclear energy. If members care about the pricing of electricity bills—

Ms Felicity Wilson: Ted Obrien is the spokesperson. You may not know that, but you better look into it.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Order!

Ms JULIA FINN: Hollie Hughes has said repeatedly in the past few weeks that Australia needs to go nuclear. Maybe she does not have to worry about her electricity bills, but nuclear power is the most expensive form of energy generation. The current price is over \$300 per megawatt hour, which is 50 per cent more than coal and more than double that of wind. But that is the way she thinks we should go. Our former Deputy Premier and former Senior Trade and Investment Commissioner to the Americas often said that we should go nuclear.

Mr Kevin Anderson: Point of order: The member for Granville should be brought back to the leave of the bill.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Granville has been generally relevant to matters relating to climate change but I encourage her to focus on the bill before the House.

Ms JULIA FINN: We will not talk; we will deliver. We will not shy away from the challenges, reforms or opportunities that the future presents.

Ms Felicity Wilson: That's all you've done in the past though.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The member for North Shore will come to order.

Ms JULIA FINN: Do you not remember the Sustainable Energy Development Authority or the other initiatives of the Carr Government?

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Order! Members will direct their remarks through the Chair and not speak across the Chamber.

Ms Felicity Wilson: She could talk about that if she wanted to.

Ms JULIA FINN: I intend to talk about it.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Is the member for North Shore taking a point of order?

Ms Felicity Wilson: No.

Ms JULIA FINN: NSW Labor recognises, and has recognised for decades, that climate change is not an existential energy and environmental challenge or something aspirational to worry about later and claim credit for if it is actually addressed; it is the greatest economic opportunity of our lifetime to secure well-paid jobs, lower energy prices and energy security for New South Wales. Twenty-five years ago BP Solar at Homebush was one of the largest producers of solar panels in the world. Back then, Australia was the world's largest producer of solar panels. These days, Australia is one of the world's largest per capita importers of solar panels. We do not make anything here. They left to go to China because China was encouraging investment in renewable energy. The Federal Liberal Government at the time said, "See ya. No, sorry, we don't want to give you a hand." The then New South Wales Government was doing a lot to support the growth of renewable energy. Then everything stopped for a decade. It was a wasted decade.

The NSW Labor bill that we are debating today legislates net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and a 50 per cent reduction by 2030. It reflects the approach of the Victorian and Australian Capital Territory governments and what is happening all around the world. The United Kingdom and New Zealand have legislated net zero carbon emissions by 2050. So have Germany, Sweden, the European Union, Japan, France, Canada, South Korea, Spain, Denmark, Hungary and Luxembourg. Our bill reflects the gravity and urgency of the climate crisis. It reflects the opportunities for job creation and economic diversification in new high-growth sectors such as renewable energy. It reflects the need to protect jobs and communities, as well as the importance of appropriate action to ensure intergenerational equity for households, businesses, workers, communities, and rural and regional New South Wales. Over the past few years we have seen the damage of climate change in this State. We have seen the predicted increase in extreme weather events. We have seen enormous bushfires and enormous floods. We need to take action to protect the people who live in our State. It is time to turn words into action. I urge those opposite to join us in supporting this bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (11:41): On behalf of the Government I will highlight what we have achieved, and are continuing to achieve, in the climate change emission target space. We have an action plan, which is working under the leadership of the energy Minister, Matt Kean. It has led the nation. We do like the idea of collaboration, working together and showing leadership. That is why we believe that we are on the right path. We have framed a very important debate on the national stage for a renewable energy strategy. Therefore, I will not be supporting the bill.

This is an important issue for me as the member for Oxley and for the member for Northern Tablelands, who was here a moment ago but is no longer in the Chamber. We are 100 per cent supportive of a project within our electorates, midway between Kempsey and Armidale, called the Oven Mountain Pumped Hydro Energy Storage project. That project was designed in the early 1980s by the man who designed Centrepoint Tower. He was a very clever local chap. When he came back to Kempsey he bought a farm because he could foresee the mountain being part of an incredible pumped hydro project. So Bruce Jeffery, the local member for Oxley from 1988 to 1999, brought it to the government of the day and they said, "No. This one doesn't stack up." Well, it stacks up now and a company called Alinta is proposing the project. I recently met with executives of that company. They hope to have the environmental impact statement [EIS] in by the middle of the year, and the member for Northern Tablelands and I are working to ensure that we have good community conversations.

Alinta was founded in the gas fields of Western Australia and was acquired by a Hong Kong-based company in 2017. In construction this project would create about 3,500 jobs over a number of years. We see some great opportunities for our local Indigenous community to work on that project. It is also in the New England Renewable Energy Zone and it is a major focus of the department of Energy and Minister Kean's team to ensure that it reaches fruition. When I was the Minister for Water, we explored conversations that needed to be had about water take. This is only a one-off take of six gigalitres during a high-flow event. That is important for the community to understand because some who do not understand the project say it will take a lot of water all the time. No, it will not. It will only need to be topped up for evaporation. In respect of output, it will be about 25 per cent of the size of Snowy Hydro. Our community wants it to go ahead. There are some naysayers. But I think the more people learn about this project, the better it will be.

I see it as a genuine opportunity to improve the infrastructure between the east and west for the electorate of Oxley. The road is very unstable. It has been majorly impacted by two floods over the past two years. Some \$222 million is sitting in natural disaster relief funding to improve that road. We should take this opportunity to reimagine what that road will look like, maybe even some of the route of that road to avoid some of the more treacherous parts, so that we can have a longstanding legacy of a pumped hydro project—if it meets all the environmental obligations. We can also have another more solid, important east-west route between Kempsey and Armidale to take some pressure off Waterfall Way and the Oxley Highway, the Gwydir Range and other routes we travel east to west. I note that the member for Tamworth is at the table. He well knows the need for freight movement and for improved capacity across the Great Dividing Range, which is a very challenging engineering feat.

This incredible project is about action. It is about planning. It is about ensuring that we have projects that underline and underscore our State's need for reliable energy, not just when it is windy or when it is sunny; and that there is a backup battery feeding into the entire network, steering our State towards net zero emissions. We have shown real leadership on this and that is a very important thing to be acknowledged. Some pretty big conversations need to be had in the community. I come from a part of the world where the challenges people are facing every week with their electricity bills is hard. But if we get the investment in the right places, ultimately the cost of electricity will come down. That has to be a big part of our thinking, as well as the ultimate goal of steering towards net zero emissions. This is actual work, not just words.

Independently peer-reviewed projections have found that under current New South Wales Government policy settings emissions are projected to reduce between 47 per cent and 52 per cent by 2030, compared to 2005 levels. This will be achieved by putting these projects into the mix. It is okay to design projects on paper, but we have designers, we have Indigenous archaeologists working on that site on behalf of the company that is proposing the EIS. This is the work that our strategy has been able to accommodate to ensure that it happens. Our plan is to transfer our electricity system into one that is cheap, clean and reliable. The New South Wales Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap will reduce electricity emissions by a total of 90 million tonnes by 2030. We are also decarbonising our transport sector. Our Electric Vehicle Strategy will help make New South Wales the best place to buy, own and run an electric vehicle anywhere in Australia. I highlight a local champion in our own region, Cassegrain Wines. The winery on the border of my electorate put in a charging station almost five years ago. It is a popular destination.

Mr Kevin Anderson: They have got seven there now, do they not?

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: They have about seven, yes. You saw them the other night. They started that process. I was proud to be the roads Minister when the Government developed its Electric Vehicle Strategy. The Government is determined to put electric vehicle charging stations throughout regional New South Wales. It is important for our communities to be able to be part of the next evolution, or revolution, of the motor vehicle market. Some people in Sydney have access to charging in their own garages; I understand it is a little more challenging in apartment buildings. We want those who have electric vehicles to be able to come to regional New South Wales. It is not petrol prices that are going to stop them; it is the ability to charge their cars.

The cost of petrol and diesel is making people think about other investments over the long term, especially if they are like me; I put something like \$300 in my car every week to drive the kilometres across my electorate. I sometimes think that I should have a battery at home. We are all having those conversations, and the Government is enabling us to have them. It is important to acknowledge that the Government is working towards this issue. If we do so with collegiality and have good, sensible conversations at a grassroots level to understand the challenges people are facing with electricity prices, and if we also look at opportunities for investment, jobs, a new way of doing things and other benefits such as improved infrastructure—like the road between Kempsey and Armidale that me and the member for Northern Tablelands are fighting for—then we can take the whole community with us on this journey. That is what the Government is doing at the moment and I am proud to be doing that work.

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (11:51): I make a very brief contribution to the Climate Change (Emissions Targets) Bill 2021. Climate change is the single biggest issue facing our communities and is the single biggest issue globally. This is a very sensible piece of legislation that holds us to account for getting to net zero emissions. I call on the Liberal-Nationals Government to support this piece of legislation and to end the climate wars now. I thought the Government would have learnt something from the Federal election, but maybe it has not. The climate wars need to come to an end. We must address climate change. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms ANNA WATSON: I move:

That the question be now put.

The House divided.

Ayes36
Noes43
Majority.....7

AYES

Aitchison, J	Harrison, J	Mihailuk, T
Atalla, E	Haylen, J	Minns, C
Bali, S	Hoening, R	O'Neill, M
Catley, Y	Holland, M	Park, R
Chanthivong, A	Hornery, S	Saffin, J
Cotsis, S	Kamper, S	Scully, P
Crakanthorp, T	Leong, J	Smith, T
Daley, M	Li, J	Tesch, L
Dib, J	Lynch, P	Voltz, L
Doyle, T	McDermott, H	Warren, G
Finn, J	McGirr, J	Watson, A (teller)
Harris, D	Mehan, D (teller)	Zangari, G

NOES

Anderson, K	Henskens, A	Roberts, A
Ayres, S	James, T	Saunders, D
Butler, R	Kean, M	Sidgreaves, P
Clancy, J	Layzell, D	Singh, G (teller)
Coore, M	Lee, G	Smith, N (teller)
Crouch, A	Lindsay, W	Speakman, M
Dalton, H	Marshall, A	Stokes, R
Davies, T	O'Dea, J	Taylor, M
Dominello, V	Overall, N	Toole, P
Evans, L	Pavey, M	Tuckerman, W
Gibbons, M	Perrottet, D	Upton, G
Griffin, J	Petinos, E	Williams, L
Gulaptis, C	Preston, R	Williams, R
Hancock, S	Provest, G	Wilson, F
Hazzard, B		

PAIRS

Barr, C	Bromhead, S
Car, P	Conolly, K
Lalich, N	Cooke, S
Washington, K	Elliott, D

Motion negatived.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): I have been informed that, under Standing Order 366, the member for North Shore, in her capacity as the Parliamentary Secretary, is leading for the Government in debate and as such is afforded unlimited time.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (12:04): I lead on behalf of the Government in debate on the Climate Change (Emissions Targets) Bill 2021. This is Labor's final attempt at considering action on climate change. I note that the bill is named the Climate Change (Emissions Targets) Bill 2021. It is interesting that Labor put the bill up in 2021; it is now August 2022. While we have gone through a pandemic that impacted a lot of people's lives, Labor seems to have been in a multi-year fugue state in not realising the serious steps of climate change action taken to date in New South Wales. In 2019 this Government already approved a net zero—

Mr Jihad Dib: Point of order: On a point of clarification, the bill is called the Climate Change (Emissions Targets) Bill 2021 because it passed the Legislative Council in 2021 and it has only come to the Legislative Assembly now.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): There is no point of order. The member for North Shore may continue.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: I will start again; I think the tactics of members opposite are very interesting today. This Government can stand tall and proud on its record on climate change action. No jurisdiction in Australia has taken more decisive action on climate change in word or deed, and that has set New South Wales up for the best future opportunities to address climate change. The positioning from the member for Lakemba is, really, quite offensive. If he wants to try to patronisingly correct me about the name of the bill, perhaps he could allow me to finish my sentence.

Mr Jihad Dib: It wasn't patronising.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: It was patronising. When I stated that the bill is a 2021 bill, I said that Labor has obviously been in a fugue state for the years prior to 2021 because in November 2019 the Liberal-Nationals Government, through Cabinet, committed to its *Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020-2030*—a full two years before Labor even tried to introduce the bill in this place that we are debating today. When members opposite come to this Chamber and suggest to us that they are the only ones who think about addressing climate change and have the policies to make a difference for climate change—I am sorry, but that is so 2019. Even before 2019 we had already implemented a range of different policies to address climate change. The only party or parties in this House that deliver action rather than words are the New South Wales Liberals and The Nationals.

In this place, we have made sure that we have delivered on a range of steps to embed our commitment to net zero in New South Wales and to take action on climate change, and we have progressively implemented each of those stages. In 2019 the Government announced the NSW Electricity Strategy. In January 2020 a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Australian and New South Wales governments. In March 2020 we released the detail of our net zero plan. In May 2020 our own expenditure review committee approved additional contributions to an expenditure from the Climate Change Fund, well out to 2030. It reflects the Government's commitment to delivering the electricity strategy and the net zero plan. In November 2020 the NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap was announced. By 2021 the Government approved a grant from the Climate Change Fund to Tallawarra B power station in the Illawarra to ensure that we could have additional dispatchable capacity to the electricity grid through gas and green hydrogen.

Those are all steps that were taken before Labor even introduced this bill, and that does not even go to the full extent of our climate change action in New South Wales. The bill is another representation of Labor's entire attitude to our State, to the policy settings that this State needs and to the needs of the people of New South Wales. All Labor does is talk, and it never takes any action. Labor members always talk too late, and they wait until they think it is politically expedient to do so. They waited until eight months out from an election to put up a piece of paper that somehow suggested they were taking a stance on climate change when they were only carbon-copying and putting the Labor Party brand on half of the things that the Government announced years ago.

The people of New South Wales have seen the Labor Party brand in action in government, and they know it is a toxic, noxious brand. They know that it is the no-frills version of government in New South Wales that will let the people of this State down. They do not trust Labor to deliver. They know that the Liberals and the National Party deliver outcomes to the people of New South Wales, especially on climate change. I find it fascinating when members opposite want to talk about the climate wars. They are the only ones trying to have a war about climate today. If they had been listening, they would know that all our Minister for Energy and our Premier have done in recent years is bat back the tide of the minority of individuals in our community who would refuse to take action on climate change. The Liberal-Nationals Government has made New South Wales the leading jurisdiction of climate change action and outcomes in Australia.

As members have already heard today, independently peer-reviewed evidence shows that under our policies, strategies, funding and action, New South Wales is projected to reduce emissions from the 2005 target of 47 per cent to 52 per cent by 2030. We have accountability mechanisms in place to ensure that this Government remains on track to deliver on those commitments. Frankly, those opposite only play stunts in this place. They try to gag debate and they introduce bills at the last minute to ensure that we cannot talk about the issues facing the people of this State. But we actually deliver outcomes for the people of New South Wales and our entire globe. Many years ago, while members opposite were still trying to figure out their mess, this Government had already committed to action on reducing emissions in New South Wales. We have a series of different, incredibly successful policies already underway. The bill before the House pales in comparison to the actions we have already taken. It tries to replicate a number of the things we have already done, but less effectively. Those opposite are trying to enact legislation that would contradict, complicate and compromise a range of the different policy mechanisms and institutions that we have already put in place to effect the outcomes of net zero policy in New South Wales.

I am quite disappointed by members opposite. Obviously the Government is leading the charge on climate change action and delivering outcomes. From time to time Labor comes on board with us on the journey—after we have developed the policy and done the hard yards—and supports us in a vote in the House. Labor members supported our Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap because they saw our vision. They saw our detailed policy work and knew it was the right thing to do. We convinced them by doing all the hard yards and they voted for it. We appreciate their support for our initiatives, policies and actions. We should be nonpartisan in delivering outcomes to the people of New South Wales. From time to time they support us after a course of extensive work and action has been taken. In principle, they support our goals to reach net zero; however, the bill before the House shows they do not really support our actions. The Opposition is trying to throw the entire policy suite out and risk the progress we have made on climate change action.

Let us talk about this Government's approach so far. More than most, we know about the challenges and opportunities of addressing climate change. Not only do we focus on mitigation, adaptation and reducing the impacts of climate change but we also look at the significant economic, trade and new industry opportunities for the State. We have introduced some of the most ambitious policies in the country. Our *Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020-2030* lays the foundation for New South Wales to slash emissions 50 per cent by 2030 and achieve net zero by 2050. However, the bill before us does not make an ounce of difference towards achieving a real outcome on climate change. As members know, transitioning the New South Wales economy to net zero emissions is no small task. As a Government we are working hand in hand with all the sectors that need to implement change, including energy, transport, the hydrogen sector—which we are looking to expand significantly—primary industries and

organic waste. We are also working with carbon financing to develop and deliver policies that will grow the economy while creating jobs and making significant progress towards zero emissions.

The bill should be considered in the context of what our State, Territory and Commonwealth counterparts are doing, particularly as we determine the appropriate settings for offsets and the role of carbon markets. The Government has led with the establishment of the international Net Zero Emissions Policy Forum, which every Australian State and Territory has agreed to join. It will provide a platform to collaborate on the practical and economic challenges of reaching net zero emissions. Instead, those opposite propose the establishment of a Net Zero Commission with broad powers. As many in this House are aware, this Government has already introduced a Net Zero Emissions and Clean Economy Board. The board already exists and fulfils the function of the commission proposed by those opposite. They have not given members any evidence as to why that model is superior to the board model already in existence. Instead, they want to dismantle existing action on climate change.

The Net Zero Emissions and Clean Economy Board, chaired by Dr Kerry Schott, is made up of cross-sector representatives with expertise in the electricity, power fuels, transport, and primary industries sectors, as well as those with experience in science, technology innovation, public policy and finance. That board is helping the New South Wales Government pursue actions to grow the economy, create employment opportunities and support industry to develop the low-emission technologies we need to modernise our industrial processes. We say we have already got a tick on that score. What is the point of Labor's grandstanding bill?

New South Wales is leading the way in ambitious climate policy. Our net zero plan is set to attract more than \$37 billion in investment while also reducing emissions by 50 per cent, as we have committed to, below 2005 levels by 2030. We are implementing our Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap, which will help reduce New South Wales electricity emissions by a total of 90 million tonnes by 2030. We are also decarbonising our transport sector. I know the member for Oxley spoke a bit about this in her contribution to this debate, but our Electric Vehicle Strategy will make New South Wales the best place than anywhere in Australia to buy, own and run an electric vehicle. We have policies in train to rapidly scale up the use of low-emission materials in the construction industry.

In March 2021 we announced a \$750 million investment under our Net Zero Industry and Innovation Program. This will support the development of new clean technologies. It will create world-leading centres of research and development and help our existing industries futureproof their operations. We recently expanded the program to \$1.05 billion through to 2030, to build the State's clean manufacturing base, and to new clean technologies such as green hydrogen, cement, ammonia and steel production. Under its carbon positive plan, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service is set to become the first national parks agency in Australia to commit to being carbon positive.

This Government is also creating jobs and opportunities for the people of regional New South Wales in a range of different policy settings. For instance, over the next decade our hydrogen strategy will create up to 10,000 jobs in regional New South Wales. That will ensure that our regional communities have skilled and well-paying jobs for future generations. The hydrogen strategy is also attracting the interest of the globe. The world is demanding our ability to provide export markets. The Premier's recent trip to Japan and South Korea demonstrated the need in those markets for green hydrogen. Who has the capability and capacity to deliver that? It is New South Wales. Frankly, it could happen in many jurisdictions across Australia, but we are leading the charge to make New South Wales an energy superpower.

We know the global market is transitioning away from fossil fuels. We are at the forefront to catalyse the industry that will help that transition domestically and ensure that we can continue to be a global export energy superpower through green hydrogen and green ammonia. We can then invest the proceeds into our own production. On green steel production, not only will we send our materials overseas to be produced into final products but also we will have the entire life cycle here within Australia, which will deliver jobs, industries and manufacturing plants to regional areas in particular. We are not only creating our own renewable energy; we are utilising that to create products that can be used in Australia and across the globe. That is also emphasised by our relationship with Germany, as Mr Alex Greenwich would be aware. The demand for those products around the globe is immense and New South Wales is best positioned out of any Australian jurisdiction to meet that global demand. That will happen because of the Government's investment in our hydrogen hubs strategy for Illawarra and the Hunter and in different catalysing opportunities.

Thanks to the actions I have mentioned so far, New South Wales is already on track to meet its target of halving emissions by 2030. An independent peer review confirms we are on track to meet our emissions reductions targets and our goal to move towards net zero by 2050. The other proposition within the bill is that we need to be a climate change leader, but New South Wales is already a climate leader. The Government has a target to reduce New South Wales emissions by 50 per cent compared to 2005 levels by 2030, and to achieve net zero. Those are the same targets proposed in the bill. I ask the member for Lakemba: What happened to him and Labor in 2019

when the Government committed to net zero? When we introduced our policy commitment to net zero, what was Labor doing? I do not want to reflect on what Labor was doing while the Government was getting on with the job.

It has taken the Opposition a couple of years to put a policy together—a policy that mirrors ours in many ways, but is inferior in most ways. In 2019 we made the commitment and in 2021 Labor decided it wanted to legislate for that, but we already have independent, peer-reviewed advice that we are on track to meet it. When Labor says it wants to legislate an outcome that we have been in train to deliver for many years, I say to Opposition members, "Welcome to the party, ladies and gentlemen. Join us. Become advocates and supporters of our strategies and policies to achieve outcomes on climate change." They do not need to fight against us by attempting to disrupt the debate in the House. Just get on board because we are already delivering outcomes on climate change. We want to work together with Labor. The member for Lakemba is an incredibly intelligent, capable, well-meaning individual. If he worked with us we could achieve even better things.

Mr Ryan Park: That is debatable.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: That was an imputation from the member for Keira. We could achieve even better things if Labor came on board and supported our climate leadership position. The foundation of the Government's action on climate change is, of course, the *Net Zero Plan Stage 1: 2020-2030*, which was committed to in 2019—two full years before Labor introduced its bill. That plan includes a suite of policies and strategies that target the whole economy to reduce emissions. The Net Zero Plan and related climate policies in this State are expected to attract up to \$37 billion of private investment, support more than 9,000 jobs and lower household electricity bills by \$130 per year. The member for Oxley spoke about that quite a bit. The Government must do a number of different things. We have to consider how to reduce emissions; how to support the transition of regional jobs and economies; how to catalyse new industries; how to transition sectors like transport, heavy transport and passenger vehicles; and how people in our community will adjust to those impacts, particularly on energy costs.

Members in this place know that global energy shocks are underway that are rippling through our communities. Look at the price of gas, which is impacting the price of heating, electricity and fuel. We must always keep an eye on the affordability of electricity because many people are concerned about their ability to keep the lights on. We must continue to have that focus. We must ensure reliability of electricity across New South Wales. The lights have been turned off in jurisdictions in Australia and across the globe. There have been regular brownouts and blackouts. We cannot have that in New South Wales. The Government is addressing climate change, and it is the only team in this House that is capable of juggling the balls and addressing multiple challenges at once. We are addressing climate change, industry development and the affordability and reliability of our electricity supply. Members opposite are not interested in doing that because all they do is put up legislation that is too late, too weak and too ineffective to create outcomes.

Mr Jihad Dib: Move amendments.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: If the member for Lakemba would like, I could amend the entire bill, but we already have policies in place.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): Members will direct their comments through the Chair.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: Under our current Government policy settings, New South Wales emissions are projected to reduce by between 47 per cent and 52 per cent by 2030. Our record on climate change demonstrates our ambition, and we are speeding ahead with the transition to net zero. In November 2020 we released the *NSW Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap* to deliver a clean, affordable energy system for the State. It will unlock billions of dollars in investment in renewable energy and create thousands of jobs. In March 2021 we announced the Net Zero Industry and Innovation Program, committing \$750 million to supporting our industrial sector to seize the opportunities of the net zero transition and invest in the clean technologies of the future. Recently we expanded the program to \$1.05 billion to 2030 to build the State's clean manufacturing base into new, clean technology, including green hydrogen, cement, ammonia and steel production.

As I flagged earlier, last year we released Australia's most generous electric vehicles package. We are investing more than \$500 million in tax cuts and incentives to drive uptake and reduce barriers for electric vehicle purchases over the next four years. That is above and beyond every other jurisdiction. I point out that we are the only mainland Liberal government in the entire country. The obvious conclusion is that all of those other Labor States' policies on electric vehicles are ineffectual and weak in comparison to those of the New South Wales Liberal Government. If they wanted to have strong, better policies they could look to us as an example and replicate our policies.

Ms Tamara Smith: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The member is filibustering so The Greens cannot contribute to debate, which is disappointing.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The member may continue but must remain extremely relevant to the debate.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: I would have thought that The Greens would be really supportive of electric vehicles as one way of addressing climate change. I apologise to the member for Ballina if she does not believe that is relevant to the discussion on climate change. We obviously believe that it is. Look at our electric vehicle policy and the package that we have put in place. I make the comment because, in juxtaposition, the Labor Party seeks to take advantage of the community's perceptions about its ability to address climate change. To understand that juxtaposition, one must look at the track record of the Labor brand, Labor values and the Labor ethos. The blood that runs in NSW Labor's veins is the same blood that runs in the veins of members of all Labor jurisdictions across the country.

I apologise to the member for Albury, who is far too close to Victoria, which is governed by Labor. Compare and contrast the Victorian Labor Party's approach to electric vehicle policy, funding and strategy. The New South Wales Government's approach to electric vehicles is superior. That is the simple juxtaposition for those opposite, who could not glean the point that I was making and its relevance to climate change action. The Government is also ensuring that New South Wales seizes the opportunity that is presented to it by our trading partners' commitments to slashing their emissions. Last year we announced the *NSW Hydrogen Strategy*, which will provide up to \$3 billion of incentives to support industry development and drive decarbonisation in the hard-to-abate transport, industrial and energy sectors. I point out some of the largest users of electricity and energy across our State—industrial users, including manufacturing plants and aluminium smelters—have provided most support for that policy.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order. My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. I speak on behalf of many members in this place when I say that this is an important issue in many of our communities, including mine in the Illawarra, which is transitioning from coal to other industries. All of those members would have liked to participate in this debate. I am very disappointed that the member is deliberately filibustering so that that does not happen.

Dr Joe McGirr: Madam Temporary Speaker—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): Does the member for Wagga Wagga wish to take an additional point of order?

Ms FELICITY WILSON: May I respond to the point of order, Madam Temporary Speaker?

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): That is my decision to make. The member for Wagga Wagga has the call.

Dr Joe McGirr: To the point of order: The implications of climate change on communities that will be impacted need to be considered. That includes not just the communities that have resources taken from them but also the widespread rollout of this infrastructure through regional New South Wales. Unfortunately, because of the filibustering, we do not have a debate and an opportunity to do that today.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The member for North Shore will continue. She will remain relevant to the debate.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: Thank you, Madam Temporary Speaker. I really appreciate that. I acknowledge the comments by the member for Wagga Wagga. I wish to discuss renewable energy zones, which have a focus on regional New South Wales. The member makes a very strong point about the way in which communities can be affected by some of the initiatives and actions taken to address climate change, particularly through renewable energy. I note the point that the member for Keira made about the Illawarra and point out that not only has this Government introduced the hydrogen hub in the Illawarra; it also has a renewable energy zone there.

The renewable energy zones across New South Wales are part of our program to address climate change and the need for more reliable and affordable electricity. There is an oversubscription from private investment in every renewable energy zone that operates in the market. That is the private sector's vote of confidence in this Government's approach in not only addressing climate change but also catalysing industrial opportunities to address climate change in our regional economies, which will thrive because of this Government's policies. For instance, the Illawarra Renewable Energy Zone has been oversubscribed. People in the electorate represented by the member for Keira will have significant opportunities to access new employment and new industrial processes.

Mr Jihad Dib: Point of order: A number of my colleagues have spoken about the issue of taking up time. This has been a deliberate strategy by the Government to filibuster and use the entire time so nobody else gets an opportunity to speak.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: To the point of order: The member's point of order relates to Standing Order 129. Madam Temporary Speaker, you have ruled on that—

Mr Jihad Dib: Madam Temporary Speaker, I am still speaking.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: —and I ask you to ask the member for Lakemba to stop taking points of order under that standing order.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The member for North Shore will resume her seat. Only one member will speak at a time. The member for Lakemba has the call.

Mr Jihad Dib: As I was saying, Madam Temporary Speaker, it has been a deliberate and terrible ploy as well as a very cynical attempt by the Government to stop other members—crossbench and Opposition members—from speaking about something that is so incredibly important.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: Debate on this bill will resume—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The member for North Shore will resume her seat.

Mr Jihad Dib: I can't believe the member for North Shore is playing politics on a matter like this.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): There is no point of order. One minute remains for the member for North Shore to conclude her remarks.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: I am very disappointed by members opposite who, as I understand parliamentary procedure, would realise that this bill can return for debate at another time. There are other opportunities in the parliamentary processes for them to discuss matters. The Government is proud of its action on climate change. I will not resile from using the opportunity to speak to it. The next time an Opposition member is leading for the Opposition on a bill and speaking for an extended period, I wonder if Government members should tell them that it is a deliberate filibuster. No, Madam Temporary Speaker. I have not even concluded referring to my notes on the Government's agenda to address climate change. All this Government is doing is delivering for the people of New South Wales and all Opposition members are doing is talking after the fact. They talk a good talk, but they deliver no outcomes on climate change. The community knows this Government is leading on climate change. The private sector knows that this Government is leading on climate change. The entire country knows that this Government is leading on climate change.

Debate interrupted.

Committees

COMMITTEE ON THE HEALTH CARE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION

Membership

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council regarding the membership of the committee. The Hon. Scott Farlow has been appointed a member of the Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of the Hon. Catherine Cusack.

COMMITTEE ON THE OMBUDSMAN, THE LAW ENFORCEMENT CONDUCT COMMISSION AND THE CRIME COMMISSION

Membership

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council regarding the membership of the committee. The Hon. Scott Farlow has been appointed a member of the Committee on the Ombudsman, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission and the Crime Commission to fill the vacancy created by the resignation of the Hon. Catherine Cusack.

Motions

DINE & DISCOVER NSW AND PARENTS NSW VOUCHERS

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (12:34): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges the Government's Dine and Discover, and Family Vouchers programs in helping families with rising cost of living pressures.
- (2) Notes the people of New South Wales embraced the nation-leading digital delivery of the vouchers over the Easter and Anzac long weekends.

- (3) Encourages individuals and families to use their vouchers to support local businesses and accommodation providers before expiry.

I will first discuss the Dine & Discover NSW program. All New South Wales residents over the age of 18 were entitled to three Dine NSW vouchers, each valued at \$25, to be used for dining at restaurants, cafes, bars, wineries, pubs and clubs and for takeaway meals. They were also entitled to three Discover NSW vouchers, each valued at \$25, to be used for entertainment and recreation, including at cultural institutions, and live music and arts venues. The vouchers could be used seven days a week, including on public holidays, and were valid until 30 June 2022. The figures for this incredibly successful Government initiative are: 5,516,356 New South Wales residents registered for access to vouchers; 23,641,786 vouchers were redeemed comprising 13,671,365 Dine NSW vouchers and 9,970,419 Discover NSW vouchers with an average spend of \$41.30; the total customer spend in the New South Wales economy was \$976 million, with \$587 million in redeemed vouchers; and there was a 97.6 per cent rate of customer satisfaction. There were 16,750 approved business registrations with a rate business application satisfaction of 97.2 per cent. The revenue boosted not only the State's economy but also local community economies.

Similarly, the family voucher programs were very successful. The Parents NSW vouchers will be accepted by Discover NSW registered businesses until 9 October 2022. Each eligible household can apply for five vouchers, each valued at \$50, and making a total of \$250. Parents NSW vouchers can be used for entertainment, recreation and accommodation bookings until 9 October 2022. I remind residents of my Camden electorate and in electorates right across New South Wales that those vouchers will expire on 9 October 2022. As at 22 July 2022, there were 604,916 household registrations and 1,492,925 vouchers redeemed, with the total value of vouchers redeemed amounting to \$73,857,152. The total consumer spend was \$148,894,579 with an average spend of \$99.73. The customer satisfaction rate was very high at 97.7 per cent.

I turn now to the First Lap learn-to-swim vouchers. Parents, guardians and carers of children aged between three and six years old who are not enrolled in school are able to apply for a \$100 voucher towards the cost of swimming lessons for the children. That is a critical program because Australia is a country with a vast coastline, and it is very important that our children learn to swim. The \$44 million program was announced by the New South Wales Government as part of the 2021-22 New South Wales budget. The First Lap learn-to-swim vouchers program went live on 1 December 2021. The program offers two vouchers each valued at \$100 for use specifically in obtaining swimming lessons for children aged between three years and six years who are not enrolled at school. As of 1 July 2022, the First Lap learn-to-swim voucher eligibility criteria reverted to children aged between three and six years who are not enrolled in school. Previously, the program was made available to children in kindergarten in 2021 or those who were starting kindergarten in 2022 as swimming pools were not open during the height of the COVID pandemic.

I speak from personal experience because my young daughters have had the benefit of this program, as have many children throughout the Camden community. A new \$100 voucher can be claimed from 1 July 2022 by eligible children to contribute towards the cost of swimming lessons. As of 22 July 2022 there were 161,108 vouchers redeemed, valued at \$16,080,556. There were 212,080 customer registrations and 488 approved providers. Customer satisfaction was 98 per cent.

The Active Kids program provides two \$100 vouchers for parents, guardians and carers of school-enrolled children to use towards sport and active recreation costs each year. Despite COVID and the recent floods, those vouchers are still used amongst my community. It is helpful for kids to be active and remain healthy. As of 22 July 2022 there were 4,257,317 vouchers redeemed with a 99.8 per cent satisfaction rate. Customer satisfaction has not been that high for any other service delivery, from this Government or otherwise. I will move on to the Creative Kids voucher. Parents, guardians and carers can apply for a voucher of up to \$100 per calendar year for each student aged 4½ to 18 years old enrolled in schools. I could speak for a long time about those successful programs, but my time is running out. I acknowledge the customer satisfaction and the delivery of the vouchers through the Service NSW app as being a huge success.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (12:41): I welcome the member for Camden moving the motion and I place on record the Labor Opposition's support for the Dine & Discover program. I give credit to the Minister for the work that he and his department have done in rolling out the vouchers within the Service NSW app. Similar schemes have been rolled out in jurisdictions around the world to stimulate the economy and support households under financial strain during the pandemic. Households right across this State have been under pressure over the past two years and with the rising costs of living from interest rates, taxes or tolls, households continue to experience that today.

The rising cost of living combined with the impacts of the pandemic have substantially impacted local businesses, particularly in hospitality and tourism. The investment in the program was supposed to help revitalise local economies, but it is disappointing to see that millions upon millions of dollars failed to reach local businesses,

particularly in regional and rural economies. Figures provided in response to a question on notice in the weeks prior to the vouchers expiring showed that only 58 per cent of the vouchers had been spent statewide. Those figures show a clear city-country divide, with the 60 lowest take-up figures being in rural councils. The Central Darling local government area [LGA] had the highest percentage—72 per cent—of vouchers unredeemed. The Queanbeyan-Palerang regional LGA had 59 per cent of its vouchers unspent, worth \$2.7 million. On 24 June the Opposition leader called on the Government to extend the expiry deadline for the vouchers. When opening registrations for the program the then Treasurer, who is now the Premier, said:

We've heard loud and clear just how tough it has been for businesses across NSW. This program will reinvigorate local economies and provide customers with hip pocket relief.

Therefore, it is disappointing that the Government did not extend the expiry deadline to ensure the money reached local communities, as the Premier said, to reinvigorate local economies and provide customers with hip-pocket relief. We know there was significant underspend in this program with a further question on notice from the Opposition exposing that \$236 million of the \$586 million in claimed vouchers went unspent. That is \$236 million in financial support that failed to reach businesses across New South Wales. Those figures only confirmed the city-country divide.

In my own electorate in the Lake Macquarie LGA \$1.7 million in Dine NSW vouchers and \$4.4 million in Discover NSW vouchers was unspent. Combined, that is \$6 million of financial support that my community missed out on. Six million dollars would go a long way towards supporting local families who are feeling the pinch, with 51 per cent of households in the Hunter and Lake Macquarie living in housing stress.

Something similar happened on the Central Coast. A whopping \$3 million in Dine NSW vouchers and \$7 million in Discover NSW vouchers went unspent. That community is also missing out on \$10 million in financial support. Elsewhere in the Hunter, other regional LGAs missed out: Maitland, over \$700,000 in Dine NSW and \$2.4 million in Discover NSW vouchers; Cessnock, \$562,000 in Dine NSW and \$1.3 million in Discover NSW vouchers; and Upper Hunter, over \$159,000 in Dine NSW and \$370,000 in Discover NSW vouchers. It goes on and on.

The Hunter is not the only place where that money failed to reach regional communities; it happened right around the State. Wagga Wagga missed out on over \$2 million in support, including \$614,000 in Dine NSW and \$1.4 million in Discover NSW vouchers. Tamworth missed out on \$567,000 in Dine NSW and \$1.4 million in Discover NSW vouchers. What about the Deputy Premier's community? He likes to come into this place and wax lyrical about how much money The Nationals are securing for the bush. Surely he would have ensured that his community of Bathurst did not miss out, but over \$1.2 million in support for local businesses and their households was unspent. As the member noted in his motion, that money was supposed to help families with rising cost-of-living pressures.

The Government often lauds itself for offering cost-of-living relief, but those figures show that financial relief has not reached households right across this State. Labor supported the Dine & Discover program to help revitalise local communities and to provide crucial cost-of-living relief for families across the State. But the reality is that the Government has failed to ensure that this funding reached our communities. When presented with evidence that hundreds of millions of dollars in support would never reach those who needed it most, it chose not to act.

For the benefit of the member for Camden, who moved the motion, almost \$3 million went unspent in his electorate—\$912,000 in Dine NSW and \$1.8 million in Discover NSW. That is not a great outcome for any of our communities. Whilst the Labor Opposition really did throw its weight behind the Dine & Discover voucher program and thought it was a good idea to assist families and businesses across the State, it stares in the face of the intention when those funds are not provided broadly across the State, even when there is the opportunity to do so. But I thank the member for bringing the motion before the House so that there is the opportunity to debate the efficiency and the effectiveness of the scheme.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (12:48): I will start by thanking the member for Camden for bringing the motion before the House. The Dine & Discover program was exciting to deliver to our electorates, particularly my electorate, which covers the Liverpool area and was one of the hardest and longest hit during the COVID lockdowns. It was important to have a program that was able to invest back into our economies and show people who had not left their homes for so long that it was safe to go back out again to a cafe, the shops, the zoo and out into society. It was so important for morale. It is disappointing to hear that some money was not spent and some vouchers were not utilised. They were quite easy to get. Service NSW would print them out for people if they need be. Service NSW is not easy to get to for everybody, so they were also available online. They were also easy to use. People could hand over their printed copy if they did not have the app. They were very beneficial.

Mr Adam Crouch: Did you use yours on the coast?

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS: I did. I used them to invest in a regional economy at The Entrance. It was brilliant. We talk about helping cost-of-living pressures. It meant that I was able to say to my kids, "Yes, you can go to the amusement park. Yes, you can go on those dodgem cars and have fun." Without those \$25 vouchers, it might have been that we would have said, "You know what, kids, we won't go back on that." But I was able to say, "Yes, we will." That money was invested back into a regional economy. That is important.

Some \$2 million was invested in my electorate of Holsworthy through the vouchers. Holsworthy does not have many shops and cafes. Our main economy is in the Liverpool CBD or in the Sutherland shire. Holsworthy is more of a residential community, yet \$2 million was invested in its economy. That is a brilliant outcome. Businesses told us how great and easy it was to log in and utilise the program so that they were able to have the money come to them when they needed it most. They said how quickly the money went into their bank accounts—in just moments. The longest it took someone to get the money into their business account was a couple of days. They were able to pay their staff straightaway when times were tough, which obviously helped them out as well.

Minister Dominello and I met with Linda at the Sahara Cafe & Grill at Casula. She runs one of the first businesses to sign up. She said that maybe it was her regulars coming in, but they were trying something different. They were trying a dip that they may not have tried, they were trying something a bit more adventurous and loving it, then coming back and having that again. The vouchers worked very well for them. She was able to tap, and the money went straight into the account. On his first visit after becoming Premier, Premier Perrottet also came to see Linda at Sahara Cafe & Grill. She gave us some amazing Turkish food. I have been back and used one of my vouchers there as well. She is brilliant. The average spend for a \$25 voucher was \$41, which is a great investment into our local economies. It is just huge.

Above and beyond that we had the Discover vouchers. If people did not use them, I know that Symbio Wildlife Park was thrilled to take them. It gave those vouchers back to kids in out-of-home care or to disadvantaged kids who wanted a day out. It has reinvested those vouchers to support families and children who do not have the ability to have a day out at the zoo. It is really important, great for Symbio and great for the kids as well. I thank everyone who donated their vouchers to groups like Symbio to help them out. The vouchers did so much to give people a boost and help them out of COVID and to feel confident again. They made a great difference. I was pleased to see those extra vouchers delivered to encourage people to spend even more.

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (12:52): I am pleased to announce a delivery: I am the proud grandfather of a newly born grandson. That is more than I can say for the New South Wales Government, which has produced another failed delivery. As an obstetrician who for over 40 years has helped women deliver, I know how important that commitment to deliver is. I know what a failure of trust it is not to deliver on a promise, which is what this failure of a government has done again and again. More recently, this desperate Government has withdrawn its \$50 million thought bubble—

Mr Justin Clancy: Thought bubble?

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND: Yes, thought bubble—the "Friyay" long lunch plan to provide 125,000 lunches in the Sydney CBD. It is a conception that should not have even been contemplated. It is an insult to the people of regional, rural and remote New South Wales who are struggling under this Government. They have no relief from the pressures of the rising cost of living.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): Government members will remain silent.

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND: If this Government was promising hip-pocket relief from cost-of-living pressures, it has only delivered half a relief. Look at the recent consequences of failed planning by this prodigal Government. My respected colleague the member for Swansea, the shadow Minister for Customer Service, has shown through her initiative that just 58 per cent of Dine & Discover vouchers were spent statewide until the end of June this year. When I went to university, that was a pass, but you needed 65 per cent to get a credit. On this result the Government barely passes and certainly does not get any credit.

NSW Labor welcomed this investment, as mentioned before. We encouraged people to get out and use the vouchers and to support local businesses, but they have failed to reach regional, rural and remote communities. It is another metropolitan solution that does not apply to people outside Sydney, just as the local punter in Moruya was not going to benefit from a long lunch in the Sydney CBD. If we look at the Far West, as mentioned, we find that the Central Darling topped the State—or bottomed the State—with 72 per cent of Dine & Discover vouchers unspent. Despite the Queanbeyan-Palerang local government area in the Monaro electorate being within sight of our national capital building, 59 per cent of vouchers went unspent. That is \$2.7 million. Some people will remember the classic Aussie power ballad of 1982 *What About Me*. The lyric "you just take more than you give" could define this Government.

But what about my electorate? In Bega 48 per cent of vouchers, a total of \$3.75 million, were not redeemed—only just a pass mark. Whose fault was that? Is it like the former Deputy Premier, and former Leader of The Nationals, who claims to be the victim? It is certainly not the fault of the people of New South Wales, who have failed to benefit from unfulfilled promises from the Government. The member for Camden has claimed that the people of New South Wales embraced the nation-leading digital delivery of vouchers. What is half an embrace, one-third of an embrace or one-quarter of an embrace? Nothing very satisfying.

The people of my electorate represent one of the oldest demographics in Australia. They live in a rural and tourist region. They and the local businesses should have expected to receive more than just half what the Government promised. Why did they not benefit? Because of the in-built barriers to accessing the benefits. Time and again my constituents complained to me of their difficulties accessing information or benefits to which they were entitled. Half the so-called benefits were not redeemed because the Government failed to live up to the hype and failed to deliver.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (12:56): Wow! The previous contribution shows the energy coming from Bega—he is Mr Low Energy indeed. Dine & Discover was one of the greatest reforms this Government has put through. Since 2019 my electorate has been through drought, with farmers and local businesses doing it tough. Then we had bushfires. We did not have bushfires for a week or a few days; we had them from November until January, until it rained. The fires in Wollondilly filled the air with smoke for months. It affected local businesses because it stopped people from the city and other areas travelling to our beautiful region to visit tourist locations and support local businesses. They did it tough. Then we had the floods and then we had the pandemic.

The Dine & Discover vouchers did so much to help our local businesses. As any member who represents a regional area knows, the town keeps the businesses going but the tourists put the cream on top. I used all my Dine & Discover vouchers. The proof is in my Service NSW app; it was very simple. More than 5.5 million adults—nine out of 10 eligible adults—registered for the program. Some 5,516,356 New South Wales residents accessed vouchers and 33,086,261 Dine & Discover vouchers were issued. In my region they helped businesses.

I know the member for Swansea does anything she can to insult the Government, but this was our idea. And it was not just Dine & Discover. Our Active Kids vouchers and Creative Kids vouchers are helping local businesses get through this tough time. The pandemic knocked our businesses for six. Going back to the fires, I remember we had only about two clear days in December, and one of them was my wife's fortieth. Thank God the skies cleared up. It was horrible in my electorate when every day was filled with smoke. Then we had the floods, and then the pandemic. I say to many people in my electorate that the past three years have been like a scene out of Charlton Heston's *The Ten Commandments*—the seven plagues of Egypt have hit our region. Yes, we did have mice and locusts from western Sydney stealing our toilet paper, rice and pasta in Bowral, but we got through it.

In New South Wales 13,671,365 Dine vouchers and 9,970,421 Discover vouchers were redeemed—a 71 per cent redemption rate overall. Some 95.2 per cent of users redeemed at least one voucher, 67.3 per cent redeemed at least four and 38.9 per cent redeemed all six. You can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make it drink. Two additional vouchers were automatically available to customers from early December 2021. The program finished on 30 June 2022 and during the last week of the program over a million vouchers were redeemed.

The whole point of this program was to incentivise spending to boost the economy and that is exactly what it did. On a couple of occasions I took my two girls to Highland Entertainment Centre in my electorate. We played tenpin bowling and putt putt golf. I call out Empire Centre, which is a beautiful cinema in Bong Bong Street, the main street of Bowral. We used the Dine & Discover vouchers to watch many movies there such as *Sing 2* and *Bohemian Rhapsody*. The vouchers have helped deliver many great things to our small businesses. I think we should be supporting that, not mocking it. I encourage everyone to support the motion of the member for Camden and I congratulate him on moving it.

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (13:00): As my colleagues have duly noted, credit must be given to the Minister for the work he, his fantastic staff and department have done in rolling out vouchers within the Service NSW app. Similar schemes have been instituted in jurisdictions around the world to stimulate economies and to support households that are suffering financial strain. As the member for Swansea pointed out, households across this State have been under extraordinary pressure over the past few years through fire, flood, COVID and with the rising cost of living with interest rates, tolls or taxes. There have been substantial impacts on local businesses, particularly in the hospitality and tourism sector. My electorate relies on those sectors and it has suffered significantly. The investment in this program was supposed to help revitalise local economies. It is alarming to see that millions of dollars failed to reach local businesses, particularly regional and rural businesses. As the member for Bega pointed out, it was half a relief.

The member for Swansea, the shadow Minister for Customer Service and shadow Minister for Digital; and the shadow Minister for Regional NSW and the shadow Minister for Western NSW, alongside the Opposition leader, called for those vouchers to be extended at the end of June. The figures in the Blue Mountains electorate show a significant underspend. We had near \$3.5 million of unredeemed vouchers and near 50 per cent of unclaimed Dine & Discover vouchers. It is interesting to hear Government members speak about figures in a positive way and I understand why they would do that. For instance, in the Liverpool LGA there was a \$1.9 million underspend in Dine vouchers and \$4.3 million unspent in Discovery vouchers. In the Wollondilly LGA, there was \$513,000 unspent in Dine vouchers and over \$1 million unspent in Discovery vouchers. The figures speak for themselves.

As has been pointed out, we all supported the concept. We welcomed this investment to revitalise our local economies. All members encouraged people to use the vouchers, to support their local businesses, to help those who were hurting. People in my electorate often said to me, "It's a good idea, but so many of our businesses were deemed ineligible." Further, many people in my community had to travel off the mountains to visit businesses to use the vouchers. That was reported to me again and again. I received an email saying, "We operate the Ben Roberts Cafe at Lawson, Trish, as you know, where some of our disability programs operate. I've attempted to register the Ben Roberts Cafe in this Dine & Discover voucher scheme but we are not eligible because we are recorded as Meals On Wheels. We were sent to Service NSW and then back to the ATO, who then referred to Service NSW. People have problems and we need your assistance."

The Glenbrook Cinema owners said to me, "It is an excellent initiative for our customers and for our little cinema, but people cannot redeem these vouchers online through our ticketing software. Large commercial cinemas like Hoyts have big pockets, but small businesses like Glenbrook Cinema do not." We hear this Government commending itself again and again for offering cost-of-living relief, but those figures are clear evidence that it has not worked.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (13:04): By leave: I appreciate being granted leave to speak on the motion moved by the member for Camden. I acknowledge this excellent motion and highlight some of the fantastic businesses that have benefitted on the Central Coast. First, I highlight how much money was redeemed in our community. It was staggering. Almost \$27 million worth of Dine & Discover vouchers were redeemed on the Central Coast, which has been a fantastic boost to the local economy in our region from one end to the other. It was great to meet many local businesses who embraced the Dine & Discover option. I say to the member for Blue Mountains and the owners of the Glenbrook Cinema, they might want to chat to Beth and Norman, who own the Avoca cinema. Somehow they were able to sort out the vouchers very quickly and easily and that cinema is run by just two people. Beth and Norman did a great job of putting packages together for locals and tourists to use the Dine & Discover vouchers at the Avoca cinema.

The list goes on: South End Social, the Event cinema at Tuggerah, FOREplay golf at Erina, Central Coast Virtual Reality at The Entrance, Hotel Gosford, the Hub of Mangrove Mountain—I give a big shout out to Shauna and her team up there who do a fantastic job. They have redeemed huge amounts of money through the Dine & Discover vouchers from not just locals but also visitors. They include The Arc in Terrigal, Bateau Bay Ten Pin Bowl, the Point Cafe at Avoca, Munchas Cafe at Shelly Beach, The Entrance pub at The Entrance, of course. The list goes on. All of those businesses embraced the Dine & Discover option. All found it very easy to become a Dine & Discover redeeming location and they have reaped the benefit. I congratulate all Central Coast locals who jumped on board and embraced this program, which enabled extra benefits to the tune of almost \$27 million to come to our region. That does not include the more than \$46 million of regional seniors travel cards that get distributed on the Central Coast. This Government is providing that support.

I could talk about the millions of dollars' worth of Active Kids and Creative Kids rebates and First Lap swim vouchers, all of which this Government has introduced. There was no support from members opposite because they criticised everything that we put in the budget to deliver those programs to many people across the Central Coast. It is interesting that we talk about promoting this program because I had great pleasure in jumping on the Triple M Country program to talk about Dine & Discover. I give a huge shout-out to Pedro. He would plug Dine & Discover vouchers every Monday morning on the Central Coast, as would Paddy and Rob. Funnily enough, I was the only member of Parliament to get on the local radio stations to promote this program, which I found disappointing, especially considering the shadow Minister has a tiny bit of the Central Coast in her electorate.

I also acknowledge Paula Martin from the NSW Business Chamber, who encouraged all of the chamber businesses who were eligible to promote this program, and they did that. One of the major beneficiaries was the Australian Reptile Park. Tim, Liz and Amanda did an amazing job. Again, they put together family packages where the Dine & Discover vouchers could be used collectively to benefit all families, not just those on the Central Coast. That kept the doors of this iconic business open through the toughest times this State has seen. If the

member for Swansea wants to check on how it helped businesses, I would say pop up and see Tim, Liz and Amanda, and have a chat with them about the millions of dollars that were received by that business through the Dine & Discover support they received from this Government. We can talk about the money that was not redeemed by individuals or we can talk about the vouchers that were redeemed by people because it was their choice to do that. It was interesting to hear about the Avoca cinema, which could make the program work to keep its doors open. This program has been a phenomenal success. I congratulate the Minister and Service NSW.

Mr Justin Clancy: I seek leave to make a contribution to debate.

Leave not granted.

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (13:09): In reply: I thank the members representing the electorates of Swansea, Holsworthy, Bega, Wollondilly, Blue Mountains and Terrigal for their contributions. I would have loved to hear a contribution from the member for Albury, but unfortunately that did not happen.

Mr Adam Crouch: He has been gagged.

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES: He has been gagged. That is exactly right.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The member for Camden does not need help from Government members. He is very competent.

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES: Those opposite have missed the point. The point is that the Government made vouchers and programs available to not only stimulate the economy after major events but also help local economies of places like Camden, Terrigal, Blue Mountains and all the local economies throughout members' electorates. It is not about those who chose not to use the programs; it is about what the Government offered. The Government gave people a choice and offered cost-saving vouchers and programs. To me, that is what counts. People in my electorate are telling me that they were fantastic. The lowest rating for the vouchers was 97 per cent. So despite what Opposition members say our communities were very satisfied.

The success of the vouchers is largely due to the success of the Service NSW application, which has had an enormous take-up. Over seven million residents across New South Wales use the app and all of the vouchers were available to them. Further to the voucher programs, the Government has implemented ambitious digital reforms across a range of areas, including the Digital Driver Licence, which has introduced a new way for New South Wales residents to access, carry and use their driver licence. It is accepted as identification by New South Wales police and at most venues. The uptake of the Digital Driver Licence was sitting at 30 per cent before the pandemic; now it is over 70 per cent. Over four million people in New South Wales have downloaded their Digital Driver Licence.

The success of the Digital Driver License has resulted in the digitisation of over a dozen other New South Wales Government licences and credentials that can be kept and used on a mobile device. Licence holders no longer have to carry around a physical card. The Service NSW app is a great example of the Government's success, with growth from 40,000 users in 2017 to over seven million users now. I thank the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, the Hon. Victor Dominello, for his vision to digitise government services not only through the Service NSW app but also through other apps, including SBBIS Inspect NSW, GovConnect NSW and one of the Minister's first initiatives, NSW FuelCheck. The Government is not only delivering cost-saving vouchers but also delivering them digitally. I would be very afraid that the Opposition would not be able to deliver that if it was in government.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

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

Members

MEMBER FOR BLUE MOUNTAINS

MEMBER FOR UPPER HUNTER

The SPEAKER: I wish the member for Blue Mountains and the member for Upper Hunter all the best for their upcoming birthdays. I hope they have wonderful celebrations planned.

*Visitors***VISITORS**

The SPEAKER: I extend a very warm welcome to a number of guests who are in the public gallery watching question time, including Edward Anderson Stokes, son and guest of the member for Pittwater, and Diaan Nasser, guest of the member for Wollondilly. Ms Nasser is also the school captain of Picton High School and an intern in the member's office. We have guests of the member for Newcastle: Ella Buchmann and Fleur Hutchings. Russell Webb is a guest of the member for Tamworth, and he is the mayor of Tamworth. Welcome, Russell. We have a number of guests of the member for North Shore, who are members of the North Shore SEC. I welcome them all, and it was my pleasure to meet them earlier.

We also welcome the Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Nuatali Nelmes, who is a guest of the member for Campbelltown. We have Damon Singh and Sukhman Gill, guests of the member for Coffs Harbour. Welcome to everyone. I also welcome a number of schoolchildren who have joined us in the public gallery. I particularly compliment those school students and education people who are involved in the excellent displays and activities in the Jubilee room in conjunction with the Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology, and the Minister for Education and Early Learning.

*Announcements***LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS**

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that a media representative has been authorised to take still photographs on a pool basis from the side doors of the Chamber during question time.

*Members***REPRESENTATION OF MINISTERS ABSENT DURING QUESTIONS**

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: On behalf of Mr Dominic Perrottet: I inform the House that the Minister for Transport, Minister for Veterans, and Minister for Western Sydney will be absent from question time today. The Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport will answer questions on his behalf. I inform the House that the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery will be absent from question time today. The Deputy Premier will answer questions on her behalf.

*Question Time***NSW BUILDING COMMISSIONER**

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (14:21): My question is directed to the Premier. Previously, the Premier said that the sacking of Minister Petinos had nothing to do with the resignation of former Building Commissioner, David Chandler, who advised in his resignation letter of 7 July that he had concerns about "the advised relationship" between the Minister and Coronation Group. Does the Premier share those same concerns?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:21): We have not even got through the token policy question today, which affects the people of New South Wales, before discussing resignation letters. I note that all week members on this side of the House have been asking questions about the things that matter to people across New South Wales. I thank members for writing such great questions that are focused on the things that matter to the people of New South Wales.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: As I have said, in a discussion with the department secretary I was advised of matters relating to the Minister's office. That was the reason behind the decision I made. As I advised the House yesterday, the secretary of the department, out of an abundance of caution, provided that information to the ICAC. That was the appropriate decision for her to make. That was the decision that she came to and that is all I will say on that matter.

SCHOOL HOURS TRIAL

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (14:22): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on how the Government is working to ensure that our kids are given the best start in life?

The SPEAKER: The member for North Shore has guests in the public gallery. The member will come to order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:23): It is a great policy question focused on the things that matter to the people of New South Wales. While we are focused on policy and improving the lives of

families and—more particularly in this question—young people across our State, we can see where the focus of the New South Wales Labor Party is. We have many school students in the Chamber today, who will probably take an interest in our policy reform relating to flexible school hours. We believe that nine to three should be a thing of the past. It came up at a time in a very different world where the needs of working families are very different to what they were 100 years ago. We want to provide choices to students and parents.

Today the education Minister announced that nine schools will partner with community organisations, local businesses and sporting clubs to offer a high range of quality activities for students to help them with their learning and provide flexibility for families. Schools involved include Cawdor Public School in Camden, Hanwood Public School in Griffith, Hastings Secondary College at the Westport and Port Macquarie campuses in the electorate of Port Macquarie, Kings Langley Public School in the electorate of Seven Hills, Kentlyn Public School in the electorate of Campbelltown, Matraville Soldier's Settlement Public School in Maroubra, Orange High School in the electorate of Orange, and Ruse Public School in the electorate of Campbelltown. There you go: The member for Campbelltown has two schools involved in the trial, as does the electorate of Orange, with Spring Hill Public School.

The trial will mean a better education setting. We know this will not suit everybody, but it does provide choice and opportunity for students, parents and teachers who want to be involved in the trial. We believe it will deliver better outcomes for our students. In addition, today we announced that we want to introduce new, higher-paid roles for outstanding teachers. It is a better system for rewarding and retaining excellent teachers. We know Labor and the NSW Teachers Federation are against performance pay for teachers, but we believe the best teachers should be paid more, just like in any profession. The Teachers Federation needs to get out of the dark old days and come into the twenty-first century. When people do their job well, they should be paid well. That is exactly what we are doing. [*Extension of time*]

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I thank the education Minister who, alongside the Department of Education, will provide a policy paper on the issue with initial recommendations later this year. That is great news for great teachers across our State. Other measures we have taken in education include \$120 million to improve access to flexible and affordable before and after school care from 7.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m., which once again provides greater support to parents who are balancing work and family life.

Mr Mark Coure: James says thank you.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Excellent. They all love it.

The SPEAKER: The member for Oatley will remain silent.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We are also giving a \$500 voucher per child to help boost the budgets of parents. I know that members of the Labor Party are all downloading those vouchers on the Service NSW app. They complain about them, but they still download them. That is in addition to a school building program the likes of which this State has never seen, with 188 new and upgraded schools—

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: —and an additional 160 new schools over the next four years. We have delivered 3,000 classrooms since coming to office in 2011. Those classrooms are everywhere. Labor electorates have never been better off than under the Liberal-Nationals Government.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We know that, because of Labor's poor economic performance, it had a secret plan to cut \$1 billion from schools across our State. Those opposite wanted to close 100 schools across New South Wales. They wanted to axe 7½ thousand teachers and slash programs for disadvantaged students, whereas members on this side of the House have built more schools than any other State has done in the history of our country.

MEMBER FOR MIRANDA

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (14:28): My question is directed to the Premier. He described the conversation he had with Secretary Emma Hogan on 31 July as one where he spoke about "a range of issues" to do with the conduct of the former Minister for Fair Trading. Was one of those issues concerns about the relationship between Minister Petinos, Coronation Group or Mr Barilaro?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:28): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. I say again that I had a discussion with the Secretary of the Department of Customer Service. The principal purpose of that discussion related to staff matters. The matters raised that relate to the question asked by the Leader of the Opposition were peripheral. It was not relevant at all to the decision that I made.

NSW POLICE FORCE

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (14:29): 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 Government is supporting police to protect our communities?

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (14:29): I thank the member for Tweed for his question. He is a member who works incredibly hard in his electorate and very closely with his local police. It was only last week that we visited the Tweed Heads Police Station in his electorate. It was an opportunity to have breakfast with the men and women in blue, talk to them and be reassured that they are working incredibly hard to keep their community safe. The people who make up our NSW Police Force are our greatest assets.

Over the winter recess I had the pleasure of visiting a number of police stations around the State. I continue to be blown away by the dedication and commitment of officers to their local communities. I met some incredible people, including officers like Sergeant Jack Keogh from Byron, who notches up 50 years this year; Chief Inspector Bob Fitzgerald from Blacktown, who was assaulted only last week but was busting to get back to work the next day; or Chief Inspector Peter Scheinflug, who is retiring after 38 years of service. I stopped at stations including Bulahdelah, Queanbeyan, Grafton, Coffs Harbour, Windsor, Byron Bay and many more.

Everywhere I went, I met new officers on the beat. They are there thanks to this Government's commitment to provide an additional 1,500 police officers in this term of government. The Liberals and Nationals are proud to invest over half a billion dollars to deliver the largest increase in police numbers in more than 30 years. It will take our NSW Police Force to more than 18,000 members next year. I can update the House that we are well on track to hit that target. Last month the commissioner and I announced the rollout of the final 550 new positions. This will mean more proactive policing, more foot patrols, more visibility of police in high-risk areas, more support for victims and more support for our police to investigate crime. This is about providing our police with the support and resources they need to stay ahead of the game and disrupt crime before it occurs. We are upgrading stations as well. In my travels around the State I have visited the electorate of Monaro with the very hardworking member there. We inspected the \$10 million purpose-built Jindabyne Police Station. [*Extension of time*]

The station will support our police and provide accommodation for the Snowys. I am pleased to say that construction is on track and the new station will be completed in 12 months' time. While bricks and mortar are important, it is also important to ensure we have the right units there to support our police. I am pleased to announce that we have our specialist units such as the Raptor squad, which will be targeting organised crime. We have more officers to deal with counterterrorism and special tactics, and more police to target and investigate high-risk domestic violence offenders. We know that criminal networks and the technologies they use are continually evolving. That is why the Liberal-Nationals Government continues to invest in new technology to support our police, whether it is armoured vehicles, IT, forensics or biometrics.

It is great to see the next generation of police officers coming out of the academy each year. I was with the Minister for the last attestation. It was great to see over 200 new students entering the Police Force. I was really pleased to see a number of students who I taught when I was a schoolteacher. I will be there next week to see class 354. We wish them the very best as they go on their journey. The Liberal-Nationals Government supports our police by giving them more resources and investment. Labor ignored them. Labor did not back them; this Government has, and we will continue to back our police each and every day. On behalf of the House, I thank the police for what they have done.

The SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Coogee, I acknowledge the students from Northern Beaches Secondary College Manly Campus, who have joined us in the public gallery. They were inadvertently left out during the earlier acknowledgements. It was not the fault of the member for Manly; the attendants accidentally left them off the list.

NSW BUILDING COMMISSIONER

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (14:35): I direct my question to the Premier. When did the Premier's office or department first receive a copy of Mr Chandler's resignation letter?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:35): I will take the question on notice. I can say that I received the letter yesterday and I have read that letter. I am advised that on Tuesday evening the letter was sent to ICAC for its information. Members on this side of the House are asking questions every day about the things that matter to the people of our State. The Hon. Rose Jackson in the upper House has said, "There is no room in our political bandwidth for the issues that are really affecting our State right now." Labor members should speak for themselves because members on this side of the House are focused on the issues that impact people's lives day in, day out. We are entering a high inflationary environment, interest rates are rising and it is an economically challenging time for people right across our State.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will resume his seat. The Clerk will stop the clock. Before I hear the point of order, I ask members to behave in a more circumspect manner, particularly the member for Maroubra, the member for Wollongong and the member for Ku-ring-gai.

Mr Ron Hoenig: I take a point of order under Standing Order 129. The Premier was asked a specific question. He said he would take it on notice. He cannot go off on a tangent. He is certainly not being directly relevant.

The SPEAKER: The Premier has indicated that he will answer the question but that he does not have the information at the moment. I am happy for him to continue in the current vein.

Mr Ron Hoenig: How is that directly relevant?

The SPEAKER: It is directly relevant because the Premier has directly addressed and answered the question.

Mr Ron Hoenig: That does not give him licence to talk about irrelevancies.

The SPEAKER: I will not entertain further commentary. The Premier has the call.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: When I did or did not read the letter is irrelevant. What is relevant is that appropriate action had been taken, and I am advised that appropriate action has been taken.

STATE ECONOMY

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (14:38): I address my question to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Liberals and Nationals are the best economic managers for New South Wales?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (14:38): I sure can. I acknowledge the outstanding member for Holsworthy—one of the most outstanding and hardworking members in this Parliament. She knows that only a Coalition Government can manage the State's finances responsibly to grow a stronger, more prosperous economy for everyone. That stands in stark contrast to the Leader of the Opposition, who cannot even manage his own financial disclosures properly. That is right. He pretends to be Mr Integrity but he was actually Mr Forgetful when it came to disclosing illegal Chinese Communist donations.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order: I take a point of order under Standing Order 130 and Standing Order 73. Under Standing Order 130, the Treasurer is debating a relatively open-ended question, upon which I did not take a point of order. Under Standing Order 73, if the Treasurer wishes to have a go at the Leader of the Opposition and cast reflections or suggest impropriety, then we are happy to debate that issue by way of substantive motion. The Treasurer cannot do so in answer to a question.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order under Standing Order 130. As to Standing Order 73, I warn the Treasurer to be very careful, although he has not yet transgressed the standing order.

Mr MATT KEAN: I am proud to talk about the Coalition Government's strong economic management. I will tell members what that looks like: It looks like New South Wales leading the nation on consumer sentiment at the moment. It looks like the State of New South Wales having one of the lowest inflation rates in the country at the moment. I will tell members what strong economic management looks like: It looks like New South Wales having the lowest unemployment rate since records began in this State. That is what strong financial management looks like, that is what strong economic management looks like and that is what a Coalition Government looks like.

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

Mr MATT KEAN: I did digress before, but I want to mention the financial disclosures of the Leader of the Opposition, the midnight prowler, the disclosure shirker—

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

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

Mr Greg Warren: It is under Standing Order 73. The Treasurer has an improper motive.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member for Campbelltown will resume his seat. The Treasurer may continue.

Mr MATT KEAN: The strong economic management in this State and the strong economic conditions that we are seeing did not happen by accident; they happened because there is a strong Coalition Government at the helm. The Coalition Government has managed the State's finances responsibly to ensure that we can invest in keeping businesses in business and workers in work during the worst economic and health shocks we have seen since the Great Depression.

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

Mr MATT KEAN: We have continued to invest to grow our economy in the future. [*Extension of time*]

Just as we stood by the community during the floods, the drought, the bushfires and the pandemic, so will we stand by the community no matter what the future throws at this State through our strong economic management and our strong financial management. Take, for example, the investments we are making in the health system in this year's budget. We want to ensure that we have the most resilient health system in the country so that we can withstand whatever shock the future may throw at us. That is why we are investing in a health army, that is why we are building 30 new ambulance stations and that is why we are building or upgrading up to 170 new hospitals around New South Wales, including brand new hospitals in Bathurst and Grafton. I can inform the House that, following recent suspicious activity outside hospitals, state-of-the-art CCTV cameras will now be installed outside emergency departments with specialist empty-suit detection technology to detect policy-free zones and to deter unsavoury midnight prowlers—those Labor workers including Creepy Chris and his mates.

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: Point of order—

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

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: It is under Standing Order 59—tedious repetition.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr MATT KEAN: We have not seen the member for Newcastle move that quickly before, and we all know why: because the mayor of Newcastle is in the gallery and she wants his job. That is right. I acknowledge the mayor of Newcastle, who is in the gallery, and the member for Newcastle knows it. That is the most active we have seen him in three years.

BARWON ELECTORATE HOUSING

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (14:44): My question is directed to the Minister for Planning, and Minister for Homes. Across regional New South Wales communities are struggling with housing supply while at the same time many towns have houses that are boarded up and sitting empty. Minister, what can be done to increase the supply of new homes and get disused housing back into the rental or ownership market?

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Planning, and Minister for Homes) (14:44): I thank the member for his question, which is probably one of the better questions asked today because it is directed to government policy. Like the member for Barwon, I am extremely passionate about providing a safe and secure place to call home for people in all communities, but particularly in the community of the member for Barwon. I am pleased to inform the House that this year's \$2.8 billion housing package in the budget is an unprecedented spend on housing in New South Wales. Around 30 per cent of that amount will go to regional New South Wales. The Aboriginal Housing Office [AHO] is supporting Aboriginal families and communities. It currently owns and manages 726 homes across the Barwon electorate. This financial year we completed 10 new homes in Barwon to help address demand for Aboriginal housing across western New South Wales, including Bourke, Lightning Ridge, Narrabri and Walgett.

The Government is investing significantly in far western New South Wales with approximately \$14 million budgeted for the construction of 25 new homes in the Barwon electorate. That will mean two new homes for Bourke, five for Brewarrina, eight for Broken Hill, two for Cobar and eight for Wilcannia. Additionally, through the New South Wales Government's recent housing package, the AHO was awarded significant funding to deliver housing over the next three years. While detailed planning is ongoing, the AHO has allocated approximately \$29 million to deliver 49 new homes across communities in the Barwon electorate. The new homes will be a mix

of large five-bed family homes and smaller two-bed units to address identified gaps in the AHO portfolio and help New South Wales meet targets associated with Closing the Gap.

I am pleased to inform the House that the communities identified for new homes through the new housing package are Baradine, Bourke, Brewarrina, Broken Hill, Cobar, Condobolin, Coonabarabran, Coonamble, Gilgandra, Goodooga, Lake Cargelligo, Menindee, Narrabri, Nyngan, Ravenswood, Walgett, Warren, Wee Waa, and Wilcannia. As part of the Strong Family, Strong Communities strategy, the Government is delivering approximately \$68 million towards supporting Aboriginal families to become home owners and Aboriginal students completing their tertiary studies. The money also will equip our Aboriginal Community Housing Providers with the training and operational resources they need to grow and to flourish.

To support infrastructure for those growing communities, the Government is investing approximately \$32 million in the Roads to Home Program, delivering roads and other supporting infrastructure to improve services like emergency and community transport, postal delivery, and rubbish collection. The Roads to Home program will benefit towns like Goodooga, Walgett, Wilcannia and Condobolin. Eight AHO homes are vacant at the moment as restoration works are being undertaken on those homes, and there are 23 homes through the Land and Housing Corporation. [*Extension of time*]

On average, the duration of vacancy averages about four to six weeks, depending on the extent of works required. With such a large portfolio, it is expected that some of our homes become vacant every so often, as we redevelop, upgrade, repair or re-let them, but we do not let them stay empty for long. Last year, only 0.2 per cent of properties were vacant for longer than three months. The AHO is working with Aboriginal Community Housing Providers [ACHPs] on community-owned properties that have reached their economic useful life and are vacant or boarded up. The AHO has funded 11 such properties in Far West New South Wales to replace those homes in Brewarrina, Bourke, and Lake Cargelligo. We are currently engaging independent inspectors to assess the condition of ACHP-owned properties in the electorate that were head leased to the AHO as part of the Build and Grow strategy to determine what repairs are needed.

I confirm to the member for Barwon that funding will be provided as part of the head lease exit project currently underway so that all properties are clear of rubbish and have been restored to a clean and safe standard prior to head lease termination. The Government is focused on building a better and brighter future for everyone in New South Wales and we are working to ensure that no part of New South Wales gets left behind. I again commend the member for Barwon for standing up for his constituency by asking questions that are relevant to the people of New South Wales while providing feedback that this Government needs to do its job. Unlike some members opposite, this Government is here to deliver for the people of New South Wales. I commend the member for Barwon for his question and thank him very much.

VARROA MITE

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (14:49): My question is addressed to the Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales. Will the Minister update the House on the current biosecurity response to combat the outbreak of the varroa destructor mite in New South Wales?

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales) (14:49): I thank the member for Coffs Harbour for the question. As he represents Coffs Harbour, he is well aware of some of the impacts that varroa mite can have and has been having. In very simple terms, this is probably the most important question asked in the House all day. It is one of the most important questions that all members need to think about right now. One in three mouthfuls of food that each one of us has every day is thanks to the humble hardworking honey bee.

Mr Anthony Roberts: Unpaid workers.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS: Unpaid workers, yes. Let me recommend the *Bee Movie* if members have not yet seen it. It is a good way to get on top of things. On 24 June this year, we confirmed that New South Wales had in fact had a positive detection of the varroa destructor mite. In simple terms, the varroa mite kills European honey bees and destroys their hives, which impacts all of us in a very meaningful way. In Australia, the value of honey bees providing pollination services to all of our horticultural and ag industries is valued at approximately \$14.2 billion. If varroa mite did establish here, we are talking about an annual loss of \$70 million to all of our honey production across Australia. At the moment, Australia is the only country in the world that is varroa mite free—and we want to keep it that way.

The good news is that we are well prepared in New South Wales. We have been doing everything we can. Our experts have moved extremely quickly to make sure that we deal with this incursion in a meaningful way. We have teams that have been working tirelessly since day one with bee industry bodies, which includes recreational stakeholders as well as commercial beekeepers, to ensure that beekeepers are well informed and

empowered to be part of this critical response. Each and every one of them deserves recognition and thanks. Our focus has always been and remains on the eradication of varroa mite. So far 24,201 hives have been sampled by surveillance teams, by industry and by community members.

Sadly, just over 5,000 hives have had to be euthanised so far. Our intensive tracing means eradication is still possible in New South Wales. I can inform the House that all of the detections are still linked by movement or by location, and that is important. We are continuing that intensive surveillance to make sure we have everything on the table to make this work. Although eradication is still the main aim of the game, we have also been working with pollination-reliant industries to ensure that we can support them and business continuity because we absolutely need that. We need it right now and in the future. I am talking about everything: industries such as almonds and berries of all kinds—blueberries, blackberries, raspberries and strawberries; you name it—avocadoes, macadamias, citrus of all kinds and much more. We now have risk-based plans to allow some movement for pollination, which is an important thing to do. [*Extension of time*]

A statewide standstill of hives still applies, but beekeepers within the general zone are able to apply for a permit to move hives for pollination. I should point out that that is being done in a very controlled way to reduce the possible risk of spread. We are using miticide baits and we have 26 new compliance officers on the ground and ready to make sure everything is being done perfectly. We also have \$18 million in compensation for all registered beekeepers, which is a big thing. The Government is supporting industry which is supporting us, and we will keep doing that. We have also provided measures to attend to mental health issues during this time as well. That is really important and beekeepers have been reaching out for that. I take this opportunity to thank Local Land Services, the NSW Police Force, the NSW Rural Fire Service, the New South Wales Environment Protection Authority [EPA], the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service and the apiary industry who are assisting the Department of Primary Industries [DPI] in stopping this destructive parasite in its tracks.

Before I finish, it is worth congratulating the Opposition leader for finally releasing his agriculture policy at the NSW Farmers conference. It was as expected—blank, blank, blank, vacant, vacant and sadly vacant. It is the new HOGO. It is worth nothing that in that speech to the NSW Farmers conference, there was not one mention of anything to do with foot-and-mouth disease, which is probably the biggest threat on our doorstep. There was not one mention of foot-and-mouth disease. The one thing that was mentioned was biosecurity and \$10 million for a new commissioner. There is \$164 million on the table right now to keep this State safe and secure. There is more red tape and more bureaucracy for no reason. It is laughable, it is a joke and it is a kick in the guts for the hardworking Department of Primary Industries and Local Land Services staff members who are on the ground delivering what we need each and every day. If Labor is fair dinkum, it will get behind them instead of pretending a new commissioner has anything to do with anything.

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

MEMBER FOR MIRANDA

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (14:54): My question is directed to the Premier. The Premier just revealed that the Secretary of the Department of Customer Service, Emma Hogan, had revealed to him concerns about Minister Petinos, Coronation Property and Mr John Barilaro. Why did the Minister not refer the matter to the ICAC, start an investigation or even bother reading the resignation letter for 11 days?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:55): The issues that the member raises in his question were peripheral to my discussions with the secretary. Additionally, the secretary raised with me that appropriate action had been taken.

ACTIVE TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (14:55): My question is addressed to the Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government's investment in walking and cycling infrastructure is securing a brighter future for families?

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport) (14:55): I thank the member for Camden for his excellent question about how we can secure a better and brighter future for people across New South Wales through investing in active mobility and opportunities to walk and cycle. I will start by—

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

Mr ROB STOKES: The member for Oatley is very excited about this issue and a very passionate supporter of active transport in his community, as I know many members across this place are. One of the most prudent and sensible pieces of public policy we can make is increased investment to support communities in making it easier and safer for them to walk and cycle around. Members may not be aware of this, but in Sydney

alone more than two million car trips every day are less than two kilometres. There is unnecessary congestion, unnecessary cost and frustration for all involved in unnecessary car trips. That can be addressed by making investments to provide the necessary infrastructure to help people make better choices about walking and cycling. The science is clear: Active transport is healthier, is great for mental and physical wellbeing, saves money, reduces congestion and has clear environmental benefits. On every level this is a prudent investment to make.

I am pleased that the Premier appointed me as the first ever Minister for Active Transport in this State and in Australia to focus on the importance of this issue for communities across New South Wales. We have doubled our investment in the Get NSW Active grants for councils just to highlight how important these investments are. I will mention some of them. The member for Camden, who asked the question, has been working very hard in his community to support the Cawdor Road share path, which provides safe access for schoolchildren to get to Camden High School. That reminds me of a story from when I was education Minister. A school community in western Sydney asked whether we could find some money for a student car park. I asked about active transport options like cycling and walking, and the principal said that he did not allow students to cycle to school because he did not think it was safe. [*Extension of time*]

The Government is not only making additional investments in Camden. The member for Auburn will be pleased to know that the Government is funding the design of the Pippita Rail Trail. I give a shout-out to Andrew Moss and those community members who worked so hard on that. It is an incredible opportunity. It is a disused section of rail line and more than 20,000 people living in Lidcombe do not have sufficient access to public open space. Across the motorway there is more than 430 hectares of public open space available to them but they cannot get there without a car. That investment will be transformative to the lives of those 20,000 citizens in this State.

There is almost \$10 million for the Cooks River to Iron Cove GreenWay, for which the member for Summer Hill and the member for Canterbury have been advocating. That includes almost six kilometres of bike paths and foreshore walks following the route of the inner west light rail. There is almost \$1.5 million for the Bay Run path upgrade, which the member for Balmain will be excited about. There is the Grand Pacific Walk at Clifton for Wollongong City Council, which is going to host the cycling world championships. The member for Keira and the member for Heathcote have been vocal about those issues. Those investments will genuinely make a difference to the lives of the communities we serve. It can transform the way in which people choose to safely and easily get out of their cars and go for a walk. It will save money for the Health budget, it will make people's lives better and it will help save money for household budgets. It is a sensible investment and I encourage all members to get behind their communities and councils in looking for more opportunities to roll out active transport and active mobility across New South Wales.

MEMBER FOR MIRANDA

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (15:00): My question is directed to the Premier. Given that he says the sacking of Minister Petinos had nothing to do with the stop work order on Coronation Property, the investigation by Minister Petinos into David Chandler, Mr Chandler's letter of resignation and the referral of that letter to—

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 128 (2) (a). This is question time; it is not longwinded statement time. The criteria under the standing orders as to additional information to the question is very clear. It has to be strictly necessary to render the question intelligible and it can be authenticated. None of those statements fall into that very limited category. This is not the occasion for a long preamble. The member for Keira should just ask the question.

The SPEAKER: I do not need to hear further. The question is in order. The member for Keira has the call.

Mr RYAN PARK: My question is directed to the Premier. Given that he says the sacking of Minister Petinos had nothing to do the stop work order on Coronation Property, the investigation by Minister Petinos into David Chandler, Mr Chandler's letter of resignation and the referral of that letter to the ICAC on 1 August, will he advise the House why he sacked Minister Petinos?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:02): This is ridiculous. I have answered this question numerous times. When I returned from my trade mission on Saturday, I had a discussion with the department secretary on the Sunday about issues in the workplace of the former Minister. I made the decision to change the ministry based on those discussions. That was the reason.

STATE BUDGET AND HUNTER FLOOD MITIGATION INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (15:03): My question is addressed to the Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing. Will the Minister update the House on the New South Wales Government's support for flood mitigation works in the Hunter in this year's budget?

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing) (15:03): I thank the member for Upper Hunter for his question. I know he takes great pride in that area of the world. During the floods this year he was very active in his support of all emergency service personnel and agencies. He was in contact with me as well as Hunter Water, WaterNSW and others. I will talk about those in a minute with regard to making sure that we protect people, property and infrastructure. I sincerely take my hat off to the member for Upper Hunter. In this year's budget a further \$21.5 million was committed to maintain the Hunter Valley Flood Mitigation Scheme. That brings our total investment to \$71.5 million for planning, maintenance and extra resources like flood specialists to ensure that the scheme is fit for purpose for future events. The scheme minimises the impact of flooding for 250,000 people. This flood mitigation scheme is quite extensive and complex. The scheme played a vital role in protecting the Hunter from more severe impacts when floods struck earlier this year and significantly reduced the risk to life and property by controlling the velocity, direction and depth of flood water.

Many people drive to the Hunter, jump on the M1 and head up the Hunter Valley bypass or the Hunter Expressway through Cessnock, Maitland and even further north, then back into Raymond Terrace. We do not realise how protected that area is due to the Hunter Valley flood mitigation. Around early July this year it really started to bucket down. The ground was already saturated. There was significant rainfall occurring. We got a call early July late in the night that there was a threat to Maitland as the levee bank was in danger of faulting. We needed to make sure that everybody got on board quickly late into the night: WaterNSW, Hunter Water, public works, police, SES, RFS and Maitland City Council. Somewhere in the vicinity of 5,000 people and some around Maitland and Raymond Terrace were on alert to be evacuated. Everybody pulled together and worked very quickly to isolate that problem. The floodgates, levees, spillways, drainage channels and bank protection works protect the people, property and infrastructure in the Hunter Valley. I can say that the recent funding announcement—*[Extension of time]*

The SPEAKER: I will grant a two-minute extension. I am usually tolerant because the member for Shellharbour is the Whip, but she should resume her seat.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: Without that funding announced in the budget we would not have been able to get the engineers up there to make sure that they kept those communities safe. Nearly 5,000 people were under threat. We were talking about shielding the Hunter Valley and Newcastle regions from the full brunt of future flooding disasters, so that \$71.5 million is critical to that water infrastructure. There are 185 kilometres of levees; 3.8 kilometres of spillways; 165 kilometres of drainage channels; 259 floodgates; and 36 kilometres of bank protection works just in the Hunter Valley. When members drive through the Hunter Valley and admire how beautiful that country is—and we go there for a variety of reasons—they should think about the work of the Hunter Valley flood mitigation that keeps that area safe.

By investing in the upkeep of flood mitigation infrastructure, we are ensuring that the Hunter Valley is in the best possible position to weather the next storm. We are securing a brighter future for families right across the Hunter Valley. Again, as the member for Upper Hunter knows, from droughts to fire and floods, we have faced a number of natural disasters in recent years. Each time our State has emerged stronger under the leadership of the Liberal-Nationals Government, thanks in no small part to the \$71.5 million investment, which helps build a safer and stronger New South Wales.

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

GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra) (15:08): My question is directed to the Premier. The former Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade was sacked, and we do not know why. The former Minister for Fair Trading was sacked, and we do not know why. The Building Commissioner's resignation letter was kept secret for five weeks and the Graeme Head inquiry report is still being kept secret. Does the Premier feel any obligation to tell the people of New South Wales what is going on with these crises, and why the wheels are well and truly falling off his government?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:08): The former Leader of the Opposition, Jodi McKay, was sacked, and we do not know why. Why? The great bastion of integrity, the ICAC freedom fighter—why did that happen? We do not know why, neither does Jodi McKay. She is sitting at home. She does not know why.

The SPEAKER: I place the member for Lane Cove on three calls to order. I place the member for Newcastle on three calls to order. I place the member for Macquarie Fields on three calls to order. The Premier will be heard in silence.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I will hear the point of order from the member for Campbelltown.

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order relates to Standing Orders 73 and 129. Clearly the Premier is being irrelevant. Standing Order 73 refers to an improper motive in answering a direct question that requires a direct answer.

The SPEAKER: The Premier will resume his seat. The Premier has delivered one sentence of his answer. I will ask him to continue.

Ms Jenny Leong: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will keep the clock stopped. I take a point of order from the member for Newtown.

Ms Jenny Leong: I wanted to ask in relation to the uproar that just occurred—

The SPEAKER: What is the point of order?

Ms Jenny Leong: I just wanted to—

The SPEAKER: You do not ask me questions. What is the point of order?

Ms Jenny Leong: I do not have a point of order.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. You can speak to me later.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: This might be a cleansing for them, for all their sins of the past in relation to knifing Jodi McKay without cause, sacked without cause. I have made it very clear as the Premier of this State—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Premier will resume his seat.

Mr Ron Hoenig: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. It is a legitimate question to ask why Ministers of the Crown have been removed. We are not the Government; they are.

The SPEAKER: I will ask the Premier to come directly to the question.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Unlike Chris, I have made it very clear in relation to the decisions that I have made in respect of the ministry. Ministers also serve at my pleasure as Premier of New South Wales. I make the decisions in relation to my Cabinet. I provided reasons—

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Premier will resume his seat.

Mr Michael Daley: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. Tell the public why you were displeased?

The SPEAKER: The member for Maroubra will resume his seat. I call the member for Maroubra to order for the second time. The Premier will continue.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I have made it very clear in relation to the former Minister for Fair Trading, in relation to concerns I have—

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Summer Hill to order for the first time. I call the member for Ku-ring-gai to order for the first time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: —in respect of the work place. I have made it very clear in relation to Minister Ayres in respect of matters that had arisen from the review of Mr Graeme Head. I have made that very clear, unlike those opposite who went out of their way, including the member for Summer Hill, to knife—

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Summer Hill to order for the second time. I call the member for Summer Hill to order for the third time. The member for Summer Hill is on three calls. The member for Summer

Hill is on three calls. The member for Summer Hill—the member for Summer Hill will remove herself from the Chamber overnight. The Premier's time has expired.

Order! I direct the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms to remove the member for Summer Hill from the Chamber under Standing Order 249.

[The member for Summer Hill left the Chamber at 15:13 accompanied by the Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms.]

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order: The Premier was inciting anger and he was also not directing his comments through the Chair. You have removed the member for Summer Hill from the Chamber.

The SPEAKER: I warned her three times that she was on three calls to order.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: But, with respect Mr Speaker, the Premier was yelling at her, not through you.

The SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat.

Ms Jenny Leong: Point of order—

Ms Jenny Aitchison: It is outrageous.

Ms Jenny Leong: My point of order relates to Standing Order 52. Specifically, I have serious concerns about the way that this question time is being conducted. There are a lot of loud, male voices yelling.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will give the member for Newtown the courtesy of being quiet.

Ms Jenny Leong: The Premier is also yelling back. Mr Speaker, there was a significant amount of yelling before you stood to call the Chamber to order, which is why I stood up before. My concern is whether you can explain why you paused before you called the House to order and stood up, because there was a lot of yelling happening before that. I am not sure whether we have agreed that on Thursdays we are just going to allow this level of interjection to happen in the Chamber.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. I do not need a speech. I agree that Standing Order 52 was being breached. That is why I stood up and did not just call members to order.

NSW TELESTROKE SERVICE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (15:15): My question is addressed to the Minister for Health. Will the Minister update the House on how the Liberal-Nationals are providing access to specialist stroke care across regional and rural New South Wales?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health) (15:15): I thank the member for Port Macquarie. She has worked with me as my Parliamentary Secretary at various stages, but she has also had an abiding interest in health, particularly as she was a nurse. We have been together and worked a great deal on this issue of stroke and treatment for stroke. Having in mind the raised blood pressures in the last few minutes, it is a good idea to think about the fact that this week is National Stroke Week. It is incredibly important that we all know what are the signs of stroke, which I will come to in a minute. This Stroke Week campaign is an opportunity to remind people that whilst 80 per cent of strokes can be prevented by managing stroke risk and living a healthy lifestyle, recognising the signs of stroke are vital for ensuring that you or your loved ones receive time-critical treatment.

I was impressed by the Minister sitting next to me just a few minutes ago as he knew a number of the signs of stroke. I say to every member in this place that I implore them to learn the signs of stroke and also to use our newsletters to get the message of stroke to our constituents. A great proportion of people do not know even one sign of stroke. The one word to remember is FAST—it is pretty easy. It will remind everyone of the symptoms of stroke. I might do a multiple choice questionnaire for some of the members straight after this and check all members were listening because it might save their life or a family member's life.

FAST—"F" is for face. A sign is if there is any drooping or numbness of the face. "A" is for arms. If you cannot hold your arm up or one drops, that is another sure sign. It also relates to numbness in the limbs, but particularly in the arms. "S" is for speech. A sure fire sign that someone is having a stroke is if you are having difficulty understanding what they are saying or if they have slurred speech. "T" is for time. Time is absolutely crucial. If someone can get to a hospital and is diagnosed very quickly, they can have a fairly good chance of not living a life with a disability. In 2018-19, 13,651 people were hospitalised for a stroke in New South Wales, which is quite considerable. Of those, 32 per cent were in the regions. In 2019 the New South Wales Government partnered with the Commonwealth Government. *[Extension of time]*

It announced what was one of the proudest moments I have had as health Minister, and that was \$21.7 million for a NSW Telestroke Service. It is interesting how the intersection of life can happen. I was coming

out of the new Blacktown Hospital and I stopped because somebody said to me, "I am a neurosurgeon. I want a quick chat." He said, "Do you realise that a trial has been going that I would really like to recommend to you should now become a full-time service in New South Wales." That trial was in the electorate of the member for Port Macquarie. It showed that if we can get somebody to understand what the symptoms are, and if we can get them into hospital for the clot-busting drugs that are now available through appropriate diagnosis, then we can make a huge difference. I stress this. As part of the Telestroke Service, a roster of neurologists or stroke physicians use telehealth technology to remotely access a stroke patient's medical images and conduct a remote consultation to determine a treatment plan. If acute stroke is diagnosed, the treatment plan may include thrombolysis—which also uses the clot-busting drugs—or referral to a metropolitan centre for endovascular clot retrieval.

Many of us sitting here would probably think that is for older people. Actually, it is not. About one in seven cases occur in kids aged about 14 or 15 through to the age of 49. A fair whack of people in this place are in that age bracket. Not me; I am a little older. But I am just saying that all members should take this seriously. For people listening in the community, take it seriously because we can now make a difference and we are making a huge difference. I had the pleasure of going to Dubbo with the member for Dubbo, Dugald Saunders, about a year and a half or two years ago. I met a lady there who was in her forties who had the clot-busting treatment and she was alive and doing well. When you are in government there is nothing more profound than to know that something like that has made such a difference. Please remember FAST and learn what it means.

WAGGA WAGGA ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (15:20): My question is directed to the Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing, Minister. The Wagga Wagga electorate is essentially on flood watch for the rest of the year. What will the Minister and Government do to ensure the safety of the community and, in particular, to manage the dam levels to ensure the safety of riverside communities?

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing) (15:21): I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for his question and his interest in his community, particularly around this time of year when the ground is so wet. It is saturated, which I mentioned earlier today when talking about the Hunter Valley. I congratulate the member on his efforts in contacting me late last week when there were some concerns. We worked closely together to try to get some answers on what we could do to help his community. I extend my thoughts to those in his community who have been impacted by the recent floods.

There is no doubt that the wet weather in our State's regions in the past 12 months has been unprecedented, particularly in the member's area in the Murrumbidgee catchment. Since mid-last year, Blowering Dam, which is south-east of Wagga Wagga, has received more than 2,000 gegalitres of inflow. To put that in context, that is four times Sydney Harbour going into one dam. That is more than the entire volume of that dam. That is a significant amount of water. At the same time, Burrinjuck Dam, which is north of Wagga Wagga has received more than 4,000 gegalitres of inflow, which is four times its capacity. Thankfully, much of this water had been safely released downstream by WaterNSW dam operators over the many months through carefully managed airspace releases. That does not really help with the notification that is required in the lead-up to what WaterNSW will do in those areas. The member and I talked about and highlighted that late last week. Another issue raised by the member was not only about notification times for affected landholders but also about river gauges. I note the importance of river gauges providing that important data. [*Extension of time*]

On Monday night, the member rightly advised me that one of the river gauges which would have impacted on those downstream communities and landholders was not working. We quickly got hold of WaterNSW and the fault was repaired as soon as crews could access that site the following Tuesday morning. I thank the member for contacting me. We need to continue to stay in contact. Following up on that, I have now instructed WaterNSW to make every effort to ensure that gauge, as well as other gauges along the river, does not fault next time such an event occurs. With regard to Burrinjuck, the airspace created enabled the dam to capture the peak of inflow before and release the water safely after the flood peak had passed. Those actions effectively cut the flood peak at Gundagai in half, helping to avoid even more damage and destruction.

Unfortunately, given the large volume of inflow, WaterNSW would have had to have cut Burrinjuck Dam to 65 per cent capacity so that it did not spill. It is worth noting that action alone would not have prevented flooding, with tributaries downstream of the dams contributing to the bulk of the flood peak. I remind the community of the importance of listening to the Bureau of Meteorology and the SES, following flood warning communications and ensuring that landholders are signed up to WaterNSW's Early Warning Network to receive the latest information on dam releases. I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for his question. It is a pleasure to work with him, and I will continue to work with his office to ensure that his community has all the information it needs in the future.

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (15:26): My question is addressed to the Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology, and Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is securing a brighter future for the people of New South Wales through its record infrastructure, skills and science budgets?

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai—Minister for Skills and Training, Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology, Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, and Minister for Sport) (15:26): I acknowledge that the mayor of Newcastle is in the public gallery. She is a fellow alumnus of Newcastle High School, but her most important contribution to public life is as the shadow member for Newcastle in the New South Wales Parliament. She would never engage in the sort of unparliamentary conduct we saw from the member for Newcastle yesterday—that brown suit was a complete shocker and should never have been brought into the Chamber.

I thank the member for Hawkesbury for her question. It is an outstanding opportunity to remind those opposite of what a track record of delivery looks like. The New South Wales Government has invested more in skills and training than ever before. It will invest \$8.6 billion in school infrastructure over the next four years and has invested more in TAFE than any government has over TAFE's 130-year history. In the most recent budget, the Government provided almost three times more capital funding for TAFE than Labor did when it was last in government. I remind members of those 16 years of hard labour when Labor was last in government. It closed 90 schools. It closed 21 TAFEs.

This Government is not just a good government for today; it is also a great government for the future. It has established the \$703 million Future Economy Fund, which will support the growth of new technologies, new industries, new businesses and new jobs for the people of New South Wales. The Government has delivered new and upgraded stadia right across the State. Those opposite opposed it and said, "No new stadia." All they want is to get tickets to go to events held in the infrastructure the Government has been building. Their favourite word is "no". Their favourite emotion is negativity. The Leader of the Opposition said he would be Mr Positivity, but those opposite are all about negativity. What is Labor's great policy contribution up to this point? It is to introduce phone chargers at railway stations. While the Government has policies to secure a brighter future for our State, those opposite have a mobile phone charging strategy. That is the extent of their policy commitment. They are all politics, no policy. It is hard to be in government, and those opposite are unfit.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Ku-ring-gai—Minister for Skills and Training, Minister for Science, Innovation and Technology, Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade, and Minister for Sport) (15:30): I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended this day to permit:

- (1) The interruption of any business before the House after 4.30 pm for the consideration of any messages from the Legislative Council regarding Government business.
- (2) The House to continue to sit after the conclusion of private members' statements to consider any such messages, including the option for the Speaker to leave and resume the chair on the ringing of one long bell.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (15:31): I observe—because it is not the first time this has happened—that regional members cannot return home whilst the other place has lunch and dinner breaks. Quite frankly, on behalf of a number of regional members of this House, I am not happy about it.

Motion agreed to.

Community Recognition Statements

NOWRA HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS VOLLEYBALL TEAM

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (15:33): I sincerely congratulate the Nowra High School girls volleyball team on being named runners-up at the NSW Combined High Schools Sports Association volleyball championships. Over two days at Sydney Olympic Park the girls fought hard for their team and their school, taking home a silver medal in the grand final against Carlingford High School. The final score was 3-1. It was a huge achievement for the girls after all their hard work to reach the final. Their commitment to training and competitions has certainly paid off as they are now labelled runners-up in the State. The girls battled it out against the top 20 schools from across the State in the New South Wales championships. I congratulate the team captain,

Alexandria Smith; Emma Keane; Riya Rawat; Krisha Mehta; Mireille Smith; Aimee Lamb; Elke Keane; and the coach, Lauren Farquar. Again, a huge congratulations to the Nowra High School girls volleyball team.

COMMONWEALTH GAMES MEDAL WINNER CHRIS MCHUGH

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (15:34): On behalf of the Bega electorate, I congratulate Pambula-born beach volleyball star Chris McHugh on claiming the gold medal, alongside his partner, at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham this week. Chris and his teammate Paul Burnett claimed a gallant gold after coming from a set down and saving two match points to prevail over Canada's Sam Schachter and Daniel Dearing in a thriller of a game. Mr McHugh is also a back-to-back gold medallist after capturing the sport's inaugural Commonwealth gold medal on the Gold Coast four years ago. With the Commonwealth Games wrapping up, I congratulate all the athletes who have represented our great country to the best of their ability, and it is fantastic to see Australia victorious in the overall medal tally. Well done. I look forward to following Mr McHugh's journey to the twenty-third edition of the Commonwealth Games to be held in regional Victoria, come 2026. Here is hoping for a hat-trick.

COOMA MONARO RAILWAY

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro) (15:35): I thank and congratulate all of the volunteers of the Cooma Monaro Railway who have embarked on the journey of restoring a significant piece of the Monaro's history. The NSW Railway Institute was initially established to provide a higher standard of educational learning for New South Wales railway employees. As well as employment-related training, the institute was tasked with stimulating growth and intellectual development of employees in the arts, social, leisure and physical recreations. This Government recently granted \$310,000 for the restoration of the historic Cooma Railway Institute building, which was constructed in 1953. The major makeover will also include restoration of the adjoining heritage tennis courts, which have been used by the local community for almost 100 years. As someone passionate about history and, in particular, our regional history, restoration of those facilities is not only an important step in preserving a piece of Cooma's history; it will also make those much-needed facilities available to the community and local organisations. I thank Cooma Monaro Railway for its passion, dedication and commitment.

WOODVILLE ALLIANCE

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (15:36): On Tuesday 2 August 2022 I was delighted to attend the official opening of the Woodville Alliance Villawood hub. I thank acting CEO Melanie Andrews and board member Tony Caldera, as well as other Woodville Alliance team members, for welcoming me to the premises. I acknowledge CEO Pam Batkin, who has been the driving force behind Woodville Alliance. Woodville Alliance has been working with communities in western Sydney for over 40 years, promoting social justice and empowerment with a vision for a fairer, more just society and improved quality of life for people in western Sydney. With centres already in Fairfield, Carramar, Auburn, Liverpool and Chester Hill, I am delighted to welcome Woodville Alliance back to the Villawood area to continue its much-needed services for the vulnerable people in our community. I congratulate Melanie, Tony and all Woodville Alliance personnel on the opening of the premises. I look forward to liaising with them in future to provide better opportunities for disadvantaged members of our community.

TRIBUTE TO JOAN WAGSTAFF

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (15:37): I acknowledge the passing of Joan Wagstaff. For over 23 years, Joan served as president of the Bankstown-East Hills Handicapped Association—or BEHHA, as it is known. BEHHA assists people with intellectual disabilities to develop and maintain living arrangements and quality of life in the community. BEHHA owns four houses, where residents can live and be supported by carers and volunteers. BEHHA's residential house at Padstow has been renamed "Joan and Allen Wagstaff House" in honour of Joan's and her husband's service over many decades. I commend BEHHA for this appropriate and thoroughly deserved recognition for Joan. Vale, Joan Wagstaff.

THE FATHERS TABLE

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong) (15:37): I congratulate The Fathers Table on its 10-year anniversary. Around 140 people—including board members, staff, charities, Coast Hands, The Bikers Hand and major sponsor Bendigo Bank—gathered in Wyong to celebrate the great milestone. It was a fantastic morning of sharing a meal, giveaways, children's activities and chatting with wonderful volunteers from my local community. The volunteers provide their time and effort to keep the Wyong community together by being the family that many people need, celebrating 10 years of supporting our community by providing meals, food hampers, clothing and assisting the homeless in Wyong and surrounding areas, and providing other support such as visiting people in hospital, helping families struggling at home, assisting people with transport for employment and emergency accommodation. The Fathers Table is also a place to be a part of the community by giving the local people an opportunity to connect

and provide support, encouragement and friendship. It is an amazing achievement of Jed, family and volunteers in their work in our community.

WHAT'S BREW'N FOUNDER NEIL FEREDAY

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (15:38): I recognise Mr Neil Fereday for his entrepreneurial spirit in turning his hobby into a successful business. Neil and his wife, Danielle, moved from Sydney to Guyra for the country experience and to raise their two sons. During the COVID lockdown, Neil discovered home brewing, which sparked his creative interests. In fact, it became an invigorating passion, but he found that accessing supplies was a major disadvantage. Why not open his own brewing business and reinvigorate his friend's interest? Neil has since learned What's Brew'n has great community support and the interest has spread to distilling spirits, along with other kinds of home supplies. Neil credits the supportive community—in particular, his wife, Anna Guerrini, Jacob Onslow and Daniel Kempton—for their assistance and encouragement. I congratulate Neil on his successful new business, What's Brew'n. I commend him for taking a business risk and enthusiastically embracing the opportunity to invest in Guyra and contribute to the town's retail community.

ST GERTRUDE'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (15:39): On 28 June 2022 it was great to visit St Gertrude's Catholic Primary School, Smithfield, to present high-achieving students with the Principal Awards. St Gertrude's staff work closely in partnership with parents and the local parish, and they are committed to developing and sustaining an authentic Catholic community. St Gertrude's is a welcoming, inclusive community that is open to all. One of its greatest strengths as a school is its cultural diversity. The staff are committed to ensuring that they care for every student. They work tirelessly to enhance the wellbeing of each individual and to ensure every student is working to their potential. The staff provide quality contemporary education that promotes academic excellence. I congratulate the students who received the Principal Awards. They should be very proud. I was also privileged to discuss with year 6 students my role as the member for the electorate of Prospect, as well as the process of parliamentary democracy in New South Wales. I thank St Gertrude's Catholic Primary School, Smithfield, for its leadership team, especially Principal Linda Katsibras. I look forward to visiting this wonderful school again soon.

ST PAUL'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE RUGBY TEAM

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly—Minister for Environment and Heritage) (15:40): I congratulate St Paul's Catholic College, Manly, rugby league opens side and their coaches, Mr Aird and Mr Newton, who won their grand final by defeating Balgowlah Boys 24-12. A broader congratulation should be extended to the St Paul's class of 2022, who not only study hard but also achieved significant sporting success, being named Broken Bay Football, Manly Warringah Basketball and Peninsula Cup rugby champions. Well done, St Paul's.

CHINESE AUSTRALIAN SERVICES SOCIETY

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (15:41): I recognise and celebrate the important work being done by community service organisation Chinese Australian Services Society [CASS]. For more than 40 years CASS has been providing significant social and welfare services to multicultural communities. CASS provides direct care in community languages for non-English-speaking Australians, including those from Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese and Indonesian backgrounds. I recently visited CASS in Campsie, where it provides residential aged care, child care and disability services and mental health care services. It was great to see older clients playing traditional games and strengthening the social connection that is so vital to avoiding isolation and mental health issues. It is also important that older Australians can access services in their own native language and cultural context where they are familiar and comfortable. CASS fills a dire community need. For many multicultural communities, seeking help with mental health is a big challenge. I acknowledge the work of foundation chairperson Mr Henry Pan, OAM, chairperson Bo Zhou, general manager Ivan Wong, and executive officer Kitty Leong. CASS has made a positive contribution and outsized impact to the lives of many in multicultural communities. I congratulate and celebrate it on its work.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN SAXON TINGLE, A FORMER MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (15:42): Today I acknowledge the passing of former Port Macquarie resident, the Hon. John Saxon Tingle, on Friday 5 August 2022, aged 90. A prominent figure in Australian journalism—and indeed State politics—John sadly passed away on Friday, leaving a legacy of community service and tireless representation for the people living in regional and rural New South Wales. The late John Saxton Tingle was born on 2 November 1931 in the eastern Sydney suburb of Edgecliff. John's career in journalism began as a broadcaster and news editor for 2QN Deniliquin from 1949 to 1951. Over the years John worked for the ABC and hosted a series of radio shows for 2SM and 2GB. In 1992 John became a self-made political force after founding what is now the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party. He was such a strong and

passionate advocate for the establishment of the Lake Cathie Public School. He opened doors for the Future Schools committee, allowing us to put our case to politicians of all persuasions. He often came to our meetings to check on our progress and to offer his ongoing support. Despite us sitting on different sides of the political divide, I have always respected and admired John and appreciated his wise counsel. Vale, John Tingle.

RANDWICK WARRIORS

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (15:43): Today I recognise the remarkable work and efforts of the Randwick Warriors, often seen training on the beaches along Coogee in the eastern suburbs. The club sent multiple teams to the rugby Junior State Championships, and they returned winning the NSW State Championship Chas Hansen trophy in the under-16s and a club title for the under-18s. The Warriors offer an outlet to play, allowing players to get together from different rugby clubs across the area from their junior years, whilst giving them a sense of identity within the culture and the game. A huge shout-out goes to the coaches and management, who are doing an incredible job encouraging, mentoring and being a positive influence on these young rugby players. Congratulations, Randwick Warriors.

WORLD TRIATHLON COMPETITOR NATALIE VAN COEVORDEN

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (15:44): I congratulate Natalie Van Coevorden on her impressive effort at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. Whilst Natalie is a regular competitor on the World Triathlon circuit, this was the first time she has represented Australia at the Commonwealth Games. Natalie competed in the women's individual triathlon—which consisted of a 750-metre swim, 20-kilometre bike ride and a five-kilometre run—and achieved a commendable fourteenth place. This is an outstanding result in a field of world-class athletes. Natalie was then selected to race in the triathlon mixed team relay event for Australia, in which the team received a bronze medal in what was a very hard-fought and close race. It is truly a team effort that is to be applauded. I look forward to watching Natalie compete over the next few years leading up to the Olympic Games in Paris in 2024.

TRIBUTE TO MICHAEL DENISON

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (15:45): I pay tribute to the life and contribution to the Wollongong community of Michael Denison. Mikhail Petrovich Denisov was born and grew up in Russia. He served in the Russian military with distinction and was awarded several medals for his service, including two for bravery. After migrating to Australia, where he became better known as Michael, he retained strong links to his Russian homeland. Michael worked to build rail lines in the Illawarra and also worked for Qantas. He was known to many as being part of the meetings and activities of the Bulli-Woonona-Helensburgh branch of the Labor Party. He was committed to getting working men and women a better deal. He was also committed to building a better community for his family and neighbours, especially around Bulli, where he lived with his wife, Patricia, and had a fantastic garden. Michael insisted on continuing to contribute to the election of local Labor representatives into his eighties and nineties, taking his place at the Woonona Public School booth, where he was a familiar face. Michael will be greatly missed by his son, Patrick, and his grandchildren, who gave heartfelt tributes at his farewell. On behalf of the Federal member for Cunningham and me, I thank them for sharing Michael with us.

HOLSWORTHY ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (15:46): I thank the locals of the 2234 postcode—and those who drive through it each and every morning—for raising with me their concerns about the new contraflow due to the subsidence on Heathcote Road. While the subsidence and the cracks in the road have been caused by the recent and continual heavy rains, it occurred when we were already in the process of adding a new bridge on Heathcote Road and improving the flow around Linden Street, Sutherland for the Woronora Bridge traffic. That meant there was already traffic, and it has only become worse with this subsidence. This morning I told the Minister for Metropolitan Roads of our concerns and the long delays. She has assured me that the repair work is coming along well, and we are working towards having the bridge movements back to normal as soon as possible. I will continue to keep the community informed of our discussions in the future. Once again I thank the 2234 community for its advocacy and patience.

WORLD VISION MAITLAND

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (15:47): Recently the Maitland branch of World Vision celebrated a unique milestone: four decades of continuous operation. When six ladies met in 1982 they had no idea that what they were starting for the underprivileged globally would raise in excess of \$250,000, but the Lower Hunter group of that organisation did just that—and more. Incredibly, two of the foundation members—Barbara King and Joan Wilson—are still heavily involved today. In the past, money was raised from many different activities, including street stalls, catering for weddings and birthday parties, music nights, Melbourne Cup functions, bus trips, screen printing on pillowslips, Dutch auctions, the sale of plum puddings at Christmas and many more. Even though

COVID-19 has dramatically impacted their fundraising efforts in the past two years, the women plan to host three events in 2022. I congratulate Maitland World Vision on its fortieth anniversary and thank it for its important contribution to our community.

NORTH SHORE LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (15:48): Last night I was delighted and proud to attend the North Shore Local Business Awards, which I am pleased to recognise today. These annual awards are for outstanding small businesses across a vast array of sectors that are valued in our community. The awards recognise excellence in service delivery and product quality as well as high customer satisfaction. The winners of the 2022 North Shore Local Business Awards included many outstanding small businesses from my electorate and surrounds. Among other awards, I was proud to present the Hairdresser of the Year Award to Neutral Bay's popular Salon Yazbek. I congratulate all nominees and winners on their richly deserved recognition. Small-business owners make great sacrifices and work incredibly hard for their clientele and the communities they serve. I also thank everyone behind the organisation of this fantastic event, including the team at Precedent Productions. I thank the partners of the awards, including Nova Employment, the Rotary Club of North Sydney, White Key Marketing, Business Networking Reimagined and *Northshore Living*.

COMMONWEALTH GAMES MEDAL WINNER MELISSA WU

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (15:49): I congratulate Melissa Paige Wu, who recently achieved a gold medal at the Commonwealth Games in the 10-metre synchronised diving and the honour of carrying the Australian flag at the closing ceremony. Her success is truly amazing because she was dealing with a near career-ending injury from the reality television program *SAS Australia*. Melissa's impressive sporting and personal record includes seven world championships, six world cups, five Commonwealth Games, four Olympic Games, three businesses that she owns, two bad injuries—and she probably has a partridge in a pear tree at her home in the Blacktown electorate. Starting at the age of 13, Melissa won her first silver medal at the 2006 Commonwealth Games. Melissa Wu has achieved an amazing tally of 62 medals across FINA and Olympic competitions over the past 16 years. Melissa is a mentor for aspiring divers and athletes, a motivational speaker and an entrepreneur. She is an inspiration to us all.

QUIRINDI SILO ART COMMITTEE

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing) (15:50): It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the Quirindi Silo Art Committee on its commitment to Quirindi and the future of tourism in the region. Quirindi is a great country town. I love taking a drive through the Liverpool Plains and enjoying Quirindi's historic main street. It is a rural town that was built by a thriving agriculture industry. Quirindi's story is shared with so many regional towns. It was born of the sweat off the backs of a group of hardworking farmers who worked the productive land. On that land was built one of the most striking features of the town: its silos. Towering above the town, the silos tell this story of the success of an agricultural industry that has sustained generations of locals. Yet those silos remain a blank canvas, unpainted and unfinished. That is about to change. Just a couple of weeks ago it was great to be in the Liverpool Plains to congratulate the committee on its success in winning a \$199,981 grant from the New South Wales Government, meaning work will begin soon. I extend a warm invitation to people from across our great State to take a weekend and make the journey to Quirindi to see this great artwork come to life.

VOLUNTEER PAM SLADE

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (15:51): Today I acknowledge Pam Slade of Buff Point, who has continuously volunteered at the San Remo Neighbourhood Centre for 17 years. After volunteering at the centre for just a few months, Pam took on the role of the manager's personal assistant, applying her experience and knowledge from assisting the principal at Mount Druitt High School. Pam soon became the backbone of the centre and was heavily involved in the GOATS Family Festival, the San Remo Community Garden and graffiti initiatives. Pam has a kind and caring nature. She recognises and understands the personal and financial struggles that Central Coast families face each week. Her dedication and passion for volunteering at the centre make her a remarkable volunteer who has made an outstanding difference within our community. I thank Pam for her efforts over the years and the assistance that she has provided to Central Coast residents.

JUNIOR WORLD MOTOCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITOR JACK DEVESON

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales) (15:52): I recognise the achievements of Dubbo's Jack Deveson. Recently Jack became one of our latest great international exports at just 14 years of age. His recent efforts at the New South Wales State titles, where he was crowned State champion, have seen him selected as one of six riders to represent Australia at the Junior World Motocross Championship. Finland's famous motocross city of Vantaa will host the championships, with more

than 12 countries taking part in the competition. Heading off this month with his parents, Cory and Holly, this will be Jack's first trip overseas. I know he has been doing some research on his destination and is looking forward to representing his country regardless of the weather. It is also worth recognising the huge amount of work that has gone into Jack reaching this point in his very young career, with most weekends spent travelling away for competitions and training four times a week to ensure he is in the best condition and ready for action each time he gets on the bike. I congratulate Jack on all his hard work and his selection to represent Australia at the championships. I look forward to seeing how he goes.

CARRAMAR PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (15:53): On Tuesday 2 August 2022 Carramar Public School held the official opening of its native garden. Leanne King, a proud Dharug woman and former student, gave a welcome to country and performed a smoking ceremony to acknowledge the event. The main feature of the native garden is a circular seating area reminiscent of the Indigenous tradition of sitting as a group and listening to stories of the Dreamtime. It will be a great place to encourage communication, where students can gather to talk. Native plants and a traditional Indigenous mural add the finishing touches to this special space and pay respect to our Indigenous brothers and sisters past, present and emerging. I congratulate Carramar Public School on the addition of the native garden, and I wish the school community many happy years utilising this special space.

CRICKET PLAYER LIAM DODDRELL

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (15:54): A name that *The Western Weekender* is telling its readers not to forget is Liam Doddrell, an up-and-coming cricket star from St Clair who has a massive future ahead of him. After receiving the Penrith Valley Sports Foundation Senior Sports Star Award, he has been signed by the New South Wales Blues on a rookie contract for the 2022-23 season. There is so much to be impressed by in this young man and his many accomplishments at such a young age. It is reported that he had a stellar NSW Premier Cricket campaign with the Penrith Cricket Club and he was a reserve for the Australian under-19 World Cup team. After taking eight wickets at a strike rate of 14.36 while featuring for New South Wales Metro at the 2019-20 under-17 national championships, Liam was one of 12 players to be awarded the prestigious Basil Sellers Scholarship. I look forward to all the amazing things Liam is set to achieve in his cricketing future, and congratulate him on a very impressive list of achievements on the field thus far.

HOME BUSH WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (15:55): I congratulate Homebush West Public School on its exceptional Education Week assembly, which I had the privilege of attending on Wednesday 3 August. This year's theme was "Creating Futures – Education Changes Lives". It was wonderful to hear teachers, alumni and students share their thoughts on why education is key to unlocking our futures. I particularly enjoyed the school choir's moving rendition of John Lennon's *Imagine* during the assembly. I also had the opportunity to tour the school facilities and meet many of the talented young students and dedicated teachers. From talking with some of the students and experiencing firsthand the highly innovative science, technology, engineering and maths classes, it is abundantly clear that Homebush West Public School is full of great minds and future leaders. I thank school principal Estelle Southall and deputy principal Roxanne Picoaga for welcoming me to the school and congratulate them on a successful Education Week.

PENRITH RAMS AFL CLUB RECORD HOLDER CHRISTIAN TRIFFITT

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith) (15:56): I congratulate Christian Triffitt on becoming the games record holder at the Penrith Rams AFL club. He and I both have life memberships at that wonderful football club. Christian has been able to play about 102 games more than I was able to play for the club. My parliamentary duties may have interrupted that. Christian Triffitt is a great contributor to the football club. He is the lifeblood of community sport. I am sure members right across the State can identify someone who keeps their local footy or sporting club going. He is a great footballer, a champion guy, a wonderful family man and a super keen photographer; the club probably has more playing photos than any other because of his great work. I congratulate Christian on being the games record holder at the mighty Penrith Rams.

NURSE LORRAINE HEANEY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (15:57): Last Saturday night I had the great delight to congratulate Lorraine Heaney on her retirement from Belmont Hospital. Lorraine started there in 1979. The hospital is only 50 years old, so she has worked in that hospital almost for as long as it has been there. Her colleagues tell me she is one of Belmont's finest nurses and is loved and respected by all. She is a true role model to the younger generation of nurses who have come through. She has provided an enormous service to our public hospital system. At the age of 63, Lorraine told me that she decided to retire to spend time with her family. She asked me to put

on record how exhausting and demanding the job is and that that impacted her decision to retire early. I congratulate Lorraine and thank her for her service.

NORTHMEAD BOWLING CLUB COACH DILYS KINDLEYSIDES

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (15:58): I commend the success of Mrs Dilys Kindleysides, whose love of bowls and commitment to the sport saw her appointed to the board of Women's Bowls NSW. During that role, Dilys was a strong advocate for the unification of the Royal NSW Bowling Association and Women's Bowls NSW. Dilys' efforts, accompanied by the efforts of her colleagues, saw an almost unanimous vote amongst members in favour of the unification. As a result, the newly formed entity of Bowls NSW was created. Following the retirement of the inaugural president on 1 June 2022, Dilys was elected by the board to the position of chair of the board of Bowls NSW. That is a significant achievement, as Dilys is the first female in 142 years to govern the sport of bowls in New South Wales. Dilys is a proud and active member of the Northmead Bowling Club, where she still finds time to umpire games and coach. Our local bowling community and, indeed, the bowlers of New South Wales have greatly benefited from the work, time and energy Dilys has given to the sport.

Business interrupted.

Petitions

MANNING RIVER PERMANENT ENTRANCE

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Business is interrupted for consideration of a paper petition signed by more than 10,000 or more persons listed on the *Business Paper* and lodged by the member for Myall Lakes regarding a request that the Legislative Assembly call on the Government to fund a permanent, navigable entrance to the Manning River between Harrington and Manning Point, and further a permanent entrance at Farquhar Inlet.

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

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (15:59): I thank the member for Myall Lakes for allowing me the great honour of presenting a petition to the House on behalf of the people of Myall Lakes and, indeed, everyone who lives in the area of the mid North Coast. To achieve a petition of greater than 10,000 signatures is a huge result, and it is great to see their voices are being heard in this place. They have certainly been heard in my area of Upper Hunter because it is an important issue for the people who live there. The petition is about the inlets into the Manning River and their connections to the ocean. The Manning River is the only double delta river system in Australia. To educate members who do not know, a double delta describes a river system that splits into two and breaks into the ocean.

The Manning River has two inlets: the northern Harrington Inlet at the northern breakwall, which was built many years ago and is still there; and the Farquhar Inlet to the south. Those inlets affect the great communities of Old Bar, Taree and Harrington. Everyone throughout the Hunter and the mid North Coast knows about the region because it is a great playground in the summer holidays. It is a great place to work, rest and play. The petition is all about opening up a navigation channel in the Manning River. It has huge support, which is evidenced not only by the petition we are debating but also by the unanimous decision of the council to support the channel. The council is calling out for it to happen; it is absolutely passionate about it because the channel is important to growth in the area and supporting the water-loving communities on the mid North Coast.

Opening the navigation channels will provide a lot of benefits. The most important is the social benefit because the people are coastal-loving and boating-loving people. In that part of the world they are great fishermen. They live on the river and the water and beaches are an important part of their way of life. But there are not only social benefits; this idea makes economic sense. Opening up the channel will stimulate local businesses. It will ensure that there is growth in tourism and boatbuilding businesses. It is very hard to get the boats out without the upgrades to the channel. If one were to build a boat now, one could not get through the channel—I can assure members of that, and that is coming from someone from the Upper Hunter. There is great agriculture in that area, and there are great oysters. Everyone in this House loves an oyster.

Mr Geoff Provest: What about prawns?

Mr DAVID LAYZELL: There are a few prawns, but mostly there are oysters in that area of the world. It is a huge industry and we need infrastructure. We must also think about safety. Getting boats in and out of that region is very important. Opening the channel will be a much safer option for everyone. It is also important that we open the channel to help with flood mitigation. We have seen the damage that floods can do in the area, so we must mitigate that now to protect the area from huge rains in future. Unless we start opening up these channels and install the infrastructure that these communities want, it is a constraint on the area. This is critical for that community. Recently the member for Myall Lakes announced the Manning River Taskforce, which has completed its report and delivered a number of short-term and long-term options. The report is what we have to enable us to

go forward. I thank the people of Myall Lakes for presenting this petition in the House. I commend the petition to the House.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (16:05): In my contribution to the discussion of the petition, I also thank the community members of Myall Lakes for banding together and presenting this petition to the New South Wales Parliament. The petition concerns a matter that is very important to that community. I know how difficult it is to get 10,000 signatures. The member for Myall Lakes has done that and has brought the petition to the Parliament. I concur with the remarks made by the member for Upper Hunter—that the community ought to be congratulated.

The member for Upper Hunter is quite right: Our waterways are so incredibly special and so beautiful. However, if they are not navigable, they are pretty useless. It is the case that the electorate of Swansea has a lake that also becomes unnavigable. Like the member for the Upper Hunter and his community, I too want our waterways to be navigable at all times. As the member for Upper Hunter said, there are lots of opportunities associated with our waterways, such as business opportunities, entertainment opportunities and any number of other opportunities, that really do bring economic prosperity to the local community. However, if our waterways are not navigable, we end up in a situation where we miss out on opportunities.

I will provide an example to the House. Three large yachting races have been cancelled in Lake Macquarie as a result of vessels not having the confidence of being able to get in and out of the lake, which has been shoaled up. The good news is that more than a year ago the Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter, the Hon. Taylor Martin who is a member of the other place, announced a \$6.2 million dredging program as a stimulus funding measure. Obviously it is a bit late since it is more than a year since the announcement; however, I was very pleased to hear that the Swansea Channel was the number one priority when the announcement was made. I look forward to that program starting sometime soon. I suggest to the member for Myall Lakes that he also should be trying to seek some of that funding for the waterways of his electorate that are in a very similar situation to the shoaling of the Swansea Channel in my electorate.

It is the State's responsibility to ensure that our channels are navigable. I have read about the problem and it is therefore the State's responsibility to get this done. Many years ago we owned dredgers in this State, but unfortunately we do not own them any longer and we rely on contractors to do the work. I have been told by NSW Maritime that, unfortunately, dredgers are difficult to get at the moment. Perhaps that is just a product of the world in which we live, I am not sure, but we need an ongoing maintenance program along the eastern seaboard. Instead of us responding all the time to a problem, we need to become proactive in this space. We should have an ongoing maintenance program of all of the waterways that are not navigable as a result of shoaling.

It is pretty simple. It is not rocket science at all. We have \$6.2 million sitting in a bank account somewhere—who would know?—yet that money has not been distributed in any way to fix any of the problems. In my view, it really is for the Government to put together an ongoing long-term dredging maintenance program for the State of New South Wales so that communities, such as Myall Lakes, Swansea and Lake Macquarie, do not have to keep gathering signatures for petitions to seek funding from the Government to ensure that their channels are navigable. The money is there.

Mr Christopher Gulaptis: Just get in and do it.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: I absolutely agree with members on the other side of the House. The Government should just get in and do it. We need to have our waterways navigable. We are very proud of our water communities and we are proud of our waterways, but we want to make sure that they are safe, navigable and being used. At the moment we do not have those three things, which really is quite sad. I very much support the petition. I very much thank the Myall Lakes community and their representative.

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (16:10): It is a pleasure to support the member for Upper Hunter who is advocating on behalf of 10,000 petitioners. However, it is disappointing and sad that the member for Myall Lakes cannot be here to represent those 10,000 petitioners. Like the other members who have spoken during this discussion, I too represent a community that has a river entrance and a river running through it—the Clarence River. We suffer similarly to what they suffer. The river is silted and there seems to be some sort of reluctance to dredge the river to make it navigable again.

A navigable river has as much status as does a trafficable road because in the early days New South Wales was settled via river. For example, in the early days the Lismore community was settled via river, which is why we have a community like Lismore. It was settled on the Wilson River. That is how people got to Lismore. They could not get to Lismore by road, and they settled in that area. Of course, we know what has happened to Lismore—it is flood-prone—but that is the history of Lismore. It was settled by people who travelled there by river because that was the only way they could get there. The river was not only a means of passenger transport;

they were also able to use the river to move goods to and from their communities. Ensuring that our river systems are navigable is fundamental not just to business but to communities that are on the river.

The Manning is no different to the Clarence. As the member for Upper Hunter pointed out, it is a bit difficult because it has two openings which cause some difficulties. Nonetheless, modern science and modern technology can deal with that. We just need to go ahead and dredge our rivers, not just for the boaters, fishing fleets and recreational users of the river or for people who rely on our waterways to get goods up and down the river but also, as pointed out by the member for Upper Hunter, for flood mitigation purposes. When a river is silted up, it will hold back and retard water, which causes more problems to communities upstream. We know that happened with the Clarence River when it flooded in February and March. There was a high tide and, of course, because the river is silted up and has not been dredged for some time, that retarded the water. As a result there was a massive flood for the lower river communities. I agree with the member for Upper Hunter and the member for Swansea.

Mr Geoff Provest: And Myall Lakes.

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS: And the member for Myall Lakes, of course, as well as the 10,000 petitioners. We need to dredge these rivers. It is important. It is incumbent upon the Government to make sure that our river systems are navigable. Our rivers have the status of being a thoroughfare and of being accessed by boaters. They have the same rights of access to the country as do motorists on a roadway. It is incumbent on the Government to go ahead with the dredging. I know a business case has been prepared and I know the Government is considering it. I urge the Government to move with haste, not just on the Manning but on all the other rivers that have been silted up and have not been dredged for some time. It is important, not just for river communities, but also for business and the economies of local communities. We need to be able to use the rivers as intended.

There are ways and means to deal with the fact that it is silted up. There are dredgers up and down the coast. A dredge operates on the Tweed River, which the member for Tweed can speak about. If it can be done in the Tweed, it can certainly be done on the other river systems that have been silted up over time, like the Clarence River and the Manning River. I note that in the Clarence it impacts on business. Harwood Marine is a business that builds and maintains boats. When barges go in they often have to wait for high tide because there is not enough draft to allow the vessel through. That impacts on a business that employs about 60 or 70 people. It is ridiculous to think that in this day and age we do not allow the dredging of the river to allow business to flourish, to allow people to have jobs, to boost our local economy and to make it safe for those communities. I commend the petition to the House.

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:15): I thank the member for Myall Lakes and the Myall Lakes community for this important petition to the New South Wales Parliament. After listening to my colleagues on both sides of the Chamber, I cannot stress enough that the New South Wales Government seems to have dropped the ball on dredging. I support the member for Myall Lakes and the community calling for a permanent solution to what is happening on the Manning River because Gosford needs a permanent solution as well. It seems unfair that the member for Swansea has to stand in this place and holler, that the member for Clarence has to holler and that the member for Gosford has to holler, because our waterways are crucially important. Historically, we were built on the waterways. The Brisbane Water was an important boat-building community. That is why we took off as a community. It is a beautiful space. We took huge deep keel boats out through the Brisbane Water.

In 2018 a stand-off between the New South Wales Government and the local council about funding for dredging the waterway created a fiasco to the point where our local public ferry stopped running for a period. That had a huge impact on our community, not just on the ferry service. It had to be shut down because of the risk. The ferry hit the bottom a couple of times, which was dangerous for commuters. School students use the ferry to get from one side of the Hawkesbury River to the other and lots of workers use it to get to work, particularly tradies who travel to the northern beaches. Tourists love the beautiful ferry trip from Palm Beach to Ettalong; it is glorious either way. Tourists who come from Palm Beach to the Ettalong community spend their money. We lost that spending for a whole summer, which was devastating for the community, and COVID came right after that.

Our waterways are important in so many ways and we must keep them open. They are so important that when that happened a huge meeting was held at Ettalong Diggers with 400 people from the community. Our waterways are not just for people using the ferries; they are for recreational fishers. Scott Levi on ABC lets me know whenever the channel is looking a bit dodgy.

Mr Geoff Provest: Good on the ABC.

Ms LIESL TESCH: Good on ABC radio Central Coast. I also support the comment of the member for Swansea that it impacts the yachting community and yachting competitions. It also happens in the Brisbane Water because sailing clubs miss out on competitions when the waterways are dredged. The sailing club misses out on

competitions, sailors miss out on competing against the Pittwater yachties and the Pittwater yachties miss out on competing against people in the Gosford environment. It is a super important resource. The Swansea Channel is another important waterway to keep open. The member for Swansea keeps me up to date, as does Marine Rescue, on how many rescues are undertaken in the Swansea Channel at the moment, which should not be happening.

I reiterate that we need a regular dredging program up and down the coast. It is a pity we have to call it out in Parliament. We need a solution that does not result in this. We are committed because we are coastal and bound by our waterways and this method of transportation. We need more than business cases. Another business case is being prepared in my community and we are slowly shifting the channel markers to make it safer, but I know that I do not want to go through that channel at the same time a ferry is coming the other way because it is not safe. Dredging is not on the horizon in the near future in the Brisbane Water. The father of the member for Fairfield is a fisherman and he knows the importance of keeping our waterways clear and active.

I thank the Government for supplying the \$6.2 million, but we need greater leadership to make sure that is being utilised regularly. I will finish by saying that the Palm Beach ferry is a crucial link between the Central Coast and Sydney, with 200,000 passengers per year travelling that route. It is important to look after our waterways, be proactive in maintaining them, and do so much more than a dredging plan. Dredgers are hard to get. We must plan in advance so that we know when it is happening and our lives that revolve around the beautiful waterways of New South Wales can be planned accordingly.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (16:20): I support the petitioners and thank the member for Myall Lakes for being active in campaigning for this. Dredging of rivers is controversial. Currently, the mouth of the Tweed River is about to be dredged. We are removing approximately 185,000 cubic metres of sand. Some members may remember that the Tweed River has a permanent sand bypass—established by a Labor government, I might add, which is good—that replenishes sand to the southern Gold Coast. On average, it pumps around 500,000 cubic metres of sand per annum. It is not cheap. In the past 12 or 15 years it has probably cost around \$200 million. It is jointly funded 50 per cent by New South Wales, 25 per cent by the Queensland Government and 25 per cent by the City of Gold Coast council. It really works.

Further south is Pottsville and the Cudgera Creek runs out there. Its breakwaters are being realigned and it has gone through dredging as well. There are some funds for dredging, but going through the process is lengthy and difficult. I have been an advocate to shorten it. I anticipate the frustration of the people around the Manning River. There are issues with the Environment Protection Authority [EPA] about seagrass and things like that. The whole process usually takes six months to two years to work out. There is difficulty in obtaining a dredge, which the member for Swansea and a few other members pointed out. The big ships that take it from the river mouth—and we dump it in Queensland—work on a schedule from Cairns all the way to Melbourne and all the way back. I am being honest. The difficulty is that if the dredge gets to the area and there are big seas and storms, it waits for a time but then it moves on. It only comes back when it works its way back. It is like painting the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Do we need more money? Yes. Do we need our own dredges? Perhaps.

In my final few minutes I say that there is a significant push, particularly on the North Coast, about dredging the rivers, whether it be the Richmond, the Tweed or the Wilson rivers, because of the vast quantities of mud from the floods. The difficulty with the EPA is that at the beginning of the clean-up it said people could not take the mud from their houses and dump it back in the river because it was toxic and had germs. There was an issue with how to dispose of the mud. To be honest, most people put it back in the river, believing it came from there. A lot of people believe in the older days when the river was dredged regularly. The mud is building up and the river is getting shallower. I have the same problems as the member for Gosford of ferries and cruise boats running aground.

I believe in dredging the river. We are spending over \$200 million on the Tweed Sand Bypass to affect maritime and it is not happening. The entrance is clear, but the sand up the river is building up. I acknowledge the environmental issues. I know how important seagrass is for fish breeding and mangrove swamps. I think we can do it better. It is a bit like the old days: If your downpipes are clogged up with leaves you will get flooding. That is what is happening to our river. Being an active river user, I am a firm believer that the greater the tidal flush, the healthier the river system.

We have had cases of fish kills and black water in Richmond—many issues like that—particularly after a flood where the water sits and cooks the cane. Weeks later it travels back and is full of acid sulphate soil. Just clearing the drains takes about six months because it requires five different government departments to sign: fisheries, water, council, drainage and the union. It is an enormously painful procedure. I support the petitioners. We must do something. The flood has been a big wake up call.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (16:25): On behalf of The Greens I speak in the discussion of the petition. I thank the member for Myall Lakes and his community. I am contributing to the debate because members

of that community have written to us. I will not address dredging because it is a very controversial issue in my electorate; I simply raise some of the environmental issues that must be taken into account. This is not an either-or sum game. We are sick to death of that. We are all much more sophisticated than that. I was pleased to hear the Minister for Agriculture speak today. We are hearing more and more that The Nationals are looking at things in a holistic way, which is welcome. It is not an either/or.

It is important to put on record that the feasibility studies of the Manning River estuary show there is cause for caution about some of the endangered and threatened species in that area, particularly beach-nesting birds. It is a unique river system because it is a two-mouth delta. Supposedly, it is the only one in the Southern Hemisphere. Birdlife Australia lists the Manning estuary as one of 57 sites of national importance in the *National Directory of Important Migratory Shorebird Habitat*. Both entrances of the Manning host a high diversity of shorebirds, of which four species meet the criteria for nationally significant populations.

One of the resident community members wrote to me to say that in the past 18 months they had seen 25 species of shorebird on the sand flats in the Manning, several of which are listed on either State, Federal or international red lists. Species seen at Harrington or Farquhar include the Far Eastern curlew, the bar-tailed godwit, great knot, red knot, red-necked stint and curlew sandpiper. It is incredibly important that a holistic view of the river is taken into account in the plan for dredging. I note the member for Tweed raised the issue of the Richmond River. Let me just say: Please help us fix the Richmond River.

Mr Geoff Provest: We could dredge it.

Ms TAMARA SMITH: If I thought dredging the Richmond River would return it to its glory, I would agree to it. Unfortunately, what we have is horrendous. We have a multitude of factors, not least of which is the need to stop cows getting in the river. We must do something about the acid sulphate soils that are running down. Unfortunately, the hundreds of flood drains that were put in place just after Federation are not cleaned and looked after. We continue to work with the cane growers to try to reduce some of the unnecessary green tape. I call it that because it is green tape; it has gone to the other extreme. But that does not mean we say, "Just dredge everything."

Mr Geoff Provest: We could work together on this.

Ms TAMARA SMITH: Exactly, and I would love to see that. I would love to see an approach that is reasonable and that does not endanger our beautiful beach-nesting birds or other vagrant birds. The sand flats at Farquhar Inlet are the only place in Australia that Aleutian terns have ever been recorded. That is extraordinary. They were first recorded in 2016 but not identified until a later review of photos in 2017. Changes in hydrology from estuary modification can be far reaching and tidal influence can be much stronger. We have certainly seen that in the mouth of the Richmond River in my electorate. We trialled a floating shark net. It was very innovative but it was a disaster. It literally floated out to sea because of the volume of water. The Greens in this State are not in the business of extremity for the hell of it. We think we can open the rivers to make them healthy again without sacrificing the environment. I thank the Manning River area residents who wrote to us to share their concerns about the protection of the environment and in particular the protection of shorebird and beach-nesting bird populations.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (16:30): In response: As the Parliamentary Secretary for Infrastructure and Cities, and Transport and Roads, I commend the member for Myall Lakes for bringing the petition before the House and the effort that he has gone to in his community. I have heard the member for Myall Lakes fondly talk about the mighty Manning in this Chamber a number of times, as has the Deputy Speaker. He is a great advocate for not only its recreational benefits but also its commercial benefits, hence the petition before us today. It is easy to understand why the member for Myall Lakes is seeking a reliable and permanent Manning River entrance. I am advised that when it is delivered, a permanent, reliable entrance would improve safety for commercial and recreational boat users and increase use of the river and investment opportunities right through the Manning Valley.

That is why the New South Wales Government has provided funding for the development of a strategic business case. It is important that such decisions with implications be made on a sound basis. That is what the strategic business case is designed to deliver. The strategic business case on the Manning River is designed to provide decision-makers with information that will help them make informed decisions on the progression of the project to the next phase, which will be a final business case. I understand that Infrastructure NSW is scheduled to start an independent assurance review of the strategic business case in August 2022 in accordance with its investor assurance framework.

I am advised that the strategic business case has concluded that a safe and reliable entrance would realise much benefit to the region. I understand the benefits would include an increase in local economic activity of approximately \$33 million a year in tourism, the creation of approximately 160 new jobs in the region and an

additional 30,000 boating trips each year. Perhaps more importantly, the entrance would also improve safety and reliability for both commercial and recreational vessels as well as improving water quality and waterway health. It is also recognised that it could mitigate risks associated with catchment flooding and coastal erosion, as well as inundation of public and private property. The Minister looks forward to the opportunity to update the House as progress on this takes place in the coming months.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (16:33): In reply: This has been a great petition discussion with a lot of great thinking and good wisdom from members of the House. I thank the member for Swansea, who expanded our knowledge of some of the challenges we have up and down the coast. Lake Macquarie has issues with navigation channels. I thank the member for Clarence for his wholehearted support. I thank the member for Gosford for her contribution. I loved the analogy of the member for Tweed about the blocked downpipe. That is probably the most adequate analogy we have heard today. The member for Ballina raised a number of environmental issues that we need to think about as we go forward with the final business case. I thank the Parliamentary Secretary for confirming that the Government is driving forward on this. It is on to it and both sides of the House want action, remembering that environmental outcomes are important as well.

But I think we can do both. We can open up the channel and increase growth in the area. We can increase the good quality social life that people have on the coast, supporting all those river and coastal communities. We hope that out of the last business cases we will see some permanent dredging going on and perhaps even an additional breakwall on the Harrington Inlet. Finally, from this House, I thank the people of Myall Lakes for putting together this petition and delivering it to the House. I also thank all those who led the community, including the member for Myall Lakes. It is a very important topic and we have heard you.

Petition noted.

Community Recognition Statements

LIVERPOOL WEST ROTARY CLUB FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (16:35): I congratulate the Rotary Club of Liverpool West on its fiftieth anniversary. The club was chartered on 28 June 1972 and since then its members have provided community service, international service, youth service and vocational service, as well as encouraged fellowship and fun within the club. A major focus of the club is supporting the local community. It supports some integral community groups and organisations on an annual basis, such as the Liverpool District Men's Shed, Liverpool Hospital Wig Library and Miracle Babies. It has also provided support through donations to various appeals for bushfire relief, flood recovery support and established the COVID Relief Project. Again, I congratulate the club on its milestone and thank it for the incredible service it has provided to the community over the past 50 years. I look forward to what the future holds.

NEWCASTLE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MARCH

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (16:36): "We won't be quiet. We won't be silent. We say no to domestic violence." That was the chant we heard at a powerful march in Newcastle on Saturday 23 July before hearing moving stories from people whose lives have been affected by domestic violence. I thank What Were You Wearing? for organising the march. In particular, I acknowledge Mackenzie Anderson's mum, Tabitha Acret, for sharing her absolutely gracious perspective. Instead of preparing for her late daughter's twenty-second birthday, Tabitha was working to help ensure that no other family has to endure what she has. Mackenzie was murdered by her ex-partner on 1 April this year. I am in awe of Tabitha's resilience and generosity of spirit. She, and so many other women, will not let the conversation end. I thank everyone who was involved in the march. We will always, and should always, say no to domestic violence.

TRIBUTE TO ROBIN AND PENNY KING

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (16:37): Sadly, and tragically, I regret sharing the news of the passing of one of the Australian Academy of Technological Science and Engineering [ATSE] fellows, who died very tragically just 10 days ago. Emeritus Professor Robin King and his wife were caught up in a tragic incident around Newcastle. Robin was a colleague of mine. He and Penny are survived by their four children and eight grandchildren. I got to know Robin through his leadership of the ATSE New South Wales chapter. He was a wonderful gentleman. He was my principal point of contact with ATSE that looks after all our engineers and scientists in New South Wales. In his career he quickly became a central figure in that area of activity in New South Wales. I pass on my condolences to his family with respect to Robin and his wonderful wife, Penny.

*Bills***NATIONAL PARKS AND WILDLIFE AMENDMENT (RESERVATIONS) BILL 2022****Returned**

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill without amendment.

*Private Members' Statements***SWANSEA ELECTORATE MARITIME WORKERS**

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (16:39): I acknowledge a significant set of events and circumstances affecting maritime workers in my community who work on Newcastle Harbour. Svitzer Towage, which employs over 500 workers nationally, is the sole provider of towage services for commercial shipping in the Newcastle Harbour. As a subsidiary of the global shipping giant AP Moller Maersk, Svitzer Australia is part of a multibillion-dollar international conglomerate. Last financial year, Maersk's revenue was almost US\$62 billion and over the past quarter revenue increased by a whopping 52 per cent and earnings more than doubled compared to the same quarter last year. However, at the same time local Svitzer executives are locked in a long-running dispute with their workforce that is unjust, unreasonable and indefensible. Svitzer Australia has not given its workforce a pay rise since 2019, when the last employment agreement expired. It is now pursuing a course of action in the Fair Work Commission which would deliver pay cuts of almost 50 per cent to their seagoing workforce.

Members will recall that a tugboat crew was sent from Newcastle Harbour to attend the rescue of the Portland Bay cargo ship off the coast of southern Sydney during wild weather in July. The Newcastle crew of Svitzer *Glenrock* sailed through the night to join the rescue effort near Cronulla, alongside crews aboard another Svitzer tug, the *Bullara*, and two tugs from Engage Marine, the *Maritinique* and *Diamantina*. The Premier of New South Wales described those workers on the four tugboats as heroes—and they are. I pay tribute to those workers and commend their professionalism, their skill and their bravery. The crew left their families, sailed into the dark of night, amidst shocking weather conditions, to prevent a humanitarian and environmental disaster that may have unfolded on the shores of the Royal National Park. When the wild weather struck and everyone else headed in, those staunch seafarers headed out. But while they came home to a heroes' welcome, they went back to work later that week with the threat of a pay cut from the bosses at Svitzer.

This company is a complete disgrace. The belligerence and pigheadedness on display from the managers of Svitzer Australia has no place in modern employment practices. We are battling some of the worst economic conditions for the working class we have seen in a generation—real wages have gone backwards while company profits have soared. Svitzer Towage, like many international shipping and logistics companies, has leveraged the COVID supply chain crisis to drive massive profits. Whereas many industries were destroyed by COVID, companies such as Svitzer have been given a licence to print money. It is now well and truly overdue for this company to share its eye-watering profits with its employees in the form of a fair pay rise. It must be a pay rise that takes into account shocking inflation, the spiralling cost of living and the fact that through delaying tactics and litigation its workers have already been denied pay rises in 2020 and 2021.

Last week, Svitzer workers from Newcastle Harbour joined a national Zoom briefing by the ACTU Secretary Sally McManus. The workforce heard from Ms McManus about the national campaign to abolish laws that allow rogue businesses and their belligerent managers to bully and intimidate their employees. I commend the Federal Minister for Workplace and Industrial Relations, Tony Burke, for his speech to the Australian Industry Group on those matters earlier this week. He has drawn a line in the sand on behalf of workers and their unions. My advice to Svitzer Australia and the global leadership of AP Moller Maersk is this: Read the room. Respect your workers. Bargain with their union in good faith. Give them the pay rise that they deserve. You have called them heroes, now pay them.

GOULBURN CHAMBER OF BUSINESS AWARDS

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government) (16:43): On Friday 5 August I had the privilege of supporting and attending the Goulburn Chamber of Commerce 2022 Awards evening. Hosted by the Goulburn Business Chamber, the awards evening was attended by approximately 200 people. It was wonderful to see businesses in our community supporting one another. Businesses in Goulburn were well represented and incredibly varied. In attendance were domestic services, restaurants, hair and beauty services, retail, automotive industries, training services, real estate, health, fitness and wellbeing, entertainment and much more. The range and variety of businesses was certainly impressive.

The Goulburn Business Chamber meets monthly to share ideas, strategies, referrals, information and services. The Goulburn Chamber of Commerce is a great first contact for new and existing Goulburn businesses. Members know the importance of business chambers in New South Wales; they help to identify key issues impacting local businesses and assist in finding ways for businesses to prosper and grow. I congratulate all the winners and will mention the recipients of the awards presented by me on the evening. The Excellence in Business award celebrates those businesses that stand out in the crowd. The 2022 winner was The Masala Mill, Goulburn's own Indian and Asian grocery store, which sells a wide variety of groceries from across the Asia and Pacific region.

The winner of the Excellence in Innovation, Sustainability or Social Enterprise award was Beks Bloomz, a Goulburn florist, which was established in 2010 and has been servicing the local community with fresh flowers since that time. It would be remiss of me not to mention the fee-free TAFE NSW Statement of Attainment in Introduction to Floristry course, for which Goulburn TAFE is currently taking enrolments. I note that the course is fully government-subsidised for eligible students. The Employer of Choice award is for the employer who goes above and beyond for their staff. The winner was Joanne McCauley of Jigsaw Tax and Advisory, established in 2008 by Joanne McCauley from an existing practice in Goulburn. This fantastic business prides itself on teamwork.

Elite Care and Support Services won the Start-up Superstar award, for those who have been in business for under two years. Elite Care and Support Services provides high-quality support to people living with a disability and supports them to achieve their goals at home or in a social community environment. The People's Choice award is awarded to the business that receives the most votes overall in any category. In 2022 the winner was Evolution Trophies, which began four years ago when the proprietors opened a trophy shop out of their shed with the goal of making finals time cheaper for their local soccer club. I congratulate the business community of Goulburn. I am so proud of its resilience and adaptation during another extremely difficult period. It was wonderful to see everyone together after the past couple of years. I am proud to be part of a government that is supportive of rural communities through programs and grants such as the Regional Growth Fund and Regional Recovery Fund. I will continue to support the wonderful work the Goulburn Business Chamber does for its community of businesses.

PENRITH ELECTORATE ACHIEVEMENTS

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith) (16:47): I take this opportunity to speak directly to the people of Penrith, the community that I love and am immensely privileged to represent in the Parliament. First, I thank the many people who have called, messaged, emailed, written, posted and even sent flowers to show their support in the days since my voluntary resignation from the ministry. I also take this opportunity to clear up any confusion that may exist in the community. I am still very much the member for Penrith and am absolutely committed to remaining the member for Penrith. It is my intention to seek the Liberal Party nomination for the seat of Penrith in the 2023 State election when the party opens nominations in the near future.

Over the 12 years that I have represented the Penrith community, I have had a strong track record of delivery. Penrith now has access to things that it could only have dreamed of under Labor, including the \$1 billion redevelopment of Nepean Hospital; the Yandhai Nepean Crossing; the widening of The Northern Road; and the widening of Mulgoa Road, which is underway. The section between Museum Drive and Union Road has been completed, with a new rail bridge installed. Penrith also has access to wonderful public spaces being constructed along the Nepean River on both River Road and Tench Reserve, and enhanced sporting facilities, like the synthetic fields at Jamison Park. Numerous schools have been upgraded. Last week I was able to meet with excited students and teachers at Cranebrook High and Nepean High, schools that were simply forgotten by Labor governments but have received new facilities now.

I love seeing a more confident and dynamic Penrith. It no longer accepts second rate and, as the geographical centre of the Western Parkland City, we know we deserve world-class infrastructure. That leads me to Penrith Stadium. The New South Wales Government has committed to the full redevelopment of Penrith Stadium. I know that the Government will deliver for the Penrith community, unlike past Labor governments. Infrastructure NSW has identified Penrith Paceway as the preferred site for the new stadium and has commenced commercial negotiations with the site owners. The intention of the negotiations is to allow the paceway's operations to continue on a new site in the Penrith local government area. It is not an eviction without a plan. It is important that this House and the Penrith community know that the clear intention of the paceway operators is to relocate regardless of a stadium being built there.

The paceway operators are in a secretive and exclusive partnership to develop the site with as many as 3,000 apartments, including 34 towers ranging from two to 22 storeys high. Most of those towers are above 12 storeys high. I lay upon the table a document that reflects the development plan. This is the dictionary definition of overdevelopment. To be clear, the paceway operators have zero intention of keeping the showground or the

harness racing on the site. To make matters worse, I am advised by Penrith City Council that the site is zoned for recreation and that the council has informed the paceway and its secret development partner that the site is not appropriate for apartment development, yet they persist. I know this because I have been supporting The Penrith Museum of Printing to find a new location after it was told by the paceway that it had to make way for apartments.

I take this opportunity to say to the management of Penrith Paceway: If you really do not want an apartment development on your site, then walk away from your secret development partner and be up-front with the people of Penrith and your members that you have done so. This is a clear choice between a best-option stadium with a relocated harness track or a suboptimal stadium on the existing site and massive overdevelopment of the existing paceway. I have found the recent remarks of both the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Chris Minns, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the other place, the Hon. John Graham, to be very disturbing. Last night, Mr Graham said of the paceway:

They were making plans for this site. Plans for how the site could be developed ...

How long has Mr Graham known about the secret plan to carpet-bomb Penrith Paceway with thousands of apartments? Is that the real reason why this week the Leader of the Opposition told *The Western Weekender* that he is not committed to the stadium? I will make it easy for you, Mr Minns: It is either the overdevelopment of apartments or a stadium. I know what I will be doing. I will be fighting every day for what is good for Penrith, which in this case is a new stadium on the paceway site, rather than thousands of apartments that Penrith does not want or need.

WOLLONGONG HOSPITAL

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (16:52): I raise the issue of pressures on a vital piece of social infrastructure in the Illawarra that serves the region—Wollongong Hospital. It has been under incredible pressure and strain of late. I keep hearing reports that time and again patients are facing longer and longer waits and staff are facing more difficult challenges when treating patients, particularly in the emergency department. I looked back on the independent health statistics that are reported periodically. From January to March 2015, 64 per cent of people who presented to the emergency department at Wollongong Hospital were able to get treatment and leave the emergency department within the recommended four hours. Four hours is a clinically recommended time, not just an arbitrary key performance indicator set by bureaucrats.

Fast-forward to January to March 2022, the most recent period for which those independent Bureau of Health Information statistics are available. The proportion of people leaving the Wollongong Hospital emergency department within four hours has dropped to 44.7 per cent. That is a 20 per cent drop over a period of seven years, at a time when we should be investing in our health services to make sure that people are treated and leave the emergency department on time or are admitted as they need to be. Instead, in Wollongong, the third-largest city in the State, in an A-class teaching hospital, there has been a 20 per cent reduction in the proportion of people leaving the emergency department within the clinically recommended four hours.

That prompted me to have a further look at some of those statistics. The median time that people were spending in the emergency department at that time—again, I go back to January to March 2015, that first quarter of 2015—was two hours and 53 minutes. Most people would think two hours and 53 minutes is a reasonably long time to be spending in an emergency department but, again, fast-forward to the same quarter—the first quarter of January to March 2022—some seven years later, and the median time people are spending in the Wollongong Hospital emergency department is four hours and 29 minutes. That is an addition of basically an hour and a half in the median time that people are spending in the emergency department.

Coupled with that are other pressures on the health system in the Illawarra that are bearing themselves out. The availability of GP services has reduced, where people have either downgraded and not continued to bulk-bill in their GP practices, or GPs are leaving the system or deciding to work part-time—effectively, reducing the number of GP hours that are available to people. I welcome the fact that the newly elected Federal member for Cunningham has committed to a Medicare urgent care service to provide some relief on the emergency department and GP services and to make sure there are bulk-billed services. While Wollongong is a relatively wealthy and growing city, it also has pockets of extreme poverty in the area—among them, suburbs with some of the State's lowest incomes and lowest socio-economic scores—that we must ensure have access to health services, lest their position gets worse.

Another emerging problem in the local health services is that about 100 people a night are in Wollongong Hospital beds who need to be in aged-care services. That is another block that we must work through. We must relieve some of that pressure. I know that the team at the local health district is working on that problem, but the reality is that the New South Wales Government's promise of additional staff cannot come quickly enough. The Illawarra needs a good allocation of those additional staff. Labor worked with the Government and drove the Government to reluctantly commit to building a new hospital at Shellharbour and a new facility at Warrawong to

service those poorer communities and to make sure they had access. That needs to happen immediately, but we must also ensure that we have the staffing complement that matches the demand in this growing city so that we can have the health services that our city deserves.

WIN THE DAY CHARITY

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro) (16:57): Last Sunday, a GoFundMe page was launched for Maddison and Jared Lamperd, who live in Googong, a thriving suburb in my Monaro electorate. The couple's infant daughter, Arielle, just 17 months old, has been diagnosed with leukaemia. According to the family friend who launched the page, before this news Arielle had been her bubbly self and was fortunate to have only caught the typical day care illnesses that most children do. Naturally the news has devastated the family. Arielle and her mum have had to relocate to Sydney for the next 12 to 18 months while Arielle undergoes intensive medical treatment at the Sydney Children's Hospital. Maddison has had to forfeit her employment due to the inability to work remotely. The fundraising page was launched so that relatives and friends can help provide financial support to the family through this challenging period.

Sadly, it is a story not unique to the Lamperds. Families from rural and remote communities, living in the Monaro and right across the State, experience the same plight day after day. Each year in Australia 770 children aged up to 14 years old are diagnosed with cancer; almost half of those are between birth and four. Most are diagnosed with leukemia, tumours of the central nervous system or brain tumours, and lymphomas. Two-thirds of childhood cancer patients will have long-lasting chronic conditions from the treatments they receive. Children diagnosed with very rare cancers have less chance of survival. Getting the news that your child has cancer is unimaginable for those of us who have not gone through it. The extraordinary emotional toll cannot be calculated. Unfortunately, the financial toll can, and it is immense.

The study *Childhood cancer: its impact and financial costs for Australian families* found that in addition to the expected high social and emotional impacts, a majority of families reported suffering from great or moderate economic hardship. A second study, *Hidden financial costs in treatment for childhood cancer: an Australian study of lifestyle implications for families absorbing out-of-pocket expenses*, showed 80 per cent of the sample reported a minimum of five different out-of-pocket expenses, which totalled an average value of \$19,064. With all of that in mind, Win the Day Charity is a small, little-known charity based in Queanbeyan that offers financial support to families experiencing the stress and chaos that occurs when a child has cancer and needs to seek treatment away from home.

Like many charities, Win the Day was born through need when the young daughter of Kristy Tai-Giteau, a former Australian rugby union Wallaroo, was diagnosed with a rare cancer and she had to move her daughter closer to treatment. Within 48 hours of receiving a diagnosis, Kristy had to take her sick daughter to Sydney, leaving her eight-month-old son and seven-year-old daughter in Queanbeyan with her husband, Sok. The next six months included numerous tests, surgeries, protocols of chemotherapy and hospital stays until they were finally told that Ka'ili appeared cancer-free.

After three months of joyous family life back home, Kristy and Sok received the terrible news that Ka'ili's cancer had returned. She was told she needed to move to Sydney for an unspecified length of time. They needed to source accommodation near the hospital, which was another expense they could not afford, and they had exhausted all of their leave during the first round of treatment. It was during that challenging time that Kristy realised more services needed to be available for families. Win the Day Charity provides one-off financial grants to families for accommodation, carer meals and some medical treatments. It also offers a welcome pack, full of helpful hints and valuable social connections. According to Kristy, one way we could assist families as a government is to look at a meals service in the hospitals where treatment is offered. That would possibly allow parents and carers to purchase low-cost meals without having to leave their children alone to go and buy their food.

In talking to local families living with cancer, it is clear that while cancer does not discriminate, the services available do. Helping ease the burden for families so they can focus on supporting their children through the biggest battle of their lives and how that might be achieved is something that deserves the attention of us all. In 2021 Win the Day Charity raised more than \$33,000 to assist families. As the brand awareness of this charity grows, so too does its ability to raise funds and support families—for example, at a recent fundraising day, held by the Queanbeyan Whites Rugby Union Club, more than \$72,000 was raised—and so are their plans to try to expand this charity and the wonderful, much-needed services it provides. Accordingly, I encourage everyone—individuals, communities, the people of Monaro and governments of all colours and levels—to jump on board and help cancer kids "Win the Day".

KOGARAH ELECTORATE TOLL ROADS

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (17:02): During the past few weeks my staff have been speaking to residents of Bexley, Bexley North and Kingsgrove in my electorate of Kogarah. Today I convey to the House the anger and frustration those residents spoke of about the Government's tolling regime in New South Wales. Those residents are good people, who work hard to get ahead and provide opportunities for their children. But their lives, in many instances, have been turned upside down by the Government's decision to put a new toll on the M5 East, travelling in both directions.

Residents are now forced to use ear plugs in order to sleep at night; others have had to move their beds to another part of their house. Some now rely on medicines to regulate their sleep. All are suffering from the noise of trucks hurtling past their houses at every hour and every night of the week. Residents lucky enough to have a noise abatement application approved are being told they must wait until 2025 before they can get access to soundproofing. Other residents raised the many traffic accidents and near misses that they have witnessed. They are scared to let their kids go for a walk to the local shops or parks because of the dramatic and drastic increase in speeding and dangerous driving.

When the toll was put on the M5 East, an extra 7,500 vehicles were recorded per day at the intersection of Forest Road and Stoney Creek Road in Bexley. On nearby Harrow Road, the number of heavy vehicle movements went from 610 per day to 2,695—a 300 per cent increase. Last week the upper House released its findings from the inquiry into the impact of the Government's toll regime. The report was scathing. In addition to the obvious, the Government spent \$3.5 billion on new tunnel and toll road infrastructure that made surface traffic in Sydney's metropolitan area worse as a result—the exact opposite, no doubt, of the intention of the infrastructure.

The upper House inquiry report stated the decision to not publicly release the contract details about WestConnex until 2060 was an "abuse of Executive power". There is a severe lack of transparency regarding the Government's tolling contracts. We do not know what is in the contracts or what New South Wales taxpayers have been signed up for. However, we do know that tolls will increase by a minimum of 4 per cent each year, every year, and we know that New South Wales motorists are already paying \$2 billion in tolls every year. The upper House committee found that the suburb of Bexley is:

... bearing the brunt of a deeply flawed pricing regime which, perversely, acts as a deterrent to heavy vehicles using the infrastructure designed for them.

Just before the M5 East toll started there was an extension of no-stopping zones and clearways in the Bexley town centre. This resulted in shopfront kerbside parking being removed, in many cases destroying local businesses. Local business owner Angelo Elliott, who owns the Forest Inn Hotel at Bexley, said the tolls have "strangled" local business. He stated:

There is no parking, there are no people, there are no shoppers and the shops are all poor.

Another local business owner, Ahmad Sleitini, who owns a pharmacy on Forest Road, said of the tolls that people do not come to the area anymore. He stated:

We are actually doing a quarter of what we used to do two or three years ago.

...

What has happened has actually poisoned the community and has poisoned the local businesses ...

In June I hosted a public meeting at Bexley RSL Club to discuss the impact of the Perrottet Government's tolling regime. It was attended by more than 300 people. A resolution was unanimously passed at that meeting that called on the Government to release the M8 and M5 East traffic network performance study, which was promised to us one year ago. The upper House inquiry also demanded that the report be released. The people in my community who live in St George, along with the residents of Sydney's west, are paying the price for the Government's failed policies, which have made Sydney the most tolled city on the face of the earth.

TWEED ELECTORATE DEVELOPMENT

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (17:06): I give the "State of the Tweed" address for 2022. While we started the year with the most horrific flooding, we are starting to see movement with the construction of accommodation pods for displaced residents across the Tweed. It is not an easy and simple thing to do, but we must do it. We need to get our residents out of tents and motels, and back into accommodation and some sort of normality, while their homes get rebuilt and people figure out what they can do.

These past few weeks have seen the Tweed Valley Hospital development reach a major milestone, hitting its highest point of construction. On 2 August I was joined at the topping-out ceremony by the Deputy Premier, Paul Toole, and the Minister for Regional Health, Bronnie Taylor, to celebrate that significant milestone for the

incredible new health facility. The facility will double the capacity of existing hospitals to meet the current and future healthcare needs of this community, which has grown by 6,000 people since the project was first announced.

Work is ramping up as the project moves into the internal fit-out stage, with around 400 people onsite each day. With the hospital reaching its full structural height, construction teams will continue work on the internal fit-out of the building, service installation and the hospital's facade. A new \$50 million multistorey car park will also be delivered as part of the project. When completed, it will provide staff, patients and visitors with free parking—I repeat, free parking—with over 1,200 car park spaces at the new hospital campus. Construction is underway and on track to open in 2023.

The Tweed's iconic Captain Cook Memorial Lighthouse—the first laser lighthouse in Australia—is set to receive a brand-new kiosk, improved coastal vantage points and a gallery highlighting the cultural significance of the area thanks to more than \$2 million from the New South Wales Government. The works will reinvigorate Tweed's Captain Cook Memorial Lighthouse precinct, making it a better place to spend time for both locals and visitors, with more car parking and amenities for visitors and more investment in Marine Rescue, which does a fabulous job. The Captain Cook Memorial Lighthouse has been a significant attraction for more than 50 years, and the upgrades will give that iconic landmark a new lease on life.

Our much-loved fluffy animals the koalas have finally had the ribbon cut on the official opening of their new treatment and research facility at Pottsville. Previous environment Minister Gabrielle Upton played a significant part in gaining that funding. The Tweed Coast Koala Research Hub commenced operations in February 2021. It includes enclosure shelters capable of holding up to eight koalas and a food plantation of 1,800 trees to feed koalas being cared for, as well as pathways, landscaping, fencing and other infrastructure. The facility creates a home away from home for koalas that are sick and injured. It also makes it easier to ensure Far North Coast koala populations are inoculated with the chlamydia jab as part of ongoing vaccine trials. Over the past year the success of the program has been highlighted, with at least 10 joeys born to vaccinated koalas. This is done in partnership with Currumbin Wildlife Hospital—I mention Michael Pyne, its head vet for 30-odd years—which has been instrumental in making this happen. Currently we are working on a system to patent the koala chlamydia vaccination so we can distribute it right across Australia.

Members might ask why koalas get infected with chlamydia. There are two reasons. The first reason is that they have a retrograde gene that makes them quite susceptible. The second reason—and not many people are aware of this—is that during breeding season a koala is likely to have four or five sexual partners within 24 hours. This probably explains why they sleep for 22 hours a day, but I am not a vet or a scientist. Apart from habitat, chlamydia is a major threat to our iconic species.

Finally, I am currently working with the Green Heroes, an environmental group in the Tweed, on a project to save green turtles. In my electorate we have habitat for green turtles and loggerhead turtles. The turtles come ashore and lay their eggs, but the big seas come and wash those eggs away. We take the eggs, we incubate them and we let them go. Cook Island is significant in Dreamtime stories as being a turtle. Due to the temperatures in our seas we have males in the Tweed electorate. I have been learning about turtles. Believe it or not, they swim all the way to Chile. Five years later they come all the way back. When they get back here they look for the little girls, which are all up north, and they chuck a right and head up there. Once again, I feel very honoured to join our local environmental groups and protect the local Tweed environment, particularly the turtles and koalas. I am 100 per cent for the Tweed.

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse) (17:11): I feel I must respond to the private member's statement of the member for Tweed. Having had the pleasure of supporting his efforts, and knowing his commitment to sustainability and the environment over a number of years, it is very gratifying to hear the scorecard that he gave of himself and efforts to reward his local community. I know his passion for koalas. I know his passion for green turtles. I have seen it myself when visiting his electorate on a number of occasions. Through his enthusiasm, his hard work, his passion and his ability to make a strong argument to decision-makers and influencers to look after our important species, one can see that he has made a big difference—for his community and for New South Wales and Australia—to the health and future prospects of koalas and green turtles.

DAVIDSON ELECTORATE COMMONWEALTH GAMES PARTICIPANTS

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson) (17:12): I congratulate three of my constituents who competed at the recent 2022 Commonwealth Games as part of the medal tally-topping Australian team. Mackenzie Little, Steve Solomon, and William Yang all achieved the honour of pulling on an Australian uniform at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games. Swimmer William Yang won two gold medals, 400-metre sprinter Steve Solomon made the finals and came seventh, and javelin thrower Mackenzie Little won a silver medal. They have all put in many years of hard work and training to achieve excellence in their respective sports.

In May this year 23-year-old William Yang, a NSW Institute of Sport scholarship holder, became the Australian men's 100-metre freestyle swimming champion at the Australian Swimming Championships. Surprisingly, before winning that title he had taken eight months off from the sport and was close to quitting. Previously William had excelled in butterfly and backstroke before deciding to concentrate on freestyle. His first Commonwealth Games gold was for the mixed 4 x 100 metres freestyle relay. His teammates were Kyle Chalmers, Mollie O'Callaghan and Emma McKeon. His second Commonwealth Games gold was for winning the men's 4 x 100 metres freestyle relay. William swam the third leg and his teammates were Flynn Southam, Zac Incerti and Kyle Chalmers, who swam the final leg of the race.

Runner Steve Solomon is a two-time Olympian who is very aware of the mental pressure of elite sport. He is an ambassador for the Australian Institute of Sport's Mental Fitness Program. As a teenager, soon after changing his focus from rugby to running, Steve became the junior and senior national champion in the 400 metres race. Steve was 19 when he ran in his first Olympic final at the 2012 London Olympics. He was the first Australian to make the 400 metres men's final for 24 years. Steve also competed at the Tokyo Olympics. Six of the eight sprinters who made the 400 metres final at the World Athletics Championships a few weeks ago in Oregon were competing at Birmingham. The 400 metres men's final had a high-quality field of runners. It was one of the most competitive and exciting events at the 2022 Commonwealth Games. Steve Solomon put in a very creditable performance and came seventh.

Mackenzie Little is a medical student who represented Australia in javelin at the Tokyo Olympics. She gained junior international medal success in the sport by winning a gold medal. She started her athletics journey at Northern Suburbs Little Athletics in the under-6s, but moved on to team sports, playing soccer, softball, water polo and hockey as she grew older. She became a javelin thrower almost by accident when rain cancelled her hurdles competition at Pymble Ladies' College and she tried her hand at the sport. Mackenzie competed in javelin as a teenager at a national level in the 400 metres hurdles and heptathlon. Mackenzie missed out on a podium result for javelin at the World Championships a few weeks ago, throwing a new personal best of 63.22 metres to finish in fifth place.

At the Commonwealth Games, having led for most of the women's javelin final, Mackenzie was pipped at the post for the gold medal position by teammate Kelsey-Lee Barber. Mackenzie held on to her trademark bright smile, having thrown a personal best of 64.27 metres to win the silver medal. I congratulate Mackenzie Little, Steve Solomon and William Yang, along with all the Australian sportspeople who competed in Birmingham. Well done to them for their hard work. Their talent was clearly on display at the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

TOPLACE REZONING REVIEW

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (17:17): I express great concern about a rezoning review for Toplace at 146-154 O'Riordan Street, Mascot. The spot rezoning application in effect proposes to double the height of the development from 22 metres to 44 metres to deliver a mixed-use outcome for 253 hotel rooms, 562 serviced apartments, 288 square metres of restaurant floor space and 906 square metres of retail floor space. It is not the first time that I have raised my concern about this spot rezoning application. I first did so on 21 August 2019, when I observed that the proposal breached a section 9 (1) direction of the Minister as inconsistent with the objects of the Botany Bay Local Environmental Plan 2013, and failed the requirements of clause 4.3 due to its visual impact. I put on record then that this spot rezoning is an extraordinary and improper use of planning powers.

The then planning Minister was in the House at the time and he encouraged me to express my views to him in writing, which I recall doing. That application was subsequently refused by the elected councillors despite the views of various planning panels. I have put on record in this House before that the planning application was a textbook example of how to get a dodgy rezoning application through a planning panel. When I printed out all of the documentation, it was about two feet high. The elected councillors refused the application and now it is being reviewed by the department. The councillors refused the application on planning grounds, which were as follows: the proposal is excessive in height, it adjoins a low-rise residential zone, it adjoins an item of local heritage significance under the Bayside Local Environmental Plan 2021—namely, Mascot Oval—and it is not in the best interests of the community.

Since that application was considered initially by the elected councillors for a spot rezoning, a council-wide local environmental plan [LEP] was adopted in 2021 in which the council again looked at the appropriate zoning of the site and determined a maximum height of 22 metres. So a spot rezoning was again applied for, despite the fact that the site adjoins a heritage park, the proposed development would be higher than any other building in the immediate vicinity and it adjoins a residential area. At 44 metres in height the development would tower over the park and the residential community. The elected councillors have refused the rezoning application and so the developers have scurried to the department with a ridiculous proposition from Urban Design.

Whilst I accept that this State must provide the ability for rezoning reviews to be conducted when there are substantial errors, the council fails to consider the application properly, or if the matter is of State or regional significance—I concede that there should be a reserve power; in fact, there has always been that reserve power—but when democratically elected councillors make conscious decisions that the height of the proposal not its use is unacceptable, then it must be valued by the law, it must be valued by the State and it must be valued by the planning department.

Councillors and mayors are not easily ignored, as they express the very informed view that they are elected to make. As I have said, an LEP has only just been considered and the area has been zoned to permit building heights of 22 metres—and again in the second city-wide LEP in eight years—yet the department thinks it can easily overturn the decision of elected councillors. Quite frankly, in my view that is grossly improper. This application should not be given any consideration by this Government, by Labor if it is in government or by the council.

CAMDEN ELECTORATE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST RECIPIENTS

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (17:22): I am pleased to acknowledge a handful of men and women who have been honoured in the 2022 Queen's Birthday Honours list for their positive contribution to the Camden community. They come from different backgrounds and fields, and their diversity reflects the diversity of the community and adds to its richness. I acknowledge Ms Rosemary Kariuki, OAM, a local resident who is truly inspiring. Since 2006 she has served as Multicultural Community Liaison Officer for the NSW Police Force to the Macarthur region. Rosemary directed the 2020 film *Rosemary's Way*, which tells her heartwarming and inspiring story of how she overcame adversity to create a more inclusive community. Rosemary is also the co-founder of the African Women's Dinner Dance, which was established in 2006, and she contributes her time to the African Women's Group. Rosemary dedicates her time for the benefit of the community, not for recognition but on behalf of the community. I thank her for all her work.

I also acknowledge the late Dr Richard Dunstan, OAM. I have to say that the award of Dr Dunstan's OAM is bittersweet—bitter because he is no longer with us but sweet because of the great work and service he performed for the community. Although Rick is no longer with us, his legacy continues. His life's work created a legacy and an impact on the community that will stand the test of time. Rick selflessly dedicated himself to the work of medicine and paediatrics to a high calibre of excellence without the want for recognition. Yet a person of his stature, with a career spanning more than four decades, is most deserving of his recognition.

I would also like to acknowledge Mr Jason Ellsmore, who has deservedly been honoured in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for significant service to education and to youth sports. While Jason does not live in Camden he is a life member and secretary of the Campbelltown Camden District Cricket Club, the Ghosts. Jason's significant service and contributions cannot be overstated. His service and involvement span back to the late 1980s. Jason's dedication to education and youth sports, particularly in cricket, is varied and impressive and he carries with him a wealth of experience which has benefited the community and created a lasting example of excellence and service. On behalf of the Camden community I sincerely thank Jason for his service.

I would also like to acknowledge Mr Paul Nunnari. Paul has been awarded the Public Service Medal for his outstanding public service to the community, and especially for his commitment in the field of access and inclusion. Paul is tireless and committed to increasing opportunities for people with a disability to access and participate in the community and its services. As a result of his instrumental work, thousands of projects and programs across New South Wales are designed to ensure all people can access these sites and services. Paul's excellent and expansive work includes the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan, which he co-led. He is truly a public service leader in every sense of the word, setting an inspirational example. His impact will be of benefit to people across New South Wales. For that I thank Paul on behalf of the Camden community.

I would also like to acknowledge Mr Mark Gibbs. Mark has been awarded the Ambulance Service Medal for his inspiring work with NSW Ambulance. He began his career in 1987. His commitment and dedication to his work, his team and patients only continues to grow. Whether on the front line or in operational management positions, his passion for ensuring and providing high level care to the community has been outstanding. It is remarkable that he undertook the role of patient advocate while leading his team of over 400 paramedics and continued to ensure that their needs were at the forefront of all operations. On behalf of the community I thank Mark for his selfless service.

HUNTER VALLEY FLOOD MITIGATION SCHEME

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (17:27): Tonight as I speak about flooding in Maitland I will refer to some of the substantial issues that the people of my electorate are still facing. Before I deal in detail with flooding, I extend my heartfelt thanks to all of the people of my community who stepped up during the floods and

who include, of course, all our emergency service workers and volunteers. But I especially thank people who do normal jobs that are not related to emergency services and who went above and beyond. They were truly inspiring. At another time I will take the time to thank them. I also hope that people in my community will nominate them for local community hero awards, which will be appropriate recognition for them.

The subject I wish to discuss in detail was mentioned during question time today when the member for Upper Hunter asked a question that was directed to the Minister for Lands and Water about flood mitigation. The Minister referred to the Hunter Valley Flood Mitigation Scheme and some funding, which was very interesting because I asked a question of that Minister, the Premier, the Treasurer and the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience in a letter dated 3 August which followed a letter dated 28 July. The nub of the issue is that during recent flood events in Maitland we suffered significant damage to the levee banks in and around Maitland, notably at Pitnacree, Horseshoe Bend and Cultivation Road at South Maitland.

A text message was sent out about the Cultivation Road event to 53,000 people, which indicates there was a lot of community concern about that. There was an error in that message and it should not have been sent to people in Lorn because, if it had been sent to the people in Lorn on the northern side of the river and people in South Maitland at the same time, it is a show stopper flood and everyone in Maitland is underwater. But that error aside, there were real concerns about the flood event. I congratulate all the people who worked on that—people like Andrew McIntyre from the Hunter Valley Flood Mitigation Scheme for whom I hold special regard because he was available to our community throughout the flood period by mobile. It was a level of support that was unprecedented in my experience over the past seven years as a member of Parliament.

I asked the Premier, the Minister for Water and Lands, the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience and the Treasurer when they were going to do something about the flood mitigation scheme. I have been asking for a flood plan for Maitland to be updated from the 2013 edition, so prior to the 2015 super storms and prior to the time when we had about 20,000 or 30,000 people in Maitland whereas now we have 90,000 people, but it was just complete crickets from the Government side of the House. In the briefing I had with the Premier at the Emergency Operations Centre during the floods, they talked about \$50 million worth of backdated flood works required from the March 2021 event—over 15 months ago. By the Minister answering the question, which came from all of my correspondence to the member for Upper Hunter, what we learnt today is that the announcement made by the member for Upper Hunter with my local mayor after all this correspondence was that that \$50 million that was announced as additional funding was actually from the budget.

The Government made an announcement before the flood in the budget period—over eight years—and now it is trying to say that the amount has been allocated in response to significant breaches of the levee. I want the Premier and the Minister for Lands and Water to come back to me directly as the local member for these areas, as a matter of courtesy and as a matter of appropriate parliamentary practice and good governance, and explain what additional funding will be provided to my community to address the funding issues. It is not just the \$50 million from the March event; there was damage worth tens of millions of dollars in the November 2021 floods, which was not recognised by this Government because it does not have an up-to-date flood plan; then there was the March event of this year and the more recent event we just had.

We cannot afford to play politics with flood in our community. Maitland was the home and the start of the State Emergency Service [SES] in 1955. That over \$800 million flood mitigation scheme asset deserves to be treated with respect, completed and fixed to preserve the safety and lives of everyone in my community.

NORTH SHORE ELECTORATE ROTARY CLUBS

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (17:32): I acknowledge the incredible and passionate work of the many Rotarians in my local community. Many in this place would know—and maybe members themselves are members of Rotary—that Rotary is a worldwide network of over 1.4 million inspired individuals who translate their passions into relevant social causes to change lives in their environments. Being part of Rotary is a calling for many in my community and they have heeded that call. I am proud to recognise the four local Rotary clubs that I have in my electorate. They are the Rotary Clubs of Mosman, North Sydney, Crows Nest, and North Sydney Sunrise and they all do an incredible job whether it is raising money for charity or being an integral part of our community and doing acts of service locally, nationally and across the world.

Recently many of our Rotary clubs held their annual changeover dinners, which are always a wonderful evening particularly after the last couple of years where the dinners have been, let me say, disjointed at best. The dinners are where the past president hands over the baton to the new president and the incoming executive. I congratulate the Rotary Club of Mosman board members for 2022-23, who are Mark Wallis, Richard Vahtrick, Graeme Robinson, David Jackson, Brian Owles, Ruth Thompson, Martin Fallows, Di McKenzie, Derek Andrew, Halyna Koscharsky, Barry Starr, and Dom Rabu. I was fortunate to join a number of them for lunch just yesterday. They came along for a lively viewing of question time in this Chamber. I thank them for visiting and for the work

they do as well as spending much of the time updating me about a number of their projects, particularly how membership is faring now that we are seeing more of the community emerge from COVID. Some areas of the community still have a reluctance to do so, including some members of our community organisations. The Rotary Club of Mosman members contribute their time, energy, and passion to sustainable, long-term projects both within Australia and across the globe. Each project has its own specific humanitarian aims but common to all is a desire to make the world a better place, particularly in areas that include disease prevention and treatment, disaster relief, water and sanitation. Many in my community would have purchased a Mosman-themed puzzle from Mosman Rotary and I also have one that sits in my office. I will have to get on to doing it—I should have during COVID. It is a beautiful item in my office.

I congratulate the Rotary Club of North Sydney board members for 2022-23: Geoff Pritchard, OAM; Toni Field, OAM; Ross Waugh; Denis Booth; John Taylor; Peter Lulic; Samantha Lee; Jiji Lee; David Field; Peter Fitzgerald; and Mal Sharpe. The Rotary Club of North Sydney is one of the foundation clubs of Australia. It was chartered on 16 August 1928 and was then only the third Rotary club to be chartered in New South Wales. North Sydney has a number of local projects, including activities that serve to improve life in local communities as well as international projects. It also embraces the local business community with vocational service activities, and supports and stimulates youth in the local community. It also supports the delivery of the Crows Nest Market.

I congratulate the Rotary Club of North Sydney Sunrise board members: Allen Colburt, Andrew Young, Cathie Glinka, Don Napper, Iain Clark, Allan Coates, Ken Preshaw and Greg Blainey. I am fortunate to be a member of North Sydney Sunrise. Since I joined, my sunrises are now spent more with my small people than with my Rotary club, but they are kind enough to let me join them at other times for dinners and different activities and events. It is incredible to be a part of something where one can see and experience the work, spirit and ethos of members of our community. North Sydney Sunrise raises funds through an annual World Festival of Magic event, barbeques and other activities to support a range of causes aligned with the values and ethos of rotary. Its efforts have assisted causes and community organisations such as the Australian Rotary Health Research Fund, Crows Nest Centre and Hands Across the Water in Thailand. It also undertakes a range of different activities locally to protect our local natural environment, including World Cleanup Day.

I congratulate the Rotary Club of Crows Nest board members: Ross Gugliotta, Mark Staples, Owen Houston, Angelo Raveane, Sue Raveane, Ian Pocock, Bill Lee, Tom Sweeney, OAM, and George Condell. Over the years the Rotary Club of Crows Nest has helped the Crows Nest Centre, North Sydney Boys High School and North Sydney Girls High School—

Mrs Shelley Hancock: Hear, hear!

Ms FELICITY WILSON: Yes, the former school of the member for South Coast. It has built 19 schools in China and raised thousands of dollars for End Polio as well as a range of other causes, such as The Fred Hollows Foundation and Duchenne muscular dystrophy. I congratulate these local Rotary clubs and the new executives coming on board. I look forward to seeing the incredible work they continue do. I give a special thank you to all our Rotarians across New South Wales.

MARINE RESCUE JERVIS BAY 41 VESSEL

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (17:37): Only yesterday I spoke about Marine Rescue NSW, and I spoke about it earlier today as well. It has been the week of Marine Rescue. Mr Speaker, you might not have much marine rescue work in your electorate, but in mine so much work is carried out by wonderful volunteers because of our beaches and waterways. The South Coast units are incredible units. As the member for South Coast I have had a lot to do with them over the past almost 20 years. They save people who are stranded on coastal waterways for various reasons, like running out of petrol or batteries running flat. Members have no idea all the reasons that people get stranded, but they do. Today I speak about a special event that I attended last month to commission a new vessel for the Jervis Bay unit. Most people will know the beautiful Jervis Bay. The new vessel is the *Jervis Bay 41* or the *John Gallimore*, named after one of the volunteer stalwarts of the unit who is sadly now deceased.

In the Shoalhaven area we are blessed with beautiful waterways. Jervis Bay itself is one of the jewels in the crown of my electorate. During holiday periods, in particular, visitors swarm to our area in thousands. With their tinnies on their cars or towing their boats behind their four-wheel drives, they drive down the Princes Highway to enjoy our beautiful waterways. I noted on the day we commissioned the new boat, however, that recent weather events and various other circumstances have led to less than the usual influx of locals and visitors venturing out to sea, but we can absolutely expect those numbers to increase as the weather warms and hopefully the rain goes away.

The Marine Rescue Jervis Bay unit is one of the busiest in New South Wales and it is therefore appropriate that it is well equipped, on this occasion, to receive one of the best rescue vessels in the State. The New South Wales Government has provided record investment to our Marine Rescue units, which sometimes goes understated in this place. I am here to say that they are well funded with this Government's record funding. Since our election in 2011, I have witnessed on numerous occasions the results of that investment in all the South Coast units.

The *Jervis Bay 41*, or *John Gallimore*, is one of 38 new vessels funded by a \$37.6 million four-year State Government investment to support the vital lifesaving work of NSW Marine Rescue volunteers. The vessel was built in New South Wales by Harwood Marine on the North Coast, supporting local jobs and a world-class ship-building industry here in New South Wales. With Raymarine navigation equipment, the *Jervis Bay 41* has already proved itself to have the speed and technology to get rescue crews where they need to go when vital seconds really count. This outstanding and beautiful vessel is a valuable investment in the safety of the Shoalhaven's active local boating community and visiting boaters.

I thank and congratulate all those who worked so hard to bring this wonderful asset to our shores along with so many other invaluable assets to our other South Coast units. I also thank all the volunteers who often head out to sea in dangerous conditions to assist those whose boats have flat batteries or no petrol or who are simply concerned about safely returning to shore. The endeavours of the Marine Rescue volunteers are rarely witnessed by the community like those of our RFS volunteers during bushfires or the SES during floods, which are frequently captured on film. Marine Rescue is not captured on film. However, our community understands the vital role of all our volunteers. On behalf of my community, I thank them all.

Finally, I acknowledge all those who were present on a wonderful sunny day in Jervis Bay last month when the *Jervis Bay 41* was commissioned, including Mayor Amanda Findley; the Federal member, Fiona Phillips; the wonderful Marine Rescue Commissioner, Stacey Tannos; Marine Rescue NSW Illawarra Director Keven Marshall; Jervis Bay Unit Commander Tony Dagger; Zone Commander South Mike Hammond; Reverend Philip Oliver; and, of course, Jervis Bay members and families as well as unit commanders and deputy commanders from surrounding units. Particularly pleasing was the presence of the family of the late John Gallimore. Well done to everyone associated with Marine Rescue NSW. Take care on the water this summer.

STATE SELECTIVE SCHOOLS

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (17:42): I have been contacted by a number of parents in my electorate who have been greatly concerned about changes to the entry system for New South Wales selective schools. The changes include no longer publishing the test score of students but rather only bands of achievement. Parents are particularly concerned about a circumstance in which their child does not receive a detailed test score and they are unsuccessful in securing a selective school place. They feel strongly that that lacks transparency and erodes confidence in the selection system. I have a daughter in year 6 who has applied for entry to a selective school, so I understand the desire of parents for transparency and fairness in the process.

I understand that the changes have been announced suddenly and without consultation with parents, including parents whose children will be impacted directly and immediately. That is because the changes will apply to the current selection process for next year's cohort. Parents and carers place great value and focus on the education of their children and invest significant time, energy and resources in ensuring their children excel. The parents who have contacted me are concerned that their children do not miss out on a place unfairly. They are confused and angry at the lack of consultation prior to the changes.

At this juncture, it is worth providing some broader context to education performance in New South Wales. Education performance in New South Wales has sadly been on a steady and significant decline over the past decade. The 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment report showed 15-year-old Australian and New South Wales students fell to below the OECD average in maths, whilst also falling in science and reading. We used to do well globally. But, from 2006 to 2018, New South Wales' performance in science fell from third place in the world to twenty-third; in reading from sixth place to twenty-third; and in maths from ninth to thirty-first.

It is important to note that this fall in performance has been sustained and continuing over the past decade and in spite of our efforts we have failed to lift our performance. We have a responsibility to do better for the sake of our children and for the sake of our country. The fall in performance in science, technology, engineering and mathematics is of particular concern, given the increasingly globally competitive environment for jobs, the impact of technology on the future of work and the importance of science, research and innovation to Australia's future prosperity. In addition, we know that Indigenous students, students living in rural and remote locations, students with a disability and students from educationally disadvantaged backgrounds have lower levels of participation, retention and attainment.

Therefore, in response to the concerns of parents in my electorate about changes to the selective school entry system, I would state the following principles: First, we need as a nation and as a State to address educational disadvantage. All Australian children deserve an equal opportunity to reach their potential. In addition to the changes around score disclosure, additional changes include reserving 20 per cent of places for disadvantaged students in the 2023 intake. Supporting better educational opportunities for disadvantaged students goes to the heart of the Labor Party's values. It is in our DNA. Second, we need to give all students greater opportunity to enrich their learning, to stretch themselves and to experience the transformative power of education in ways that suit their particular needs and circumstances. Consistent with this, gifted, talented and highly motivated students should have more, not less, opportunity to extend their learning and challenge themselves.

Third, there must be transparency in the selection process for selective schools. Parents and carers invest greatly in preparing their children for these tests and want to be assured of the integrity and fairness of the system. I call on the Government to properly consult with parents, students and other stakeholders and provide greater clarity around the operation of the new system before implementing the changes. I call on the Government to provide detailed test results for parents who ask for these, recognising that providing confidence in the integrity of the system is of paramount importance. Selective schools are an important part of our educational landscape. I call on the New South Wales Government to open a new selective school in Sydney's south-western suburbs, thereby expanding the number of overall available places. At the same time, I urge the Government to create more opportunities and pathways for high-performing and high-potential students in non-selective schools to accelerate, enrich and enhance their learning.

MULGOA ELECTORATE RFS AWARDS

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (17:47): Recently I had the pleasure of attending the 2022 awards ceremony for the NSW Rural Fire Service for the Cumberland District. The ceremony was an opportunity to thank RFS volunteers for their service to the community, especially during the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires. Many attended and were presented with medals recognising their service, including long service medals and citations awarded to crews, brigades or organised units for outstanding service of a meritorious nature. My community is filled with brave individuals willing to go so far as to put themselves in the line of fire, literally, to defend lives and livelihoods in the service of others. They are individuals who go above and beyond the call of duty to protect others and their families. Before I highlight the individuals from my electorate brigades, I take this opportunity to recognise and acknowledge all New South Wales RFS volunteers across the State for their service and the support of their families who enable their volunteer service to our community.

I attended two award ceremonies in my electorate of Mulgoa. One was in conjunction with Penrith City Council to recognise the recipients from the Cumberland Zone. The second ceremony was at the Horsley Park Rural Fire Brigade station to recognise their RFS volunteers. I recognise and highlight the service of those RFS volunteers from my electorate brigades who were recipients of various awards during the Cumberland Zone awards evening. Stephen Weyman from Orchard Hills was awarded the National Medal in recognition of his diligent service to his community for 55 years. The award is also given to recognise members who go above and beyond what is expected of active members in their brigade. Fifty-five years of service is an incredible amount of dedication and an extraordinary demonstration of commitment to one's own community. I thank Stephen for his tremendous service to protecting the lives of families wherever his service has required him.

The Long Service Medal is presented to members who have served between 10 and 30 years to their community. I am grateful for their service and I am not alone in sharing this sentiment. I know that my colleagues on both sides of the Chamber share a deep view of respect and admiration for those who give most of their time in service to others. Recipients include: from the Orchard Hills Brigade, Adrian Edwards, Tara Allen, Thomas Moran, Karl Zeizinger, Phillip Walters, Paul Bridgeman and James Garland; from the Regentville Brigade, Jamie Heaton and Ryan Gregoric; from the Erskine Park Brigade, Megan Flack.

RFS members who were presented with the Commissioner's Citation for Service included Shannon Carrol, Andrew Dickson, Adam Hurst, Stephen Mamo, Stephen Whiley and Hayleigh Wood, all from the Regentville Brigade. As part of the Cumberland Strike Team Bravo these individuals were awarded with the Commissioner's Citation, which is bestowed upon crews, brigades, groups or organised units to recognise outstanding service of a meritorious nature, such as group action in relation to fire service duties, group work performance or other outstanding or meritorious service.

On the occasion I attended the ceremony at the RFS Horsley Park Brigade, I was pleased to participate and recognise the service of more outstanding RFS volunteers. Blake Kingdom and William "Bill" Robb from my electorate were National Emergency Medal recipients. This distinction is presented to those, for their unique contribution and commitment, who have provided sustained or significant service in response to declared nationally significant emergencies, in particular service during the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires. The presentation ceremony was led by RFS Commissioner Rob Rogers, AFSM. It was fitting and a sign of respect

that the commissioner was in attendance at this ceremony to pay due honour and regard to the Horsley Park RFS Brigade family who sadly lost two of their own on 19 December 2019 fighting the Black Summer fires on the Green Wattle fireground. Firefighter Andrew O'Dwyer and Deputy Captain Geoffrey Keaton sadly lost their lives when a tree fell in front of their truck causing it to roll.

I will never forget the day when my phone rang in the early hours of the morning on 20 December when the Minister called me to tell me the devastating news that impacted one of my own Rural Fire Service brigades. It is tragic. It is a life-altering moment for all of us. It brings into sharp focus the risks faced by our RFS volunteers and causes us to deepen our admiration and respect for these wonderfully selfless community volunteers. My thanks and gratitude go out to all the men and women who serve with the NSW RFS. They are heroes walking among us. They bravely defend us. They are committed to service above self. Congratulations to everyone who was awarded with deserving medals, distinctions and citations. Their actions make the lives of families and communities safer every day.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (17:52): Since the pandemic began, household garbage bins have been filling up at a much quicker rate and rubbish dumping on the streets has drastically risen. The City of Sydney reports that its waste collection costs have increased by 16 per cent and bulky household collections rose by 75 per cent. The floods, COVID-19 associated leave and reduced migration have all disrupted collections, compounding the problem and making it visible on our city streets. While councils are working to address the rise in waste generation through education, recycling and collection and drop-off services, we urgently need to slow the generation of waste at the source by transitioning to a more circular economy.

A circular economy designs waste out of products from resources extraction, manufacturing and packaging to ensure that products last and packaging is minimal, with everything easily recyclable. It provides the only sustainable solution to a massive looming waste crisis. Sydney has only two landfills for red lid bins: Lucas Heights and Woodlawn. Lucas Heights will be full in six to eight years and Woodlawn in 14 years. We have known about this problem for a long time but have failed to make any real inroads. It is bleak to contemplate that the NSW Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041, published last year, adopted the same 70 per cent waste diversion target for households as the 2021 strategy, published in 2014. In 2019 we were only at 43 per cent of household waste, lower than we were in 2010-11, at 46.5 per cent.

I commend the Government for banning single-use plastic bags and a number of other items such as straws and introducing a container deposit scheme. But these moves should have occurred decades ago and we now need a more aggressive approach. Based on 2019 data, which is before the pandemic saw waste generation skyrocket, New South Wales generates 19.4 million tonnes of waste each year of which 6.8 million is landfilled and 2.2 million tonnes of that landfill comes from households. Plastic remains a priority problem. Australians generate around 2.4 megatonnes of plastic waste each year, of which households account for 47 per cent, with only about 12 per cent recycled. About 130,000 tonnes of Australian plastics end up in Australian waterways and oceans each year. So much packaging remains single-use plastic that is difficult to recycle. A 2021 World Wildlife Fund Australia survey of 82 popular supermarket foods found that only 16 per cent of products came in containers that could be recycled at home. Another 55 per cent could be recycled if taken to collection points, but these only attract very dedicated recyclers. Only a tiny percentage of soft plastics, for example, are recycled through REDcycle collection points.

The data only tells us about food but plastic is a massive part of almost every product, from make-up, to skincare, vitamins, cleaning products, utensils and electronics. We should have rules that require all packaging to be recyclable, reusable or compostable, with all products to display clear recycling instructions so people know what to do to reduce contamination of kerbside recycling. Contaminated items currently make up 13 per cent of kerbside recycling bins and often lead to recyclable items ending up in landfill. I have spoken in the House before about food waste and the Planning and Environment Committee, which I chair, is conducting a review into food security. Food waste and food scraps contribute significantly to landfill, making up 40 per cent of the contents in red lid bins. Food scraps provide significant potential for resource recovery as they can replenish soil nutrients and improve fertility. It is a shameful waste to landfill these resources.

Other problematic waste includes electronic waste. Australia produces 539,000 tonnes of electronic waste each year and despite councils' efforts to provide e-waste drop-off and collection services, only about 10 per cent is recycled. The rest is incinerated or landfilled, causing significant environmental impact and resource wastage. The vast majority of the 1.25 million mattresses trashed each year end up in landfill because of the cost associated with recycling them. Textiles are equally problematic with about 6,000 kilograms ending up in landfill every 10 minutes and a tiny recycling rate of only 7 per cent. We urgently need mandatory rules and targets with strong government investment at all levels to achieve a truly circular economy. A circular economy would help us better

use our resources, reduce the need for damaging extraction practices and cut greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental impacts.

PITTWATER ELECTORATE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport) (17:57): In his classic sociological study of American life, Robert Putnam showed how social capital—those tangible and intangible resources we share in common as a community—strengthens and enriches our individual lives. People and families who live in communities with strong, complex bonds help us to live healthier, more prosperous, more meaningful lives. People with weak societal links will then have lower socio-economic or educational outcomes and generally be unhappier. I draw to the attention of the House two instances in my community that remind us of the significance of community places, how they bind us and how their loss could result in losses for each and every one of us.

At Elanora Heights, the Uniting Church has indicated it will sell its conference centre at the edge of Irrawong Reserve. For decades, it has served the community as an important retreat for fellowship groups, school groups, business groups, sports groups and community groups. Set amongst the bush, the facilities are in excellent condition and employ six local full-time staff. Of course, I understand the Uniting Church owns the land—albeit gifted to them—and neither I nor anyone else can direct them to use it in a particular way. The pandemic has been a difficult period for conference facilities and, without further economic support, the Uniting Church has made a difficult decision that it cannot continue to operate the facility. However, I remind the Uniting Church that it is held in esteem in the community precisely because we recognise the important role it plays to bind society. Churches are exempt from paying taxes because, as opposed to businesses undertaking economic operations, churches make significant contributions to society outside our traditional understandings of economic output.

Our society and our communities are stronger because they provide services and spaces that are inherently uneconomic. But there is nothing that requires society to continue to value the role of churches in the community if they do not provide those functions. Tomorrow I will meet with the Moderator of the Uniting Church Synod of New South Wales, Reverend Simon Hansford, to share my ideas on the future of the site. I am very eager to work with the Uniting Church to find a similar organisation that can carry on its work as a community-focused facility, rather than dispose of the land for whatever commercialised purpose a private owner may wish to pursue. The same common purpose found in our religious organisations can be found in our public spaces and infrastructures. I was disappointed and dismayed to read in *The Sydney Morning Herald* two weeks ago that, after five years of consultation with the local community, Northern Beaches Council resolved to defer plans for two cycleways in Avalon. I discussed in this place in May how Avalon Beach is, in many ways, an idyllic urban neighbourhood. That is part of why I advocated for \$500,000 in New South Wales Government funding to deliver the closure of part of Old Barrenjoey Road to create a public plaza as an action of the Avalon Place Plan. But I was particularly disappointed to read comments in the article supporting cycleways, but for the fact they may bring people from outside the local area.

I have been able to make an effective argument against increasing housing density in Avalon Beach precisely because of its importance as a holiday destination for visitors from other parts of Sydney. If local people are now seeking to exclude visitors from enjoying the area, it becomes harder to make the argument that Avalon should be protected from housing density relative to other parts of the city. Celebrating and sharing the beauty and unique character of our community is ultimately what protects it. If there are genuine concerns about how these cycleways will impact on the local environment, then by all means, let us discuss them. But I am extremely doubtful that this is a substantive conversation about the technical or operational merits of a cycleway, with the council report noting that community concerns about loss of car parking and trees could be easily addressed. It is a shame when the public misses out on great community facilities such as safe routes for bicycles because of a car-dependent mindset. I encourage council to work with the community to get this important civic project done.

Robert Putnam's argument was that despite our individual differences, we need to find the links, structures and relationships that can bring us together to prosper. After all, we are all human, in all its vulnerability, in all its wonder, in all its weakness and in all its strength. Communities without the physical and social infrastructures to bring people closer ossify and wither. We must remember that we need those infrastructures not for their own sake, but because of their capacity to bring us together, to share experiences, to learn from one another, to celebrate our differences and to celebrate our shared humanity. Let us choose to strengthen our community so it thrives in the future.

HILLSBOROUGH ROAD

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (18:02): The number one infrastructure priority for the Charlestown electorate is Hillsborough Road. It is one of the busiest roads in the Hunter region. It is a vital link between Newcastle and Lake Macquarie and it is a major choke point for our local road network. At peak hour,

traffic on Hillsborough Road slows to a standstill. Hillsborough residents face interminable waits trying to exit their suburb, and thousands of hours are lost every year, and that is time that people could spend at work or at home with their loved ones. As the local area continues to grow, in particular, the population growth that is occurring on the western side of Lake Macquarie, Hillsborough Road becomes more congested and the need for upgrades becomes more desperate. Accidents are commonplace and near misses are a fact of life for those who use the road. In 2016 one accident resulted in the tragic loss of a young woman. Fifteen-year-old Jade Frith was crossing the road on her way to swimming training when she was hit by a car. Her death prompted widespread calls from the community for upgrades to the road and a petition has been tabled in this place in respect of the upgrades to Hillsborough Road. But those calls have been ignored.

I have raised this issue time and again. I have given notices of motion, asked questions on notice, given speeches, presented a 10,000-signature petition and written to the Minister. What action has the Government taken? In 2013 there was \$500,000 for planning and pre-construction. In 2015 there was \$4 million for more planning and pre-construction. Then there was silence until in 2018, after meeting with local activist and Hillsborough resident Michael Nolan and his residents action group, I called for funding for action on Hillsborough Road in the 2018-19 budget. There was nothing. I called for action in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 budgets. There was still nothing. And then, finally, the Government seemed to pay attention. There was \$2.9 million for continued planning in the 2021-22 budget. To be honest, after not hearing much, there was a lot of relief in my local area. "Finally," we thought, "we're actually going to get something done."

In the most recent budget, there is another \$1.2 million for planning—not for works to commence—and that is about it. Given all of that, I ask: What will it take before we see works commence on Hillsborough Road? After so many years of campaigning and of trying to manage with a road that is no longer fit for purpose, people are well and truly ready to see shovels in the ground. Wendy, who lives in Hillsborough, has been campaigning for works to begin at Hillsborough Road for many years. She told me:

There has been so much planning for Hillsborough Rd over the years they have to keep reviewing the planning to remember what they're up to with it. It's terrible, money for the work was given such a long time ago and Transport for New South Wales are still planning.

The people of the Charlestown electorate and beyond are sick and tired of the Government spending big on flashy projects in certain parts of Sydney—projects which cannot keep to a schedule or a budget—while continuously ignoring the much-needed upgrades to Hillsborough Road. This is particularly egregious in a pre-election, cash-splash budget promising everything under the sun, promises which many in my community are concerned are hollow.

The budget once again fails to deliver the sort of bread-and-butter infrastructure that improves communities over the longer term. After nearly 12 years in office, it is probably too late to hope that this Government will take seriously the job of listening to the clear voices of my community. After more than a decade of inaction and wilful ignorance on the issue of Hillsborough Road, it is hard not to think about all the opportunities that have already been lost. It is high time that there were shovels in the ground on Hillsborough Road, but this Government has proved that it is simply not capable of delivering.

HUNTER NEW ENGLAND LOCAL HEALTH DISTRICT

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (18:07): I speak yet again about the ongoing failures of the senior management of the Hunter New England Local Health District and to share some of the reasons why Northern Tablelands communities from east to west are calling for a smaller, more responsive health district. Two weeks ago, alongside local mayors and community groups, I launched a community petition outside the Armidale Rural Referral Hospital. I acknowledge New England Visions 2030 and its founder, Maria Hitchcock, OAM. I also acknowledge the local NSW Nurses and Midwives' Association branch; its president, Michelle Chappell; and its secretary, Warren Isaac, who represent our overworked nurses.

The petition calls for the New England local health district to be reinstated, to allow our region to ditch the failed visiting medical officer model and directly employ GPs in district hospitals providing outpatient services—something we have never done but that is now essential given, the changes to the rural GP workforce—as well as dramatically increase the number of nurses and have appropriate ratios. It is an understatement to say that the community quickly sent that petition ballistic. In under two weeks, it has had over 5½ thousand signatures. That is more than halfway to our goal of 10,000 signatures to force a debate on the floor of this Parliament and trigger immediate action on our region's demands. The response has been overwhelming and humbling, but the work is not done. I urge people across our region to maintain momentum, shout our support for the petition and make sure we get as many signatures as possible.

At the heart of this community tilt is a very simple question: Can the Hunter New England Local Health District properly deliver essential health services to 25 local government areas and almost one million people

living in major cities like Newcastle and also in isolated and remote communities like Mungindi, which straddles the Queensland-New South Wales border? As far as the communities at the very end of the health district's line are concerned, the answer is a resounding no. The current Hunter New England Local Health District does not—and, I strongly believe, cannot—serve such a large land mass with a vastly diverse population that has different needs.

To give the House some perspective, while it is not the largest district in land size, the Hunter New England Local Health District has the largest regional population base to serve: 950,000 residents. Compare that with our neighbouring health districts. Western NSW Local Health District covers 250,000 square kilometres and a population of 270,000. On the eastern side of the State, Northern NSW Local Health District serves a population of only 288,000. In fact, the only New South Wales health district that serves a larger population than Hunter New England is South Western Sydney Local Health District, with 966,000 residents. Other regional health districts are far below the population served by Hunter New England. Murrumbidgee Local Health District delivers health services to 242,000 people; Far West Local Health District, about 30,000 people.

My communities are calling for the urgent reinstatement of the New England Local Health District, which included the 12 local government areas in the north-west region. That can be done by splitting the current Hunter New England Local Health District neatly in two. The downsized health district must be given the autonomy to employ doctors directly in district hospitals and to increase the number of nurses employed. We are sick of being an afterthought of the senior management team based in Newcastle. It may as well be a different bloody country. Some of the comments I have received since launching the petition are as follows. John from Ashford noted:

Relying on the stoicism of the rural people to prop up this concocted shambles is hard to stomach.

Dick from Willow Tree observed:

As you have eloquently pointed out in your public statements, the system is a mess. It seems a large portion of the solution lies in reverting to a system which worked so well in the past.

Jodie from Armidale said:

Hunter New England Health fails to acknowledge the issues and deficiencies of recruitment ... that stop highly qualified and experienced professionals choosing to work in our beautiful region. They advertise positions for an allocated time period and if not filled, the position just disappears.

I could stand here for hours sharing those views, but members get the vibe. We are sick to the back teeth of the neglect of the senior management based in Newcastle. We want effective local services. We want more doctors. We want nurses, and we want them now.

AUBURN ELECTORATE DEVELOPMENT

Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (18:12): I speak about an issue that is becoming a bigger problem in my electorate every day. As members would be aware, the electorates of Auburn, Granville and Parramatta are the most populous electorates in New South Wales, and the reason for that is the significant construction that has gone on in those areas. There have been problems, however, with how apartments have been built and completed. In my area, the biggest problem has been a 16-storey apartment building in Auburn. The Building Commissioner said that inspectors found it to be riddled with fire hazards and building defects months after the owners had moved in. He described it as an abomination because it was not finished and cited it as the straw that broke the camel's back. Moving forward, the changes to the Building Commissioner's powers and the audits that are coming forward will make for a much better process and a much better style of living for people.

Unfortunately, that comes too late for the people of the Auburn electorate, particularly for people at the development in 93 Auburn Road, which was first identified for building work rectifications back in October 2020. An order was issued in December 2020, and a prohibition order was issued on 3 March 2021 because such serious defects existed. We are now in August 2022 and, unfortunately, those defects have still not been rectified. On 19 July an article in the Financial Review stated that Merhis Corp had gone into liquidation and that its director Mark Merhi left the country, possibly for Saudi Arabia or Lebanon, and that the corporation owes the ATO \$6 million. A 14 June article noted that financier Wingate had put the 179-unit Imperial development in Parramatta into receivership, meaning that all those companies were placed into receivership. Apartments such as Hassall Street or other properties that were owned by Merhis Corp, because they had not settled and there was no occupation certificate, became an issue for the financiers behind those developments. Unfortunately for the people in my electorate, an interim occupation certificate was ordered, and those people were in apartments that were uninhabitable. They have never been rectified over that time, and the developer has effectively fled the country.

That presents a huge problem, because those people in my electorate are amongst some of the poorest in the country—certainly the poorest in metropolitan Sydney. They are nearly overwhelmingly all immigrants, and quite often immigrants who have come as refugees. It will be a tremendous ask for them to undertake the

rectification works. I understand that in the past the Government has looked at how those people can be assisted. People are not asking for a handout, but where there has been a long association with rectification orders and prohibition orders and the developer has fled, taking the millions and millions of dollars he got out of unfinished properties with huge defects that must be fixed, the Government must have some mechanism to come in and at least look at a capacity for low- or no-interest loans to rectify strata titles.

Going forward, the building industry will have a much better process and a much better standard, but looking at my electorate of Auburn, we have limited capacity. Cumberland City Council deals with some of the largest socio-economic problems in Sydney. It has 1,000 refugees without income, high unemployment—a whole raft of problems. It is not easy for either the council—which has had its commercial properties and, therefore, all its funding base ripped out of it by a merger—or those people to find solutions. I ask the Government to give that issue every consideration.

HEALTH SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (18:17): I honour our healthcare workers and healthcare sector and reflect on the great contribution the Government is making to health in Willoughby and New South Wales. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought enormous challenges to us all as a community, with individuals, families, businesses, schools and community organisations all bearing the brunt. Nowhere, however, have the effects of the pandemic been more acute than in our healthcare system and its workers who have served on the front line. Our doctors, nurses and healthcare professionals have had to juggle the day-to-day care of patients with the added pressures of responding to the pandemic. In rising to that challenge with such dedication, our healthcare workers have put their lives on the line, and they deserve our sincere gratitude and thanks. Our health system in New South Wales could simply not survive without their contribution. For that reason, our Government is making record investments in our health workers, hospitals and healthcare services.

In the 2022-23 budget the Government announced new initiatives dedicated to improving health care for all, investing a record \$33.5 billion in health. Recognising the strain of the pandemic on our healthcare workers, the Government will recruit over 10,000 full-time staff to hospitals and health services across New South Wales over the next four years. To ensure that our health system is world-class, \$2.8 billion will be invested in hospital and health facility upgrades. To support mental health services, a further \$2.9 billion will be invested, including \$143 million across four years to fund suicide prevention initiatives and \$28.5 million over four years for Lifeline to boost crisis counselling services. I welcome those measures, as the tragedy of suicide is a scourge on our society and community.

With the COVID-19 pandemic response having delayed elective surgery for many New South Wales patients, \$408 million will be allocated to fast-track elective surgeries. That funding boost will take the Government's total commitment to reducing elective surgery wait times to almost \$1 billion, on top of the existing \$2 billion invested in elective surgery every year. I particularly welcome the Government's investment in women's health. The Treasurer announced that \$80 million would be allocated to support women to access affordable fertility treatments, and \$40 million given to improve the health care of women experiencing menopause. About 12,000 women who are using private fertility clinics will benefit from government rebates, and another 6,000 women will be given access to publicly supported IVF treatment.

Investing in emergency health care to the tune of \$1.76 billion, the Government announced that NSW Ambulance will recruit over 2,000 new staff and open 30 new stations as a major boost to the frontline emergency care system. The record investment will provide New South Wales with nearly 2,000 extra paramedics, 210 ambulance support staff, 52 nurses and eight doctors over four years. I am particularly grateful for the Government's investment in the Artarmon ambulance superstation in my electorate of Willoughby. Opened by my predecessor in 2018, this ambulance superstation was part of the New South Wales Government's \$184 million Sydney Ambulance Metropolitan Infrastructure Strategy program. Located on Reserve Road in Artarmon, the superstation provides much-needed support to patients in Willoughby and its surrounds.

With my electorate set to accommodate Royal North Shore Hospital soon, I express my appreciation for the Government's ongoing commitment to funding the \$1.127 billion redevelopment of the hospital. Since the Government came to office in March 2011, the new Acute Services Building was officially opened; the part-refurbishment of the existing Douglas Building was done; a new car park completed with 350 extra parking spaces, new roads and landscaping; and a new Clinical Services Building built. Those developments are a timely response to growing demands, locally and statewide, by creating purpose-built, dynamic and contemporary facilities to support high standards of health care. As the local member responsible for Royal North Shore Hospital, I will be a strong advocate for continuing investment in this premier health facility. I am particularly proud to do so, given my many personal connections to the hospital. My great-great-grandfather George James helped to found the hospital in 1880s. My mother trained and nursed there for nearly 25 years, and it is where many generations of Jameses have been born, including me.

In conjunction with funding our public hospitals, the Government is also committed to working with our private health care system. In Willoughby, I particularly note the Castlecrag Private Hospital, run by Ramsay Health Care, which I visited recently. Indeed, it is where my mother also worked some years ago. I am also committed to supporting the many doctors, GPs, nurses, paramedics, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, pathologists and other health professionals who work in my community of Willoughby. Working long hours and sacrificing so much of their personal time, those dedicated health workers have been the unsung heroes as they work around the clock to care for our sick, frail, aged and those with special needs. Once again, I applaud the Government's commitment to investing in them and their services to provide the quality health care that our State and the Willoughby community so deserve.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE CULTURAL RIGHTS

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (18:22): On behalf of the electorate of Newtown, I speak in support of justice and the rights of First Nations people in New South Wales. Earlier this week I acknowledged the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples and noted that Indigenous peoples' rights to culture, traditional lands and resources have been violated due to invasion, colonisation and systemic racism. I affirmed that sovereignty was never ceded and that New South Wales was and always will be Aboriginal land. I called on and continue to call on this Parliament—as well as the Federal and other State parliaments—to enshrine the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples into domestic law.

In 2009 Australia endorsed the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and committed to implement the minimum standards for the survival, dignity and wellbeing of First Nations people and to expand on the existing human rights and freedoms as they apply to Indigenous people worldwide and to First Nations people here. To our shame, that has not happened. Thirteen years on, successive Australian governments have failed to implement UN declaration laws into policy or practice at all levels of government. Only this morning we saw the reports from the Water Services Association of Australia that almost 600,000 people do not have reliable access to safe or good-quality water, and 40 per cent of those communities impacted are remote Aboriginal communities. The Greens want to see immediate actions to undo the impacts of more than 230 years of colonisation. We must acknowledge and stop the ongoing grave violations of human rights perpetrated by white Australia against First Nations peoples.

We want to see an end to the incarceration of Aboriginal young people and an end to the over-imprisonment, over-policing and harassment of Aboriginal communities. Between 2020 and 2021 in New South Wales, the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people imprisoned increased by 8 per cent to over 3,500. That is significantly higher than the national 5 per cent increase. They are disgraceful statistics and every politician who has a seat in this Chamber knows that they are. I acknowledge the tireless work of so many First Nations organisations and activists who have been leading the movement for justice and resistance for so long, calling for an end to deaths in custody, an end to the ongoing removal of Aboriginal children and young people from their families, and for sovereignty and justice through treaties.

Having joined countless rallies and vigils—from the massive Black Lives Matter rallies to small, trauma-filled speak-outs on the streets outside this place—it is clear to me that the cry for justice, the demands for change and the need for serious truth telling and action are long overdue. I acknowledge the unwavering work of my Federal Greens colleagues. I particularly give a shout-out to the First Nations senators for The Greens, Lidia Thorpe and Dorinda Cox, for their leadership. I back in the calls led by the Australian Greens, Lidia Thorpe and Adam Bandt, for a meaningful progress towards truth and treaty with First Nations people, the passage of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and for every recommendation of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, and the Bringing them Home report to be implemented.

As Senator Thorpe stated recently, we do not require a voice to Parliament to tell us that 10-year-olds do not belong in prison or that First Nations children should be in their communities. This nation is better at keeping First Nations children in jail than in school. Aboriginal young people are 10 times more likely to be taken from their families. This must stop. We can do much right now in New South Wales. We can back in the calls to raise the age of criminal responsibility, but we must go further to end this horrific and unacceptable situation. We can and we must move away from policing and prisons as the solution. There is no justice in those options as a solution. We can put an end to the unacceptably high rate of incarcerations by ending juvenile detention and abolishing child prisons. What if we stopped locking people up, especially women? They needed support to deal with the trauma, disadvantage, drug and alcohol addictions and mental health crises that they were facing. Instead, we took them away from their families and their children.

We can start moving towards a justice system that would put a stop to an incessant and systemic over-policing of young people; to First Nations people and activists being over-policed and over-represented in our justice system; and abolish the outrageous and racist Suspect Target Management Plan used by the New South Wales police. We can start breaking the cycle of incarceration, injustice and intergenerational trauma by genuinely

investing in housing and supporting people when they come out of jail—no more reports or reviews. One thing is needed, and that is action.

TAMWORTH MENTAL HEALTH CARE AND SUPPORT NETWORK

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing) (18:27): In the Tamworth electorate we know where we stand, we know what we want and we know where we are going. That dedication to good solid vision will make our community stronger. We know where we want to be, we know where our futures lie, and we all want our kids' futures to be in safe hands. Our communities want and expect to have a say in their futures and it is my job, as the local member for Tamworth, to ensure that that happens.

In October 2020 I spoke in Parliament about a very special group. The group is very dear to me for the measured, kind-hearted and passionate advocacy it has demonstrated for a number of years. That group is the Tamworth Mental Health Carers Support Group. I speak about them again because the budget has handed down a very big win on their behalf to our community. The budget put an end to years of campaigning, years of concern and years of advocacy. The budget has delivered for not only the community of Tamworth but also the community of New England North West. It is because of this dedicated group that Tamworth will now be home to a state-of-the-art \$56.2 million brand new mental health unit. That new unit will be significant when it comes to delivering the very best in mental health care in Tamworth.

I cast my mind back to 2017 when the Tamworth Mental Health Carers Support Group came knocking on my door, looking for a solution to the lack of mental health care in the region. The group was passionate; they knew what they wanted—lived experience was really important—and they demanded that this Government deliver. The group was not new to the scene. They are a team of locals who, in 1996, began their campaign to increase services and raise awareness for mental health in our region—and they meant business. So in 2018 the push for a brand new mental health unit in Tamworth gained real traction. I pay credit to Di and Don Wyatt, Annie Warden, Gail Zammit, Joan Wakeford, Joyce Vernon, Lyn Bentley and Marg Rankin along with all their other members and volunteers who spent weeks walking the street, knocking on doors and raising awareness about the need for a new facility. They carried a petition with them and in a short time gained an incredible 13,000 signatures. Their work paid off with a commitment from the New South Wales Government that it would build the facility and the design of that facility would be a co-design, in part in the hands of the Tamworth Mental Health Carers Support Group.

They are the co-design team. They meet regularly with the architects, with Health and with the community. They are our voice and they are the boots on the ground locally that ensures that we get what we need and what we want in mental health services. I also pay tribute to the Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for Mental Health, who backed our fight. The Minister is a staunch advocate for improving the lives of people in regional New South Wales. I thank her for her commitment to our people, not only residents of the Tamworth electorate but also those in New England North West.

Our new mental health unit will not only include four dedicated beds for children but also add another entire level to the building. The unit will be totally dedicated to the mental health care of our children. A safeguard team, who also will work in that unit, will be with their patients to ensure their safe return to the community. We do not want to have to send our kids away for help. We want to treat them in their hometown, at home, alongside their loved ones and get them back into the open arms of their community. Soon we will be able to do that, and I thank the Tamworth Mental Health Carers Group and the NSW Nationals in government for their commitment to the people of Tamworth and New England North West.

Business interrupted.

Bills

CASINO LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Returned

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell): I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill with amendments.

Consideration in Detail

Consideration of the Legislative Council's amendments.

Schedule of amendments referred to in message of 11 August 2022

No. 1 Ind (GP) No. 2 [c2022-143F]

Page 4. Insert after line 37—

[4A] Section 4A(1)

Insert after section 4(1)(b)—

- (b) minimising harm to individuals and families from activities associated with gambling in casinos, and

No. 2 Ind (GP) No. 4 [c2022-143F]

Page 28, Schedule 1[92], proposed section 139E. Insert after line 28—

- (k1) a summary of measures taken by the NICC and casino operators to prevent or reduce harm from gambling in casinos,

No. 3 Opp No. 1 [c2022-150B]

Page 35, Schedule 1[103], proposed section 169B(1)(b), lines 5 and 6. Omit all words on those lines. Insert instead—

- (b) the terms of the Act remain appropriate for achieving the objectives, including whether the amount of the responsible gambling levy is sufficient to ensure the requirements of the Responsible Gambling Fund trust deed can be carried out.

No. 4 Grns No. 17 [c2022-129D]

Page 35. Insert after line 24—

[104A] Section 170A

Insert after section 170—

170A Implementation of Independent Review of The Star Pty Ltd by Adam Bell SC

- (1) The Minister must, within 9 months after the independent review report is delivered, prepare a report about—
- (a) what has been done to implement the recommendations of the report, and
- (b) what steps the Minister and the NICC will take to implement any outstanding recommendations.
- (2) A report under subsection (1) must be tabled in each House of Parliament within 12 months after independent review report is delivered.
- (3) In this section—

independent review report means the final report of the Independent Review of The Star Pty Ltd by Adam Bell SC under this Act.

No. 5 Ind (GP) No. 6 [c2022-143F]

Page 49, Schedule 3[25], proposed section 35B(1). Insert after line 21—

- (e1) the Director of the Office of Responsible Gambling or a person nominated by the Director,

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing) (18:33): I move:

That the Legislative Council amendments be agreed to.

During the debate on the bill on the evening of Tuesday 9 August, I outlined the seriousness of the problems that have occurred in the casino sector, the enormity of work that lies before the casino operators in this State to reform themselves and the momentous nature of the package of reforms contained in the bill. The Government has taken the gravity of the findings in the Bergin report and the evidence of the Bell review very seriously and has worked hard to ensure that we have the most rigorous and effective regulatory regime for casinos in the future.

The bill now incorporates a number of amendments to further enhance the effectiveness of the legislation and confirm the Government's commitment to minimising gambling harm associated with casino activities. These amendments include adding a new more specific primary object of the Act and the regulator to address gambling-related harm to individuals and families; requiring the New South Wales independent casino commissioner's annual reports to summarise harm minimisation measures taken by the regulator and casino operators; adding a representative from the Office of Responsible Gambling as a standing member of the casino liquor and gaming coordination committee; requiring all future reviews of the Casino Control Act to consider whether the responsible gambling levy is sufficient to fund the functioning of the Responsible Gambling Fund; and requiring the Minister to report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Bell review into The Star within nine months after the Bell review report is delivered.

The amendments strengthen the bill in a number of ways. Importantly, they reinforce and strengthen the important regulatory requirements relating to combating gambling harm that are contained in the bill, including

additional governance and transparency measures. The collaborative and constructive manner in which members across the Parliament have approached the bill has been especially pleasing. The bill has been strengthened by the thoughtful amendments moved by members from both Houses. I acknowledge the Opposition, in particular the shadow Minister, and member for Swansea, who is in the Chamber this evening, for her extensive and productive engagement with the bill. I reiterate my thanks to the member for Sydney for his constructive engagement with the bill. I acknowledge his longstanding advocacy about casino regulations in the State. In the spirit of bipartisanship, I also thank Mr Justin Field and Ms Cate Faehrmann for their collaboration on the bill in the other House. They are both committed and passionate advocates for reducing gambling harm and I respect their dedication to that cause. Their thoughtful amendments have helped strengthen the bill. The bill is better for the input of all those members and I thank them.

I acknowledge the enormous work undertaken in the past few years by the Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority [ILGA], particularly the leadership of its chair, Mr Phil Crawford, who provided clear direction in implementing the Bergin report and stays committed to what needs to be done. Mr Crawford was in the Chamber today to witness the progress of the bill. Recently Mr Crawford mentioned in a speech—and it is important to emphasise—that ILGA has been ahead of every other casino regulator in the country when it comes to identifying and addressing issues of casino misconduct. It was the first to launch an inquiry with Commissioner Bergin when it was not investigating activity in New South Wales but in Victoria and Western Australia. That shows not only the seriousness with which it has approached its job but also its foresight when it comes to casino regulation. The casino regulators in all States have been following the path laid by the Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority. It has been an extraordinary workload and I thank all members of the authority for their commitment and work.

I thank the dedicated team in my office who have helped deliver this legislation, led by my tireless chief of staff, Gavin Melvin, including Harriet Platt-Hepworth and our newest member of team Anderson, Catriona Uliana. I sincerely thank Catriona for her administration in pulling all of the documents together—well done, Cat. I also thank the dedicated staff of the Department of Enterprise, Investment and Trade, particularly Alex Kennedy, Natalie Wright and Aileen Zheng, who have worked hard to bring the reforms to where they are today. I reiterate that the substantial reforms introduced by the bill, including the valuable amendments incorporated in both Houses, are a firm step towards delivering the Government's strong regulatory response to the failures and deficiencies identified by various casino inquiries in recent years. The bills sends a clear message to the industry and the community that the Government is committed to ensuring a strong and robust regulatory framework, with the regulator, independent experts and casino operators working together to make our casinos free of crime and to minimise gambling harm.

The bill is not the end of the process. The Government will continue to monitor the implementation of the reforms and respond to any future developments of the casino regulatory environment, including any need for further reforms to support a vibrant, safe and responsibly run casino industry in New South Wales in which the community can have confidence. However, with the passage of the bill the Government has laid the foundations for a dynamic and safe casino industry; it is now up to the casino operators to build on those foundations. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (18:38): I concur with the Minister entirely. I will not take up too much of the time of the House; it is Thursday afternoon and we all want to go home. I reiterate what the Minister said: These are substantial reforms. It was critical for us to address the many issues that were highlighted in the media and in the various reports and inquiries. The Minister has worked closely with the regulator and others so that New South Wales is on the front foot to ensure that we have a casino industry that we can respect and that is transparent and run in a way that the community expects.

I thank the Hon. Mick Veitch for leading for Labor in debate on the bill in the upper House and working closely with those members. Like the Minister, I also thank Ms Cate Faehrmann. The Minister is right in that some of the amendments moved by The Greens in the upper House increased transparency. That is critically important. We want to ensure that the community has confidence in the operation and regulation of casinos in New South Wales. The amendments certainly enhanced that. I also thank Mr Justin Field. He moved some excellent amendments, which we were able to discuss together and introduce. That process strengthened the legislation before the House. I also thank Mr Phil Crawford and his team from the Independent Liquor & Gaming Authority [ILGA]. They have been instrumental in ensuring that we can all feel assured that casinos in New South Wales will be working within a tight regulatory framework through this legislation. I thank Mr Crawford for his ongoing work and for reaching out to the Labor Opposition and briefing us at every turn.

I also thank the Minister's staff—Gavin Melvin, Catriona and others. They have been cooperative, inclusive and very transparent. The standout for me is that the Minister came to this place with the intention of bringing integrity to the gambling industry. We are on the same page about that. I thank the Minister for that. Previously other members in this place have been critical about casinos being allowed to operate. I make the point that the

Minister and I have been able to work in a cooperative and open manner to enable an industry that employs thousands of people to be operated under a regulatory framework with confidence that those jobs will not be lost, whilst also ensuring that there will be no harm to members of the community. I thank the Minister again as well as members of both Houses. We have worked cooperatively to pass very good legislation. I am proud to be part of that. I commend the bill to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell): The question is that the Legislative Council amendments be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Private Members' Statements

GLENORIE RURAL FIRE BRIGADE SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (18:43): I acknowledge and congratulate the Glenorie Rural Fire Brigade on its seventy-fifth anniversary, which was celebrated on 25 June 2022. I was pleased to be present at this momentous occasion, which I attended in my capacity as the local member and on behalf of the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery, Stephanie Cook. I was also honoured to assist the member for Berowra, Julian Leaser, and Assistant Commissioner Rebel Talbot, in presenting medals to some of the outstanding volunteers in the Glenorie brigade who have given decades of their lives in the service of their community. I also note the attendance of The Hills Shire Council mayor Dr Peter Gangemi and Rural Fire Service Association vice-president Steve Robinson at the celebration.

I make mention of some of the medal recipients. Captain of the Glenorie brigade, Rod Derriman, was presented with the National Medal for his 23 years of service. Diane Coxon-Ellis, who has served on the brigade for 28 years, was awarded the National Medal 1st Clasp and the National Emergency Medal Bushfires 2019-20 Clasp. Former captain Ross Lithgow was awarded a National Medal 2nd Clasp for his 46 years of service. Elizabeth Whiteman was also awarded a Long Service Medal for her very impressive 35 years of service, as well as a National Emergency Medal Bushfires 2019-20 Clasp. I also acknowledge and commend Sylvia Calvert, who was the first-ever female deputy captain elected in the Glenorie brigade. She was awarded the National Emergency Medal Bushfires 2019-20 Clasp. Well done to those humble volunteers. I send them and the 10 other very worthy medal recipients in the Glenorie brigade my sincere thanks for their vital service to our community.

The medals that were presented bore great meaning. They symbolised many years of service to the Glenorie Rural Fire Brigade and to the community. I know the Glenorie community is very grateful for the volunteers of the brigade. Being an RFS volunteer is far from an easy job. Having been the chair of The Hills Shire Council bushfire management committee for 10 years, I got to know the volunteers very well. They never know when they will be called out to an emergency and what kind of danger they will face. It is not just bushfires; sometimes RFS volunteers go to rescue at critical road accidents, which is difficult for them. Acknowledgment should also be given to the families of volunteers, who understand why their loved one is not at home at Christmas, birthdays, dinners and other celebrations. Countless hours that could have been spent with family and friends in comfort at home or on holiday were instead spent fighting fires and helping communities across New South Wales and Australia more broadly.

I again extend my gratitude to the Glenorie Rural Fire Brigade volunteers for so often putting first their community—and communities all over—often at the expense of their own wellbeing and safety. Most recently, members of the Glenorie brigade rolled up their sleeves to help when the Hawkesbury was once again devastated by flooding in July. The brigade was an important part of the flood response and recovery, and volunteers were very busy keeping locals updated as the natural disaster evolved, preparing sandbags and travelling to remote parts of the region to help with the clean-up. The Hawkesbury community relies heavily on emergency personnel and volunteer forces during times of crisis, and I was proud to be part of their special day and celebrate the Glenorie brigade for its unrelenting service over the past 75 years. What a grand achievement!

POINT CLARE STATION ACCESSIBILITY

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (18:47): Members of this Chamber know about my passion for calling out disability discrimination when I see it. I am again forced to call out another ludicrous decision by the Government to remove ramps. Point Clare is a beautiful suburb in my electorate, sloping between amazing natural bushland and spectacular views over Brisbane Water. Right in the middle of Point Clare, separating the bush from the water, is Point Clare station, which is used by commuters and visitors to travel to and from Sydney and Newcastle, and other gorgeous parts of my electorate. Until recently, the station had a fantastic, ramped passageway underneath, which allowed bikes, prams, mobility scooters and senior residents to get from one side of the track to the other. Like many stations in regional areas, it does not provide lifts to the platforms.

We were thrilled when the Parliamentary Secretary for the Central Coast announced an accessibility upgrade to that important station. The member for Terrigal said that the existing station would be upgraded to include lifts on both sides for access to the platform, and ramps on both sides to allow people with disabilities, bikes and prams to travel from one side to the other. Ramps are simple, inclusive and accessible for all. The plans went out for community consultation and received widespread support. We were thrilled. The plans were approved, and the community had been brought along on the journey to accessibility and inclusion. Up until then, I congratulated the Government.

Yet last month I learned that the Government had turned its back on accessibility, turned its back on my community and refused to listen to people with disabilities and other mobility challenges. The promised ramps, which were to be installed on both sides of the station, have been dumped and replaced with stairs, supposedly to save money. Minister Faraway said to the local media that we were creating a scare campaign. Imagine that—a scare campaign about accessibility ramps! Minister Faraway went one step further, saying that it was a storm in a teacup and incorrectly stating that there would be ramps at the station. That is false, and I call on the Minister to correct the record.

More important than the Minister's knowledge of his brief are the challenges faced by so many in my community, who now face a flight of stairs where a ramp used to greet them. Right now, people who need mobility access are faced with a construction site and a flight of stairs or a completely inaccessible footpath with a telegraph pole in the middle of it. The builders are currently at the site; this could be fixed right now. I encourage the Minister for Transport to look at what is going on and ask those builders to modify the plans and put the ramp in immediately.

Sadly, the Point Clare station upgrade has already destroyed community and pedestrian access from one side of the station to the other. Our community is justifiably upset and outraged by the Government's waste of taxpayer money and resources. I put on record some emails from people in my community. Emma Willoughby stated:

... due to health issues, I am unable to carry my bike over the stairs ... I cannot cycle with my kids on the road as it's too dangerous.

Emma feels that she may not be able to fit her long cargo bike in the lift. She also wrote:

... the new stairs at Point Clare station disproportionately affect women ... mothers pushing prams, or walking toddlers with their scooters ... and women don't want to have to get off a train at night and wait for a lift; they want to purposefully and quickly walk home, or to their cars.

Another constituent, Desmond, said that without the ramp he was lucky to be able to rely on some workers, who carried his walker up the stairs while he struggled to climb them. Unfortunately for Desmond, when he came back to the station there was no-one there to assist him with his walker. He is pleading to have the ramps reinstalled. Danny Crowther wrote:

Yesterday I saw an elderly woman emerging with a shopping trolley, I asked her how she managed. She was near in tears, explaining the hazard she now experiences trying to negotiate crossing to the other side to the doctors and chemist as well as Aldi ...

The steps that have been put in are narrow. Danny is 80 years old and has had a couple of falls down stairs, one resulting in a broken leg. He wrote:

I have to go sideways, one step at a time.

Kylie Willis and other parents from Point Clare Public School are upset because their kids do not have the same access, so they have to drop them off at school rather than let them walk and ride their scooters. Cherylyn Dean wrote:

Stating that travellers can use the lift is a furphy. Lifts break down often leaving many disabled people, mothers with prams etc struggling to negotiate the stairs.

I completely agree. I am heartbroken by this, because access should always be as inclusive as we can possibly make it. The Government should be leading the way in all aspects of social inclusion.

MENANGLE STREET, PICTON

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (18:52): I have met with residents from Menangle Street, Picton, and have listened to their concerns, which I share. Residents of Menangle Street, which is in the centre of the Wollondilly electorate, have been campaigning for many years for the street's speed limit to be reduced for the safety of pedestrians and drivers. The current speed limit is 60 kilometres per hour; however, safety and heritage concerns have led them to campaign for a reduction to 50 kilometres per hour. There is ample evidence to support the need for a reduction in speed, and safety is of paramount concern. The section of Menangle Street in question is within the heritage residential precinct that includes Matthews Lane to Baxter Lane. That strip of road has a woeful safety record, with traffic records showing that there were 17 reported traffic accidents between

2011 and March 2019. That is a shocking number of incidents for such a small section of road over a period of just eight years.

The number of accidents is one of many reasons why I support the reduction of the speed limit. Most of the residential homes on both sides of the street have narrow and steep driveways, which make entering and exiting the homes safely very difficult with traffic rushing by at 60 kilometres per hour. Lack of proper visibility further increases the danger of backing out of a driveway onto this road. Menangle Street descends downhill after the Prince Street intersection, so cars naturally increase in speed as they enter Picton. A reduction in the speed limit would both remind and motivate drivers to slow down and drive safely.

Council has proposed a set of traffic lights for the intersection of Station Street, Prince Street and Menangle Street, but that too is a very unsatisfactory suggestion. Not only would the traffic lights forever spoil the heritage entrance into Picton; they would also not resolve safety issues, speeding and, indeed, may create unintended consequences. My biggest concern with those traffic lights—and I find traffic lights to be a form of socialism—is that they represent short-sightedness and a bandaid solution to an ongoing and increasing problem of traffic congestion. The lights might assist during peak-hour traffic but they will also be eclipsed by further growth in Picton and other surrounding towns. The traffic would still only have the Prince Street one-way bridge to avoid going through Picton town centre. Meanwhile, it would permanently mar the picturesque heritage strip entering Picton. It is absolutely gorgeous, and I encourage the member for Bankstown and the member for Shellharbour to come see it.

Residents have dutifully maintained their homes to those heritage standards, and council must be held to the same standard. The obvious answer is that Picton needs its bypass. It will improve the amenity of Picton town centre, provide an alternative for freight movement and reduce the number of vehicles using Victoria Bridge. For too long, Wollondilly residents have suffered from poor roads, increased traffic congestion and unsafe evacuation routes during bushfire and flood events. Under this Government, they deserve to see the delivery of the promises that we have made and solutions that look more than three years ahead. Wollondilly is growing and infrastructure needs to grow with it. With more cars, trucks and motorbikes on the under-maintained roads, Picton Road is a major thoroughfare between Greater Sydney and the Illawarra. The community is rightfully frustrated. We deserve to have a plan for resilient road infrastructure and safety, including a safe exit in an emergency.

That is especially important in my electorate, where the standard of public transport is less than desirable and where access to employment in other locations is associated with long commute times and high car dependency. When the WestInvest survey went live online, constituents nominated the popular Picton bypass as a tailor-made project that would make a real difference to the community amenity and economic recovery. It would be truly transformational. It would support livability, culture and amenity, improve access to education, employment and health care and, fundamentally, increase road safety. I implore the Minister for Metropolitan Roads to give the people of Picton and the Wollondilly electorate hope by funding the Picton bypass, reducing the speed limit on Menangle Street and scrapping those socialist traffic lights.

YAGOONA TRAIN STATION EASY ACCESS UPGRADE

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (18:57): I take the opportunity to inform the House that, after a very long 10-year campaign, I am delighted to announce that we have finally upgraded Yagoona train station with an easy access lift. Last Friday I had the opportunity to catch up with some of our old residents who were there at the beginning of the campaign. I thank a number of them, including Heather Wicks, Karen McPhillips and Richard Hayes, who are all long-term residents of Yagoona. I also thank Roydon Ng from the Restore Inner West Line campaign, who has strongly campaigned, like I have, this entire time, demanding that the Government install the lift at a train station that should have had a lift a long time ago.

I was surprised, however, in going down there to see a plaque that said the upgraded station was opened a month ago by the member for East Hills. I was intrigued by that because I thought, "Well, I didn't receive an invitation as the member for Bankstown, and these residents in Yagoona didn't receive an invitation either." In fact, no-one knew about it, and I was advised by the local editor of the Torch that they were given a release last week to say that it had been opened by the member for East Hills. I decided to look at *Hansard*. I noted that in the past four years the member for East Hills had not raised Yagoona train station once, but, as the member for Bankstown, I had raised the issue of Yagoona train station needing a lift on more than 30 occasions in this House. I have done that by moving notices of motions and by discussing the matter as a part of my private member's statements in this Chamber. I have raised questions with the various different transport Ministers and asked them why they had not provided an easy access lift to Yagoona earlier.

I have also raised on multiple occasions why it was that the express train services were taken away from Yagoona, and why the Yagoona train station and the train line west of Bankstown were removed from the city rail grid and, therefore, removed from the city circle. We do not have a direct service from Yagoona into the city

circle. It was removed by then transport Minister Gladys Berejiklian back in 2013. On that occasion, I note that the then member for East Hills raised nothing about it, and now the new member for East Hills has also not on a single occasion raised any concerns in this House about our train stations being removed from the city circle. So it is interesting for me that she had the hide to take it upon herself to open the upgraded train station and not invite any of the local residents who were part of that campaign.

I also acknowledge many of the housing residents in Dutton Street who entirely rely on public transport to get around. Many of them have different, varying disabilities, and they were absolutely gutted for many years, having incredible difficulty getting down those stairs at Yagoona train station. It is quite a steep set of stairs and it was quite dangerous. I acknowledge *Canterbury-Bankstown Torch*. We were on the front page a couple of years ago, calling for the train station upgrade and easy-access lift. We have been down at the station multiple times, helping people walk up the stairs. I must thank the Torch, which has been right there on the campaign as well.

I am pleased for the residents of Yagoona that we have our train station lift, and I am pleased that we, as a community, have advocated for it. It is not just political spin for us, as it must be for the member for East Hills, who has not on a single occasion raised the issue. Surprise, surprise—her sudden interest might be about redistribution and her electorate of East Hills moving into Yagoona, but I would suggest to the member for East Hills that she should, in fact, worry about her big commitment to a new \$1.3 billion hospital. She should focus on that. She made that announcement with her Government 10 days before the last election, and we are still none the wiser as to whether we will even receive the hospital or where it is going to be.

Again, I thank the residents. I thank the Restore Inner West Line campaign group and everybody who was behind the campaign. I also thank *Canterbury-Bankstown Torch* for supporting our community in the campaign. We are delighted that we finally have an easy access lift at Yagoona. We recently installed one at Birrong, and we will continue to fight for those lifts to be installed at Chester Hill and Villawood.

Community Recognition Notices

KU-RING-GAI PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—2022 is an important milestone for the Ku-ring-gai Philharmonic Orchestra. It marks fifty years of making music for the local community. The Ku-ring-gai Philharmonic Orchestra began in 1972 and is now a full-scale community orchestra, drawing on a pool of more than 150 musicians. They are highly rated for the quality of performance and interesting musical program. The orchestra have pioneered some innovative, community-focused programs, including the NSW Secondary Schools Concerto Competition, Kids' Proms concerts, and its Composer Workshops. Notably, the Orchestra kept up the spirits of locals during recent Covid lockdowns by providing free pop-up outdoor concerts. I congratulate the musicians, organisers and volunteers involved in the KPO's first 50 years and wish them the best for the future.

NSFA RESPECT REFEREES CAMPAIGN

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—I commend the Northern Suburbs Football Association for establishing a campaign calling for respect for referees and for the community facilities that provide the venue for community sport. The NSFA is concerned about an increase in incidents of match officials being abused by coaches, spectators, and players. The NSFA is sending a strong message such behaviour will not be tolerated. In an increasingly self-absorbed world where people would rather rant on social media than act civilly, the NSFA Respect campaign is an important and timely reminder to be nice. The NSFA believe sport should be enjoyable and that referees are only human and might make a mistake. They want people to realise that local sport is not the world championships. Congratulations to the NSFA for championing excellence in the game of soccer as well as civility toward all the people involved in community sport.

LOCAL FOOTBALL CLUB NURTURES TWO YOUNG MATILDAS

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—Congratulations to current Northern Tigers player, Ella Tonkin, and to her teammate and former Northern Tigers player, Greta Kraszula, on being selected in the squad for the Young Matildas for the Under 20 Women's World Cup in Costa Rica. The squad has been finalised following the completion of the Young Matildas pre-tournament training camp in Mexico City. Both Ella Tonkin and Greta Kraszula have featured throughout the Young Matildas preparation. They played against New Zealand and in the AFF Women's Championships 2022. The coach of the final squad said selection was difficult, with so many talented players to choose from. He praised the final team as a unified squad who are committed and enthusiastic about representing our nation to the best of their ability. Australia will open the tournament with a game against hosts Costa Rica. I congratulate both Ella Tonkin and Greta Kraszula for their selection in the Australian side and acknowledge the role played in development of their skills through the Northern Tigers Football Club.

ORANGE HEALTH SERVICE AUXILIARY

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to recognise the Orange Health Service Auxiliary. The Orange Health Service Auxiliary have been operating for 99 years, which is a phenomenal community service effort. The Orange Health Service Auxiliary is one of 176 Auxiliaries across NSW. The Orange Health Service Auxiliary is comprised of over forty members, many of whom volunteer to operate the hospital's Auxiliary Café each weekday, providing an invaluable service to staff and visitors to the hospital, reliably supplying customers with meals, refreshments, gifts and some essential items. The Auxiliary Café is an important service in supporting the functioning of the hospital. Without the volunteers, this important service would cease to exist. Last year the active members volunteered about 8,500 hours to the running of the café. The Auxiliary raised over \$185,000 in the 2020/2021 financial year, and, despite the impact and trade disruption of COVID-19, they managed to raise \$155,000 in the 2021-2022 financial year. All the money raised by the Auxiliary has been donated to the hospital for equipment and patient services. I congratulate the Auxiliary's committee, members and café volunteers on this outstanding effort, which benefits the entire Orange community. Well done.

MARIAH WILLIAMS

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to once again recognise Mariah Williams, who hails from Parkes. Mariah, an Australian National and two-time Olympic women's hockey player, recently achieved her 100th international hockey cap. The 27-year-old achieved her representative sporting milestone at the Fédération Internationale de Hockey [FIH] Women's World Cup 2022, held in Spain and Netherlands. Mariah's 100th international cap was earned while playing with Australia's Hockeyroos, defeating South Africa in Spain. Mariah's 100 caps were all hard-earned, encountering stiff and relentless selection among her peers, requiring robust physical and psychological attributes, and a tenacious resilience to navigate injuries she has sustained along the way. Mariah is a credit to her family, Parkes and Indigenous communities. She is an inspiration to those emerging hockey players and all female athletes. I congratulate Mariah on this significant sporting milestone, and I wish her continued success, both on and off the field. Well Done.

CHARLIE BUBB

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I recognise Mr Charlie Bubb, of Orange. Muay Thai fighter Charlie Bubb recently fought an opponent at a WBC Muay Thai 79kg class, hosted at the Gold Coast, Queensland. Charlie faced American fighter Will Chope, defeating Chope in the second of the scheduled five round bout. COVID-19 was incredibly frustrating to high-level sports men and women, having to forgo match-level experience and competition necessary to sharpen sporting skills – especially for fighters whose competition is international. With the world having now opening borders, representative competition is now resuming – much to the relief of Charlie and his fellow Muay Thai fighters. Following the recent victory, Charlie is now ranked number one in the world. Charlie is now looking forward to progressing his career with a schedule of high-profile fights. I congratulate Charlie on his recent and decisive win in the international bout. I wish Charlie well for his future career and look forward to watching it progress.

BUDGEWOI BEACH DUNECARE

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—I acknowledge Budgewoi Beach Dunecare Inc. on being a finalist for the 2022 National Landcare Awards. The Awards recognise the diversity of landcare across Australia, and celebrate the outstanding achievements of the nominees. The ceremony will be held at the International Convention Centre Darling Harbour in Sydney on 24 August. Budgewoi Beach Dunecare is a deserving finalist because its volunteers have worked tirelessly to protect Budgewoi Beach by restoring sand dune ecosystems, managing vegetation, and lobbying for greater protection of the coastline, since the group was established more than 26 years ago. I have been a great supporter of this group over the years and know that they have played a great part in Budgewoi's coastal rehabilitation. I congratulate Budgewoi Beach Dunecare on being a finalist for the 2022 National Landcare Awards, and wish them all the best for the ceremony later in the month.

ALEXANDER WELLS

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—I acknowledge Alexander Wells on winning the Lake Mac Sports Star - High Achievement at the 2022 Lake Mac Awards. The Lake Mac Awards recognise and celebrate the amazing accomplishments of local athletes, artists, environmentalists, volunteers and ambassadors. Alexander is an outstanding professional baseball pitcher, who started his career in Lake Macquarie by going through the junior and senior ranks at Belmont Baseball Club. Alexander has now become the 36th Australian to play Major League baseball in the United States. The opportunity saw him play for the Baltimore Orioles in New York's famous Yankee Stadium and secured 2 game wins. There is no doubt that Alexander has made a great contribution to the local and international sporting scene and should be very proud of what he has already achieved as a young athlete.

I congratulate Alexander on winning the Lake Mac Sports Star - High Achievement at this year's Lake Mac Awards.

HOPE IN A SUITCASE

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—I acknowledge Hope in a Suitcase on being named the Lake Mac Community Group of the Year at the 2022 Lake Mac Awards. The Lake Mac Awards recognise and celebrate the amazing accomplishments of local athletes, artists, environmentalists, volunteers and ambassadors. Hope in a Suitcase is a non-profit organisation that is run solely by volunteers, who purchase suitcases and fill them with essential items such as clothes, toys and toiletries before providing them to out-of-home care and child protection agencies. The organisation has worked tirelessly to assist over 130 children entering out-of-home care with child protection involvement right across Lake Macquarie. It is clear that Hope in a Suitcase strive to help children in need and has made a great contribution to the local community. Once again, I congratulate Hope in a Suitcase on being named the Lake Mac Community Group of the Year at the 2022 Lake Mac Awards.

DRAGONS TEAM OF THE CENTURY

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—The St George Club, established in 1921, celebrated its centenary in 2021. However, Covid-19 caused delay to the celebrations, which included, the recognition of six Teams of the Eras, selection of the 100 Greatest Dragons and the Team of the Century. The Team of the Century was chosen by a panel of former players, officials, rugby league journalists and historians, and were judged only on what they achieved, while playing for the Dragons. The team is dominated by players from the world record 'never before, never again' 11 consecutive premierships (1956-66), including the Club's four Immortals: Reg Gasnier, Graeme Langlands, John Raper and Norm Provan. The team also contains a representative from every Premiership winning team across the 100 years - 1941, 1949, 1956-66, 1977, 1979 and 2010. Mark Gasnier is the only modern-day player selected in the centenary team, named to partner his uncle Reg. Chairman of selectors and former Dragons' coach, Roy Masters said it is arguably the greatest combination of club players in the history of rugby league. Frank Burge was chosen as the coach of this historic team. We are all very proud of our Dragons.

OPERATION ART EXHIBITION CELEBRATES 27TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—Operation Art, an annual exhibition celebrating the achievements of visual arts students, will be showcased at Hurstville Museum and Gallery as part of a state-wide roadshow around NSW. The art exhibition is an initiative of The Children's Hospital at Westmead, in partnership with The NSW Department of Education to help make sick children feel better through the power of art. The bespoke creations can help make a positive impact to the wider community, featuring native Australian flora, animals, portraits and colours that evoke important topics such as inclusion, diversity and mental health. A total of 50 of the 723 artworks created by NSW students from Kindergarten to Year 10 will be displayed from 29 July – 23 October illustrating their artistic talents through art and design. It's great to see Operation Art continuing its huge success and bringing its exhibition to our local government area for the first time. A series of workshops and professional learning opportunities in visual arts for teachers and students will coincide with the exhibition, from 28 August 2 September at Hurstville Museum and Gallery. Congratulations to the Hurstville Museum and Gallery on securing this exhibition.

VALE JAMES "JIM" ROBERT WALSH, FORMER HURSTVILLE MAYOR

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—Jim Walsh, a member of the Beverly Hills ALP, recently passed away aged 88. Jim Walsh was first elected to Hurstville Council in a by-election in Penshurst Ward in 1970. Re-elected the following year, Jim was appointed mayor in 1971 aged 37 and whilst raising a young family served as mayor until 1974. He was re-elected to Hurstville Council in 1974 and served until 1977, including as deputy mayor in his last year of service. James Walsh was educated at Marist Brothers, Kogarah and graduated with a commerce degree from the University of NSW. He then worked as a research and development officer for Grace Bros. Jim and his wife, Barbara were well-known for their involvement in the local community and the valuable contributions Jim made. I would like to acknowledge Jim's work on Hurstville Council and for the warmth and affection he was regarded with. I extend my sincerest condolences to his wife, Barbara and their four sons and daughter and their families.

BORDER BASKETBALLERS BOUND FOR NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate Claudia Hocking (Captain), Jade Crook, Aleira McCowan, Kijana McCowan and reserves Ellie Lyons and Audrey Hogg, for being selected to represent Albury basketball in the NSW Country under-16, national championships. The four students will travel to Perth for the event. This is such a great accomplishment for our Albury basketball team and a first for female players competing in the Nationals. Well done Claudia, Jade, Aleira, Kijana, Ellie and Audrey for all your commitment and hard work!

STAR QUALITIES HELP THERESA FIRE UP TO ACCOMPLISH REGIONAL FIRST

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate Theresa Star from Bungowannah Rural Fire Station - the first woman to lead a brigade in the Southern Border area. This brigade provides service extending to regions such as Tocomwal to Jingellic and north of Henty. Theresa first joined the brigade at seventeen and has been the deputy captain for the past four years. Three generations later, she is following in the footsteps of her father, Graham, and grandfather Don. Congratulations Theresa - this is a great achievement as a firefighter and your achievement helps build confidence among other women to get involved in this critical regional service and to take a leadership role.

JAZ STRIKES RIGHT NOTE AS SHE SHOWS HER METTLE IN WINNING PRIZE

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to congratulate Jazmine Anderson, a Fabrication Engineering apprentice, who has been awarded the 2022 Sarah Lloyd Scholarship. The scholarship award sets out to encourage women to enter a non-traditional trade for women in NSW. Ms Anderson started working as an apprentice at Corowa's Focus Engineering in January, where she is the first female apprentice in the company's thirty years of trading. Her skills are being used for a current project, building a frame walkway for the Twelve Apostles site along the Great Ocean Road. Congratulations Jazmine, I am proud of your achievement and determination, and wish you success in completing your apprenticeship.

KURT DEFRIS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—Three Warners Bay High School students, Jikoda Cooper, Sam Garas and Tom Garas, were recently selected for the NSW State ice hockey team to compete in the 2022 Kurt DeFris National Championship. Held in Newcastle from 28 July and 31 July, this annual tournament sees the best under fifteen ice hockey players in the country come together to compete for gold. All three boys play for the Newcastle Northstars, whose 2022 season has been phenomenal—just before the tournament kicked off, the Northstars were sitting at a close second on the leader board behind the Canberra Brave. In great news for our State, the tournament finished with New South Wales defeating Western Australia 7–3 to claim the gold medal at the Northstars' home ground, Hunter Ice Skating Stadium. New South Wales had earlier defeated Queensland in their semifinal. New South Wales' Gustav Remler-Jensen finished as the tournament's top scorer with 17 goals and three assists from six games, and the home state side led in the goaltending statistics with Justin Baxter posting a 0.914 save percentage and a 1.38 goals against average. Congratulations on your outstanding achievement, boys!

HUNTER BREAST CANCER FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—Breast cancer is the second most commonly diagnosed cancer in Australia, with 57 Australians diagnosed each and every day. That equates to over 20,000 diagnoses with breast cancer each and every year. You would be hard-pressed to find a family which hasn't been impacted by breast cancer. The Hunter Best Cancer Foundation does so much work for those diagnosed with breast cancer in the Hunter, with their slogan "Hunter People helping Hunter People" proof of their community-mindedness and focus on our area. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the Bare Foot Bowls Fundraising event hosted by the HBCF at Alder Park Bowling Club on Saturday 30 July. Organised by the fantastic Chevonne Parker, the event aimed to raise funds for HBCF by providing a fun day of barefoot bowls, games and activities. It was an incredible success, more than doubling their \$5,000 fundraising goal and raising a total of \$10,125, which is going towards providing supportive care services to local breast cancer families. Thanks to Chevonne, Greg Parkes, Ove Lange, the Parkes and Parker family, Alder Park Sports Club everyone who donated. It makes all the difference!

REDHEAD PUBLIC SCHOOL YARNING CIRCLE AND AWABAKAL LEARNING SPACE

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—To mark NAIDOC week, Redhead Public School officially opened its new Yarning Circle and Awabakal Learning Space on Wednesday, 29 June. The yarning circle has been used First Nations peoples for centuries to learn from a collective group, build respectful relationships, and to preserve and pass on cultural knowledge. It was my pleasure to go along as a special guest of the school, and see the culmination of several years of work by the students and community. I loved seeing the native plants and Australian animal mosaics that complete the area, which were made by students as part of the 2019 NAIDOC Week. There is a very special feel to the area the school community has created and I thank the school for including me in the opening ceremony. My thanks to Principal Lisa Monaghan and inviting me, and to the entire school community for their incredible work in building a space which acknowledges and celebrates the wonderful First Nations people of the area.

DAPTO HOCKEY TEAM

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Dapto Hockey Club's first grade men's team on their win of 2-0 against former long-time premier's University on Sunday 26th June, in round 11

of the Illawarra South Coast Men's hockey league. It's a fantastic turnaround for the newly motivated Dapto team, off the back of a win of 1-0 against Albion Park after suffering a 9-1 loss against University in the opening round, and 3-1 in the seventh round. The team's coach, Simon Orchard, former Kookaburra and London Olympics bronze medallist, said this win was a great effort against a team who were undermanned but still a difficult opponent, and is a reward for the hard work his team have been putting together this season. The first goal came in the second quarter when in-form scorer Kevin Mansell linked up with Luke Potter. The second goal came from Zac Nyrhinen, from an unconventional penalty corner variation. My congratulations again to the Dapto Team, and their coach and goal scorers, for a fantastic team effort. I know we will see more wins this season.

PETERSHAM PS GYMNASTICS CHAMPION TAKES GOLD AT NATIONALS

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—A huge congratulations to local Petersham superstar, Ariadna Diaz for her outstanding gymnastics win at a national level back in May. Travelling from the Inner West all the way to the Gold Coast, Queensland, Ariadna represented New South Wales in the 2022 Australian Gymnastics Championships specialising in rhythmic gymnastics at the sub-junior level for ages 10 - 11 years old. The Australian Gymnastics Championships are the height of competition for gymnasts in Australia, attracting the most elite athletes from all around the country. This year, Ariadna and her team competed in the rhythmic categories of free-hand, hoop, ball, and clubs, showing off an exceptional set of skills. The New South Wales team overall bested their friendly inter-state opponents from Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia and secured first place, winning their competition. Go Ariadna for taking home the gold for New South Wales and representing Petersham!

NAIDOC WEEK AT SUMMER HILL PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—Local residents, students and staff have come together for Summer Hill Public School's NAIDOC Week, celebrating the cultures and achievements of First Nations Australians. Thank you so much to the Nyumbar Aboriginal Educational group for coming into the school to celebrate with and educate our local students in this important week. To begin the week's festivities, kindergarten through to year six students received the opportunity to watch the group perform a Sweeping Ceremony. The students enjoyed the paint up that was hosted that afternoon. And in particular, the Nyumbar Ngahri Dance incursion was a great chance for students to participate in fun and interactive education sessions, learning cultural dances and songs. At the school's NAIDOC Week assembly, this year's Busking for Change charity event was also launched with a performance by Australian singer-songwriter, Josh Pyke and actress, Justine Clarke. The proceeds of the event will go towards the Indigenous Literacy Foundation, which engages with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander remote communities to provide educational resources. Thank you and congratulations to everyone who hosted and participated in Summer Hill Public School's NAIDOC Week 2022 activities.

ASHFIELD BOYS HIGH SCHOOL PREFECTS

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—Congratulations to the Ashfield Boys High School prefect group for receiving a 2022 Amy Large Volunteering Award in early July! The award is presented to groups that have made significant contributions within their local community. The prefect group was recognised due to their efforts in creating a welcoming environment for the community returning to the high school following the 2021 COVID-19 lockdown. Every morning, the group of leaders would ensure that someone was greeting students and members in the community at the school's front gate. To make people feel safe, they handed out masks and provided hand sanitiser for those entering. Ashfield Boys High School should be so proud of this fantastic group of role models that are helping lead the Ashfield community during such uncertain times. I acknowledge School Captain Samuel Cropper; Vice Captain Moazan Ali; and Prefects Kush Kumar, Zaid Mohammed, Kingston Nacagilevu, Ethan Ng-Saad and Pranjal Pathak. What a well-deserved award!

NSW COMMUNITY SPORTS AWARD WINNERS

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I acknowledge two Lennox Head sports volunteers who received a Distinguished Long Service Award at the 2022 NSW Community Sports Awards in June. Brenda Zakaras has been a volunteer at Lennox Head Football Club since it began in 1978. She was integral in getting the club started and has held many positions over the years including Secretary, Treasurer and team manager. Brenda has made a great contribution to the club by running the canteen for more than 40 years, bringing in significant funds that go towards improving club facilities. John Beasley is a member of Lennox Head-Alstonville Surf Life Saving Club, where he has given distinguished service for more than six decades. John has won many Service and Recognition Awards, including life memberships of Surf Life Saving NSW, and Surf Life Saving Australia, and a 60-Year Long Service Award in 2014. I congratulate Brenda and John and commend all of the volunteers in the Ballina electorate who give so much to our sporting clubs.

CANTERBURY BANKSTOWN JUNIOR RUGBY LEAGUE TEAM OF THE CENTURY EVENT

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—I am pleased to congratulate Canterbury-Bankstown District Junior Rugby League who recently celebrated their 100th anniversary at Canterbury Leagues Club with the unveiling of their Team of the Century. To commemorate this milestone, the Club conducted an online poll where members and fans were able to select from several nominees for each position. The result culminated in a wonderful recognition and celebration of legendary players in our community. This also afforded us an opportunity to thank and honour these players who individually and collectively have brought us many thrilling moments on the field. They may have gone on to the next phase of their lives, and beyond but the memories will live on. I congratulate all the nominees and thank them for their contribution to the sport. Canterbury Bankstown Junior Rugby League Club continue to work at grassroots level to produce and nurture future players, from our community, who go on to represent our local community, state and country. On behalf of the community, I extend my thanks and congratulations to the Club on this momentous occasion and wish them well in all their future endeavours.

ABDULLAH YOUSUF

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—I wish to acknowledge the important work of a senior figure within my community, Abdullah Yousuf. I am proud to represent one of the most vibrant and diverse electorates in NSW. We are several communities as one, living harmoniously through the collective efforts of leaders such as Abdullah Yousuf. Abdullah is the Editor in Chief of Suprovat Sydney, a newspaper servicing the Australian Bangladeshi community. He also heads up and assists groups like Bangladeshi Senior Citizen of Australian Inc. and Bangladeshi Refugee of Australia Inc. Recently the latter group held a special gathering in Lakemba for refugees and concerned citizens to raise awareness of the issue and where improvements ought to be made. Many of us would agree that more needs to be done to support new migrants and people from ethnically, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. We succeed when we rise as one which is why the efforts of Abdullah to support members of the Bangladeshi community in Australia are critical and so appreciated by me. I look forward to continuing my work with him in pursuit of a more supportive, multicultural and harmonious society.

AWU CONFERENCE DINNER

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—On 3 August I was privileged to attend the AWU Conference dinner. We had the honour of being joined by the Prime Minister, the Hon. Anthony Albanese. I'm very grateful to our hosts, AWU National Secretary Daniel Walton and AWU President Marina Williams. AWU is one of the oldest and largest unions in Australia and just last year AWU celebrated 135 years since it was created. Today, as we have done throughout the history of the Labor Party, we work with unions to support millions of Australian workers. This is demonstrated by the recent success of the campaign by the AWU and other Australian unions to increase the minimum wage for millions of Australian workers, and secure family and domestic violence leave for millions of affected workers. The Prime Minister and Workplace Relations Minister Tony Burke put legislation to the new Parliament and extended this entitlement to all workers, full, time, part time and casual. One of the highlights of the dinner was to hear the Prime Minister remind us that "Australians deserve better" and "We must do better". Together we will.

CENTRAL COAST LOCALS DOMINATE BALLITO PRO FINAL

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I take this opportunity to celebrate the immense achievements of Molly Picklum and Macy Callaghan. In the recent Ballito Pro Surfing Competition, these young women have excelled. In her first time competing in the event, Molly Picklum has sealed the win with an incredible finals' performance, while Macy Callaghan has placed as runner-up. Held in South Africa, the contenders were against 3–4-foot waves. Both women put in an excellent performance, showcasing their talent, hard work, and skill. After a hard-fought final heat, Molly managed to edge-out Macy with a final score of 12.40 to 12.17. The win is a boost of confidence for Molly who recently moved from the Championship Tour to the Challenger Series; this win puts her in good stead for selection in the coming year. This is a fantastic result for the Central Coast, where two locals have achieved the highest possible results in the competition. It is a testament to both Molly and Macy's training, but also to the surfing community in the Central Coast. Congratulations again, I and the Central Coast could not be prouder of your achievements.

KATHY LAKELAND AND SHANE HUGHES

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I commend the excellent work of some special Central Coast volunteers, Kathy Lakeland and Shane Hughes. Both Kathy and Shane have been named as finalists in the 2022 Rotary Clubs and Districts of NSW Emergency Services Community Awards. In a region like the Central Coast which has been so recently challenged by drought, bushfires, floods, and storms, as well as COVID-19, it is our emergency personal who have been the backbone of community support. Kathy and Shane exhibit the resilience, courage and commitment required by emergency personnel and have been recognised for performing at a

consistently high standard. The awards honour those who dedicate their lives to protecting other people and property, selected from a range of emergency services, including Fire and Rescue NSW, Marine Rescue NSW, NSW Ambulance, NSW Rural Fire Service, Surf Life Saving NSW and more. It is a testament to the hard work of Kathy, from Saratoga/Brisbane Water RFS, and Shane, from Copacabana RFS that they have been selected and recognised amongst such an admirable group of people. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank you both for your service."

TERRIGAL SLSC TEAM RESCUE OF THE MONTH

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—Today I recognise Patrol Team 9 from Terrigal SLSC who were recently celebrated by Surf Lifesaving NSW for Rescue of the Month. The team consisted of Patrol Captain Glenn Bowles, Peter O'Malley, Paul Quick, Toni Jones, Deb Barnes, Chayse Coleman, Jill Heaton, Nigel Heaton, Ric Morrey, and Adam Brierley. This award is utterly deserved, for their outstanding teamwork. The rescue itself took place during the recent storm systems; despite the evidently rough conditions, debris in the ocean, and hazardous surf warnings, 5 people decided to risk a swim. By early afternoon, 4 swimmers were battling a newly formed rip that extended about 100m out to sea. It was thanks to the team that today I do not report any fatalities. It was through their well-practiced coordination and honed skills that rescue tubes and an IRB were used to perform an exemplary rescue. Multiple oxygen bags, a first aid kit and a defibrillator were transported to the rescue site to ensure the health of all those rescued. I am proud to congratulate the teamwork and expertise of Patrol 9 from Terrigal SLSC recognised by this award.

ASSYRIAN AUSTRALIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—Congratulations to the newly established Assyrian Australian Medical Association [AAMA] on its launch event held on Sunday 26 June, 2022. The idea to form a medical association from the Assyrian community was born out of the local lockdown in Fairfield and South Western Sydney. Doctors and medical practitioners saw a gap in the service delivery of information relating to the everchanging Public Health Orders. The launch event was held at the Assyrian Sports and Cultural Club with representatives from Assyrian, Chaldean, Mandaean and Iraqi medical and cultural associations. It was an honour to meet the inaugural board members, all of whom are committed to giving back to the community. The goals of the association are to improve the health outcomes of the community, raise awareness of health matters, support the community with updated health information in language and to promote and encourage youth to enter the medical profession. I would like to thank the board of the AAMA for organising the launch event and wish them well in their work assisting the community on matters relating to health.

COALITION OF ASSYRIAN PARTIES IN AUSTRALIA – ASSYRIAN MARTYRS DAY

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—The Coalition of Assyrian Parties in Australia held an annual memorial on Sunday 7th August 2022 to honour and commemorate the Assyrian Martyrs. This year marks the 89th anniversary of the Simmele massacre, where thousands of innocent people were slaughtered in cold blood. The service also commemorated the lives lost in the Seyfo genocide in 1914 and other events where the Assyrian Martyrs fell victim to genocide. I would like to acknowledge the Secretary of the Coalition Ms Jacqueline Georges and member organisations for organising the memorial.

ASSYRIAN DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT – ASSYRIAN MARTYRS DAY 2022

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—It was an honour to be with the Assyrian Democratic Movement to commemorate Assyrian Martyrs Day, 7th August. The solemn memorial was held at the Assyrian Sports and Cultural Club, Fairfield heights with representatives from the Assyrian community, welfare, cultural and sporting organisations. The religious prayers were presided over by Father Cor Bishop Joseph Joseph from the Ancient Church of the East, with speeches delivered by representatives from the Assyrian Women's Organisation, Assyrian Aid Society and the Assyrian Cultural and Social Youth Association. I pay tribute to ADM President Immanuel Sada and the organising committee for hosting the commemoration of the 89th Anniversary of the Simele Massacre and other genocides committed against the Assyrian culture throughout history.

MARTIN NESBITT

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—Day to day, Martin Nesbitt of Shortland works as a traffic controller. Having to travel to work every day, he would look on google maps to find the closest street library. This experience inspired Martin, who decided to bring a street library to his own local community. What followed was a community effort to bring Martin's idea to life. The team at My Community Pharmacy agreed to take on the library, which will be placed on the main street at the Shortland Chemist for public use. When the pharmacy is closed, the library will be stored in there. East Maitland Men's Shed agreed to build the library. Once it is constructed, schoolchildren from Our Lady of Victories will paint and decorate the structure. The funds for the construction and furnishing of the library will be raised through raffles held on-premises at the Shortland Hotel.

Martin has coordinated the project and I would like to congratulate him on all the effort he has put into it. Thank you Martin.

PHIL MAHONEY

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—Sometimes, it is said that in Newcastle we have both kinds of music—country and western. One former resident of Lambton has had an outsize impact on country music in Newcastle, and he was recently recognised for that contribution. Congratulations to Phil Mahoney, an entertainer, promoter, mentor to young artists and a long-time resident of Lambton, on receiving a lifetime achievement award for his services to country music. He received the TC Brown Award at the Dusty Boots festival in Narromine, with previous recipients Shirley and Brian Appleyard in attendance. For many years, Phil has helped boost the careers of up and coming country artists by organising bookings and passing on advice he'd received from many of the biggest stars in the genre. Phil's biography, named *Try a Little Kindness* after Glen Campbell's 1969 country track, was released in 2021. It tells his life story and all proceeds from the sales go to support Camp Quality. Good on you, Phil, on this well-deserved recognition.

WORLD CUP QUALIFIER

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—I wish to congratulate the Australian Socceroos who have qualified for the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar from November 21 to December 17. The Socceroos had to climb football's Everest and win two further qualification games against the UAE and Peru to make it into the draw for the 2022 World Cup. In a supreme effort coach Graham Arnold and his team overcame all odds in a do or die penalty shootout against Peru. I would particularly like to recognise the players who took part in the shoot-out: Martin Boyle, Aaron Mooy, Craig Goodwin, Ajdin Hrustic, Jamie Maclaren and Awer Mabil. Fantastic job, boys! This achievement by the players, coaching staff and Football Australia in reaching their 5th consecutive FIFA World Cup will lift our spirits into the future as the Socceroos firstly take on current World Cup holders, France, on November 23 in Doha. As a lifelong football fan, as are many of my constituents, I offer my support and encouragement to the Socceroos as they represent their country, themselves and their sport to the best of their ability.

ILLAWARRA SURF LIFE SAVING AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE BULLI SURF CLUB

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira)—Today I acknowledge and congratulate the winners of the 2022 Illawarra Surf Life Savings Awards of Excellence. Bulli Surf Club Winners: Club of the Year, Surf Sports Club of the Year, Emergency Call Out Team- Services Team of the Year, Bulli Open A Boat Crew- Surf Sports Team of the Year, Hannah Minogue- Athlete of the Year & Masters Athlete of the Year, Paul Jones- Coach of the Year, Brock Neall- Youth Athlete of the year. I would like to acknowledge the contributions these surf-life saving volunteers are giving to ensure our beaches are safe. These volunteers, give their time and put their bodies on the front line to ensure people visiting the beach are kept safe, educated on safe places to swim and assisted in the event of an emergency. My electorate has patrolling surf-life saving members from Coledale in the North stretching to Corrimal in the South. Congratulations to the winners and thank you for your service to our community.

LE MARCHE WILLOUGHBY

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—Willoughby is proud to showcase cultures from all around the world and Le Marché Willoughby treats locals to the best of French fashion and the culinary delights of France. Le Marché Willoughby is an authentic artisan market on the lower north shore that offers the best of fresh produce, French gourmet food and apparel. Some of the market's mouth-watering specialties include Raclette cheese, Tarte Tropezienne, and of course, the ever popular Choux and eclairs. Sourcing fashion accessories from talented artisans, the market has also features French linen tablecloths, hand-carved wooden spoons, baby clothing, jewellery, handmade homewares and much more. The market is open every 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month from 8:30am-1:30pm in Laurelbank Cottage on Penshurst St Willoughby. Born almost two years ago, Le Marché Willoughby has had a bumpy ride through lockdowns, approvals and wet weather, but the talented and enterprising team led by Solveig Coulon-Legay have kept these fantastic markets going. I encourage all members and their constituents to come along and visit this wonderful market to sample the best of France within Willoughby.

ARTARMON MAESTROS CRICKET CLUB

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—Adding to the thriving sporting and community life of my electorate is the Artarmon Maestros Cricket Club. Established in 2021, the Club is a very recent addition to the lower north shore cricketing scene. Artarmon Maestros is affiliated with the Northern Suburbs Cricket Association, the Manly Warringah Cricket Association and the Northern Cricket Union. The current president of the club is Kaylan Raju Gaddiraju. He is supported by a number of office bearers including the Secretary, Yogesh Gunaji, the Registrar, Vikas Chaudhary, the Club Coach, Yogesh Gunaji, and the Training Coordinator, Ashutosh Jogalekar. Artarmon Maestros provides great opportunities for local cricketers of all abilities to improve their cricketing skills and to

enjoy the camaraderie of competitive team sport. I know that the establishment of Artarmon Maestros has been warmly received by the cricket-loving South Asian community in Willoughby and I look forward to following and supporting the progress of this great local club.

THE POST

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—Local newspapers continue to serve as a vital source of information, engagement and entertainment for the community, and I would like to commend the importance of local paper The Post. This respected and trusted masthead is locally owned and printed for the northern suburbs of Sydney, with strong circulation into the Willoughby electorate. It is published monthly and distributed via a committed team of persons and places locally. The paper includes local community news, sport, real estate and classifieds as well as coverage of arts and culture together with health and lifestyle. The paper is produced by a talented editorial team led by Tina Brown and, together with my state parliamentary colleagues, Matt Kean and Alister Henskens, I am privileged to be a regular columnist for the Post. Since taking up this role, I have had the opportunity to write about state issues of interest to my local community, including the value of small businesses and the importance of investing in our local schools. I am grateful for the contribution that The Post makes to the life of Willoughby and the whole of Sydney's Northern Suburbs.

SHOALHAVEN GOES GOLD

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast)—I would like to acknowledge and congratulate all those involved in the Shoalhaven Goes Gold, a series of events to occur in the Shoalhaven in support to raise funds for Neuroblastoma Research and for the Shoalhaven and Milton Cancer Care Centres. Shoalhaven Goes Gold has had these events planned over the last two years but due to Covid-19 they did not proceed. This year Shoalhaven Assistance and Support Incorporated is planning a month of activities in August and September. There will be events such as Fashion Parades, Lunches, Entertainment, High Tea, Concert in the park, Games night and many more. All tickets can be found on Trybooking.com. These events sound like lots of fun and it is great to see that our community can get involved to help support a very great cause. I look forward to hearing about all the success Shoalhaven Goes Gold brings to our community and I hope our community can come together and help a great cause by participating in these events.

THE ARTY FARTY PARTY

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast)—I would like to congratulate and acknowledge the success of the Arty Farty Party recently held in the July school holidays. The Arty Farty Party was held at the Shoalhaven entertainment centre where there was non-stop fun for families and friends, with lots of activities that continued throughout the day. Theatre, music, art, dancing, stories, food, circus, games, and digital scavenger hunt were amongst the number of fun activities going on to keep the families busy. I was glad to hear this event was a great success even with the amount of rain fall we had during this event; it was still great day of fun for the kids during the first day of school holidays. I hope next year is just as great if not better with the weather on our side for some more fantastic events to go ahead. The Arty Farty Party was made possible by the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre, Shoalhaven Regional Gallery, Shoalhaven Libraries and Festivals Australia.

STEVE LYONS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I bring to the attention of the House an issue raised with me by Port Macquarie resident, Steve Lyons. Steve was born without legs and the use of only one arm commuting using his trusty skateboard but he would have improved accessibility if he was able to use an electric skateboard. I met with Steve to discuss the need for electric personal mobility devices such as a skateboard be legally classed as a mobility aid in NSW and have advocated for such a change with the Minister. I acknowledge the announced trials being rolled out across NSW for e-scooters to be used on designated bike paths if a Council applies to participate. Steve expressed concern that the trial did not consider all electric personal mobility devices including skateboards or reference their use by people with disability. I note that Port Macquarie-Hastings Council has decided not to be included in the trial. Thank you Steve for bring this issue to my attention and I welcome any decision by Transport for NSW to include e-mobility scooters and similar devices in any future review of regulations. Thank you Steve for bringing this issue to my attention.

GORDON "RICHARD" MOY – 54 YEARS OF BARBERING

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I recognise an icon in the barbering world—Gordon Moy who recently announced his retirement after tending to client's hair for over half a century in the barber shop on William Street in Port Macquarie called "Richard The Barber." Known by all his clients as "Richard", the local barber has decided to call it quits from a career spanning nearly 54 years after taking on an apprenticeship at the age of 16 in 1968. With the business now sold, Richard hopes to enjoy his retirement with his lovely wife of 47 years Lynette, their grandson and a planned trip to Western Australia. Richard's traditional but professional clipper

work has seen many people enter his barber shop with some long-term clients dating back 30 years. Richard recalls fond memories of seeing his clients grow up and then pass on a recommendation to the next generation. Richard admits he will miss his interactions with his customers and above all the conversations and banter he had with his many clients that have translated into friendships. I wish Richard and Lynette all the best in their future endeavours and in their retirement.

THE HOPE COMMUNITY

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—The Hope Community Australia, also known as The Hope Shop recently celebrated their 20th birthday commemorating a milestone in providing vital support to the most vulnerable living in the Hastings and Camden Haven. A vision originally conceived by the Honour Church members, The Hope Community under the then name "That's a Bargain" opened its doors on 5th August 2002 with activities conducted around the Port Macquarie Op-Shop which also operated an onsite café. Today, The Hope Community runs out of three stores from Port Macquarie, Lake Cathie and North Haven selling, receiving, and donating furniture, clothing and food supplies to families experiencing financial hardship. Each week the Hope Community provides food for the homeless and in addition 100 meals are offered to families in need through a partnership with the Hastings Neighbourhood Centre. A Return and Earn collection point has also been established supporting organisations like Rotary in their fundraising efforts. The popular Hope Café now offers practical work experience and support for people with disabilities who have an interest in hospitality including becoming a barista. I congratulate Manager Eden McGregor and all of the team at The Hope Community past and present on this impressive milestone.

KATHERINE DONOGHUE

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Katherine Donoghue as the recipient of the Exceptional Rural Healthcare Award on the 1st of July 2022. Katherine is an Occupational Therapist based at Health One in Cootamundra and a Care Coordinator of the Integrated Care team. Katherine was nominated by one of her patients, Mel Kerrison. When talking about the level of care received in her nomination, Mel said "If it were not for Katherine I would not be here today, and my children would not have a mother". Acting Chief Executive of the Murrumbidgee Local Health District, Carla Bailey said "Katherine's work results in significant reduction in Emergency Department presentations and hospitalisations for consumers while having a massive impact on improved quality of life". I would like to thank Katherine for going above and beyond while performing her duties. Not only is this an incredible achievement for Katherine individually but also an extraordinary outcome for Mel and I have no doubt the many others who Katherine cares for on a regular basis.

40 YEARS FOR NIC

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—On 21 July 2022, Fire and Rescue 389 welcomed Zone Commander, Thomas Freedom to the Harden Fire Brigade Headquarters where several vital members of the local brigade received medals for their service. Firstly, I would like to congratulate all members who received awards including Wal Leonow, Doug Baker, Thomas Boehm and Jayson Smith who all received a bushfire medal. Additionally, Matt Prosser received a "10 years of service and good conduct" award. I would also like to highlight a particularly outstanding achievement by one member of the brigade. Nic Nadycz who was awarded with a framed certificate for "40 years of service". What Nic has achieved is nothing short of incredible and inspiring, a milestone that few individuals come to surpass. Again, I extend not just my congratulations to Nic and the broader Harden Fire Brigade members but also my sincere thanks. The work conducted in service of your local community, including keeping those within the community safe is simply admirable and something you should all be very proud of.

MILES HARROLD

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—The journey to some of our greatest achievements in life often occurs along the hardest roads. For Miles Harrold, a Mulgoa local, this sentiment could not be closer to the truth. Miles joined the rowing world in 2015 with the Nepean Rowing Club and since then he has worked incredibly hard and his efforts are paying off. In February this year, at the NSW State Championships Miles won Gold in the U21 Quad and U21 Eight boat class. Then in April, at the Australian Rowing Championship representing NSW, Miles finished first in the U21 Quad and first in the U21 Eight boat class. To top it all off, Miles won Bronze in the U21 Single Scull. As Miles puts it, that bronze was the pinnacle of what he wanted to achieve that season as it is the class of boat that he has been training in for many years and has worked tirelessly to achieve what he has. Congratulations to Miles, I wish you all the best with your future in rowing and I look forward to all the wonderful things you will achieve.

ETHAN MCGUINNESS

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Earlier last month, Glenmore Park local Ethan McGuinness represented Australia at the World Games to compete in Tumbling. After a rigorous selection process, Ethan had to take part in two trials which were held in conjunction with the NSW State Championships, with other athletes also vying for a spot to represent Australia. I would like to congratulate Ethan on all his hard work and proudly representing his community, his State and his country overseas. It is a rare honour and privilege to represent one's Country. Well done to Ethan and I extend to him my best wishes for continued success in the sport that he loves.

DAVID GILE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—After suffering a heart attack in his forties and having a family history of heart disease, David Gile knew something was wrong when he began to experience shortness of breath. He sought advice from his GP who diagnosed David with Aortic Stenosis last year. As a result, David underwent a delicate procedure called a TAVI, also known as a trans-catheter aortic valve implantation. Thankfully the procedure was a success and he has come back stronger than before. I want to acknowledge the proactive example David has set for others by seeking help when something didn't seem quite right. He looked after his health and now he has the opportunity to play with grandkids, enjoy his garden and do many other things he loves. I thank David for sharing his story which I hope will encourage others, especially men who are less likely to seek medical advice when they experience symptoms of ill health. I extend to David all the very best for his health and for the extended life that he has now been gifted with.

ONE STEP WALK

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—I would like to recognise Tim Smith, the brainchild behind Maitland's unique OneStep Walk. The very low-key community event, which supports refugees to resettle in the Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and Hunter regions, builds a mutual understanding and empathy with local residents, one step at a time. It's a simple initiative: the group strolls along the Hunter River trail in Maitland, enjoying each other's company. They mix locals with people with refugee experience, too, so there will be interesting conversation and the chance to meet someone new. After the walk, they all have lunch inside the Uniting Church Hall before heading home. I joined them there a couple of months ago, and it was lovely to be able to connect with everyone. "I just loved being able to say 'welcome' to two young women who had only been here for two months," one participant said. Settling in a foreign country can be a daunting time for refugees, young or old, so the OneStep Walk is a terrific way to overcome some barriers and allow them to thrive in an inclusive environment.

BIGGEST MORNING TEA

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—I would like to say a big thank you to everyone who attended my Biggest Morning Tea function, as well as those who made a generous donation, to support the annual NSW Cancer Council event. Together, we raised in excess of \$1,700, which was a fantastic effort. A special shout out must also go to Chris and Zac from Abacus Café & Conference Centre, in Thornton, for their delicious morning tea, which included numerous scrumptious mini cupcakes, cookies and much more. We even held a raffle, which was well-received on the day. I am a staunch advocate for the Cancer Council and am always supportive of their annual Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, which raises vital funds. The NSW Cancer Council, particularly the Newcastle Hunter branch who work so hard to make a huge difference for people impacted by cancer. They offer hope, advocacy, practical support and research funding to people who are suffering from cancer, and their families.

TREVOR KEDWELL [NSW RFS]

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—I would like to acknowledge Trevor Kedwell, on being awarded a NSW Rural Fire Service [NSW RFS] National Medal. Trevor joined the Lochinvar Brigade in 2001 and held the roles of treasurer, permit issuing officer, equipment officer, community engagement officer, the brigade's RFS representative and Deputy Captain. In 2016, he transferred to the neighbouring Greta Brigade. There, Trevor's taken on the positions of callout officer, training officer, vice-president to name a few and is currently the Deputy Captain. Trevor is passionate and dedicated to providing a service to the community and his brigade. He's a team leader, role model and outstanding member. Congratulations Trevor on your 19 years of service with the NSW RFS in the Lower Hunter District.

MWLP STUDENT WORK PLACEMENT AWARDS

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—It was wonderful to attend the MWLP Student Work Placement Awards. MWLP is a non-for-profit organisation that connects students to range of organisations including businesses, industry, and training organisations. MWLP helps thousands of students each year. I commend the CEO Dr. David M. Williams, AM and the team at MWLP for the work they tirelessly perform. Truly an

organisation that fosters and facilitates students' ambition and industriousness, helping them build a foundation for their bright futures. I would like to congratulate all students who attend schools in Camden who had the opportunity for a student work placement and especially congratulate Lachlan from St Gregory's College, Campbelltown, a Camden local, who won Student of the Year for his placement at the Greenhaven Garden Centre in Leppington. I thank Greenhaven Garden Centre for providing this opportunity to Lachlan and wish him the very best for his future endeavours and have no doubt that he has a bright future.

MACARTHUR CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVING

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—The Minister for Environment and Heritage, the Hon. James Griffin MP and I had the pleasure of visiting the Macarthur Centre for Sustainable Living, in Mount Annan. The Centre is a not-for-profit organisation that is dedicated to educating the community about sustainable living options. The Centre guides and educates people on a whole range of environmentally friendly living options, including farming, gardening, renewables and recycling, solar energy, building, and waste avoidance and management. Centres such as the Macarthur Centre for Sustainable Living play an increasingly important role in the community. I would like to commend and thank the board including the Chairperson, Christine Winning. On behalf of the Camden and Macarthur community I extend a special thanks to Helen Byfield-Fleming, Centre Coordinator, and the staff and volunteers who dedicate themselves to the betterment of our future.

JOSHUA AZZOPARDI

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—I would like to congratulate Joshua Azzopardi, the Camden local representing Australia at the Commonwealth Games at Birmingham, Competing in the 4 x 100m men's athletics relay team. The effort and dedication exemplified by Joshua is something to be commended and celebrated. Joshua is representing Australia for the first time on the world stage. Training under Rob Marks of Project Elite Track Squad in Camden, Joshua competes with a sharp level of agility and dedication. I congratulate him for representing Australia at the Commonwealth Games and I am thrilled to see his hard work paying off. I wish Joshua the very best in his future athletics aspirations and have no doubt he will continue to make us all proud.

PAUL CAVALIER WESTERN NSW BUSINESS AWARDS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—Recently I had the honour of attending the 2022 Western NSW Business Awards, held at Western Plains Taronga Zoo. These awards are all about celebrating and showcasing the diverse array of talent in the business community of Western NSW, and this year's winners should feel incredibly proud to be named as the region's leading businesses and leaders for 2022. I'd like to congratulate Paul Cavalier of Print Storm Mudgee, who won the "Outstanding Young Business Leader" award. Paul started Print Storm 17 years ago, as a hobby business, on the side of his parent's house in Gulgong, when he recognised that digital technology would be the future of printing. Since its inception, Print Storm has gone from strength to strength, now employing 20 staff, and spanning across different townships, with the main office in Mudgee. In 2020 Paul opened another office in Dubbo, which became a challenge due to the outbreak of COVID, however it is still open today. Paul has also served as a Councillor on Mid-Western Regional Council since 2012. Congratulations again Paul, and good luck at the state awards!

QUENTIN PARK ALPACAS AND STUDIO TOUR WESTERN NSW BUSINESS AWARDS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—I congratulate Quentin Park Alpacas and Studio Gallery, which won the "Outstanding Start-Up" award at the Western NSW Business Awards. After purchasing a small mob of alpacas as herd protectors from foxes, artist Ameer was soon inspired by their wool, and began to make jewellery and fibre flowers. But because alpacas come in 16 different standard colours and Ameer wanted to create different coloured products without dyeing them, she asked her husband, Shaun, if they could buy some more – they now have a herd of over 130! There is truly something for everyone, from getting hands-on with the alpacas, to browsing through the gallery filled with products made from alpaca fibre, or just sitting and enjoying some food surrounded by the animals. The business, which saw a 305 percent growth from its first year of operation, is continuing to evolve, putting on birthday parties, weddings, school trips and senior home visits. Congratulations to Ameer, Shaun, and the team at Quentin Park Alpacas, and good luck at the state awards!

LEADERLIFE WESTERN NSW BUSINESS AWARDS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—I congratulate LeaderLife, which won the "Outstanding Community Organisation" award, and its CEO, Joh Leader, who won the "Outstanding Business Leader" award at the 2022 Western NSW Business awards. Joh started her career in Dubbo as a paediatric speech pathologist in primary health care in 2003, before taking her

passion for kids into the field of community. She began working from the Apollo House community centre in 2011, after having a relentless desire to help kids falling through the cracks lead a life filled with "love and purpose". Joh wanted to fill what she saw as a massive gap in Dubbo's social fabric with children dropping out of school, suffering from complex mental health issues, and getting locked up in jail. She decided to take further action, and LeaderLife was born. LeaderLife fills the gap with sincere, meaningful holistic long-term support for kids who have been caught in the crossfire of some of the most complex social issues anyone could face. Joh has taken on the challenges of running a charity, making LeaderLife the epitome of a model of care that successfully empowers kids and youth. Congratulations again to LeaderLife and Joh!

WHERE SHADOWS MEET

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)—I wish to recognise an exhibition that was launched on Saturday 30 July at the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre. The Exhibition was entitled "Where Shadows Meet". The artists involved included Eunjoo Jang, Maddison Gibbs, Shan Turner-Carroll, Zan Wimberley, Meng-Yu Yan and Tianli Zu. The Exhibition features artworks in a range of mediums. They include sculptures, photography, light installations and performances. The Exhibition launch also featured artist talks. The artmaking displayed in the Exhibition uses the physical and metaphoric spaces in between light and darkness. Many reflected the experiences of dealing with the recent pandemic. This Exhibition is proposed to continue until 16 October.

#PLAYINPURPLE CAMPAIGN

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I recently joined Lilli Pilli Football Club President Greg Storey, Sutherland Shire Mayor Carmelo Pesce and Councillor Laura Cowell for Pankind's #PlayInPurple campaign. Now in its eighth year, the campaign is embraced by all levels of Australian football determined to raise awareness of pancreatic cancer. Across the weekends of 23-24 and 30-31 July, local football fields were turned purple, with teams going out onto the pitch with purple socks, hair and ribbons. Lilli Pilli FC is one of the biggest fundraisers in the country for Pankind and this year had over 1600 players participating in the weekend events. Pankind aims to triple pancreatic cancer survival rates by 2030 and significantly improve quality of life for people with the disease. Funds raised through campaigns like #PlayInPurple will support Pankind to fulfil its mission. I thank Greg and the club's more than 1600 #PlayInPurple Lilli Pilli participants for their efforts to support pancreatic cancer awareness. I also acknowledge the efforts of the other local clubs supporting the campaign, including Gynea United Football Club, Caringbah Redbacks Football Club, Cronulla RSL Soccer Club and Grays Point Soccer Club.

MICHELLE AND LIAM GOOLEY

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I highlight the efforts of Michelle and Liam Gooley of Caringbah South, who have provided ongoing support for a Ukrainian refugee family. Irina and Dima Ievsha, and their daughter Anastasiia, were forced to leave their home in Glukhov, a small town in the Ukraine, following the outbreak of war. The Ievsha family were living in emergency accommodation in Sydney before Michelle and Liam Gooley took them in. As well as offering the Ievshas housing, the Gooleys raised more than \$6000 from a garage sale, sausage sizzle, and cake sale to help the family settle into their new lives. With the help of the Gooleys, the Ievsha family have been able to start a new life in Australia. The Gooleys hope to help Dima Ievsha get a car and tools so he can continue working as a builder. Irina Ievsha, who is an accountant, is learning English at Loftus TAFE. Their daughter, Anastasiia, is settling into her new life and attending a local school.

IVY BOOTHROYD

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I congratulate Endeavour High School student Ivy Boothroyd on her success at the 2022 U16 Australian Titles and 2022 Oceania Titles. Ivy, a member of the Sutherland Athletics Club, won the 400m, 800m and 4x4 relay at the U16 Australian Titles. In the 400m event, she broke the 18-year-old record with a time of 55.08. In the 800m she broke the meet and NSW records at a time of 2:05:66. At the 2022 Oceania Athletics Championships held in Mackay, Queensland, Ivy won the U18 800m event in a record time of 2:09:83.

GARY CHAPMAN

Dr JOE MCGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—I wish to congratulate Ladysmith bus driver Gary Chapman on clocking up an extraordinary milestone. In a 50-year career as a bus driver, Mr Chapman has undertaken an impressive 20,000 bus runs from Kyeamba through Ladysmith to Wagga Wagga. In the decades since he first sat behind the wheel, Mr Chapman has seen two, and sometimes three, generations of the same families boarding his bus. Mr Chapman began his career in the bus industry, when he began working for his father, who started a company, then called Chapman's, in the mid-1950s. He started out as an apprentice mechanic. After he and wife Liz sold the family business in 1998, Mr Chapman has worked for three more companies, including M&M Buses, Priest's Coaches and finally Miller's Buses, his current employer. Mr Chapman has admitted to having to deal

with the occasional "naughty" child traveller over the years, but also has many, many good memories of his years in the driver's seat. With retirement likely at the year's end, I wish Mr Chapman all the best in the next phase of his life and hope he finds plenty of time to devote to his vintage car hobby.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE STANLEY WALL

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—Congratulations to Detective Senior Constable Stanley Wall, who has retired from the NSW police force after 37 years. Detective Senior Constable Wall ended his career on July 8, at Tumut police station with an official march-out to mark almost four decades of frontline service in the Riverina. He was piped from the Tumut police station with bagpipes and driven away in an historic police charger. Detective Senior Constable Wall, whose police career began in Wagga Wagga in 1985, has also served at both Adelong and Tumut. Detective Wall served as the Local Emergency Operations Controller at Tumut for 20 of the years he was stationed there. It has been a long career of dedicated service to the public for Detective Senior Constable Wall, who at one time considered a career as a stock and station agent, but instead followed his mum's advice and joined the police force. As he looks forward to retirement, Detective Senior Constable Wall is looking forward to spending more time with his family, including wife Louise, and continuing to enjoy life in beautiful Tumut. I wish Detective Wall and his family all the very best for the future.

SHARNI WILLIAMS AND COREY TOOLE

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—Congratulations to Sharni Williams and Corey Toole, who made the Wagga Wagga electorate proud with their performances in the 2022 Commonwealth Games. Batlow's Sharni Williams has added a Commonwealth Games gold medal to the one she won in the Rio Olympic Games in 2016. She helped the Australian women's rugby sevens team defeat Fiji, 22-12 in the gold medal match at Birmingham.

Among her match highlights, Sharni not only played the entire first half, but also helped to set up a try and made a try-saving tackle early in the second half. Sharni's Australia teammate, Wagga Wagga's Corey Toole, was part of the Australian men's rugby seven squad for the games. While the men's squad missed out on a medal at the games, Corey performed strongly for the Aussies. Corey, who only got called into the Australian training squad late last November, made headlines after a speedy 130-metre try against Canada in May's London Sevens. In Edinburgh, both Sharni and Corey demonstrated the talent, strength and determination that no doubt helped them gain a spot in the Australian squad. I am looking forward to seeing what comes next for these talented players.

KARL JOHNSON

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—It is my pleasure to acknowledge and recognise the work and contribution to the cultural life of Lismore and the wider region by Karl Johnson. Karl has been the Production and Technical Manager at NORPA for 20 years. Karl has played a key role in the care and development of Lismore City Hall into our region's premiere performing arts centre and in establishing NORPA as one of Australia's leading and most exciting theatre companies. Throughout more than two decades of service to NORPA, Karl has brought to life the daring and bold creative ideas of trailblazing Artistic Directors Julian Louis and Lyndon Terracini – from performances travelling the streets of Lismore, on the platform of a disused Railway Station, in small halls, and this September, at an iconic country pub - the Eltham Hotel. Karl is loved for his creativity, calmness, generosity, humour, reliability and sense of adventure. He's a quiet achiever and the heart and soul of NORPA. So, on behalf of the NORPA team, current and past, and the community, I want to thank Karl for his service and wish Karl, his partner Janelle and son Jack all the best as he enters a very well-earned retirement.

VALE WAYNE LUSTY OF TENTERFIELD

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I wish to pay tribute to the life of beloved Tenterfield local and dedicated volunteer Wayne Lusty. Wayne was known and loved by just about everyone in Tenterfield. Wayne was a friend to many and always had a story. I have been fortunate to come to know Wayne in my time as member and there was never a dull moment. Wayne was a stalwart of the mighty Tenterfield Lions Club and became President in 2017. He drove more community involvement and made the Lions Club an even stronger club through his leadership. Wayne was also a passionate advocate for better health services to service the people of Tenterfield. He never let me or any pollicie get away without having a word about it. Vale Wayne, I hope you are having a rum and telling stories.

THE CROSSING PROJECT – KYOGLE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I would like to acknowledge The Crossing Project film that was launched in Kyogle last week. The Crossing Project features creative responses to the wooden bridges that cross the many creeks, rivers and tributaries in Kyogle and surrounding villages. The launch was at Roxy Gallery in Kyogle. Gullibal Traditional Owner Aunty Marcia Brooks did a beautiful Welcome to Country which included a minute of silence for ancestors who have now passed. After a viewing of the film there was a Q&A. The Crossing

Project was directed by Paul Shields, cinematography by Paul Daley from Lush Forest Media and professional audio treatment by Chris Wesley. I also commend contributing writers Andrew Johnston, Carlie Daley Christabel Strehle, Dusk Dundler, Jarrah Dundler, Jenny Fraser, Paul Shields and Vince Shied. A trailer of the project is available on the Kyogle Writers Festival website and there are more local screenings planned. Congratulations to all involved on this incredible project which showcases the beautiful region surrounding Kyogle and Villages.

YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield)—It is with a great sense of pride that I recognise the members of my first Youth Advisory Board convened on 28th July 2022. Year 10 and 11 students from many of the wonderful schools across the electorate of Strathfield participated in this meeting where they discussed the most pressing issues affecting young people in the local area. It was inspirational to see discussions between students from co-educational, single sex, public, private, religious and secular schools and between students reflecting the vibrant diversity of Strathfield. Board members voted on the top issues concerning young people. These are diversity, inclusion and respect in our social institutions and in their education, climate change, mental health, housing affordability, and the impacts of technology on their lives and futures. My warm thanks and congratulations to all board members. I extend my recognition to the schools who participated. I also recognise the generosity of Australian Catholic University for hosting us at their beautiful Strathfield Campus. Youth involvement in the political process is a crucial part of our democratic system. I am grateful to all the students who have shown their commitment to engaging with issues and each other.

HOME BUSH WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield)—I congratulate Homebush West Public School on their exceptional Education Week assembly that I had the privilege of attending on Wednesday 3rd August. This year's theme was 'Creating Futures – Education Changes Lives'. It was wonderful to listen to teachers, alumni and students share their thoughts on why education is the key to unlocking our futures. I particularly enjoyed the school choir's moving rendition of John Lennon's 'Imagine' during the assembly. I also had the opportunity to tour the school facilities and meet many of the talented young students and dedicated teachers. From talking with some of the students and experiencing firsthand the highly innovative STEAM classes, it is abundantly clear that Homebush West Public School is full of great minds and future leaders. I thank the school Principal, Estelle Southall and Deputy Principal, Roxanne Picoaga for welcoming me to the school and congratulate them on a successful Education Week.

GROW IT LOCAL

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors)—Speaker, I recently met with the Grow it Local group to discuss some of the fantastic garden initiatives they are implementing within my community, as well as other communities across the State. Starting as a 'crowd farming' concept in 2012, Grow it Local is a grass-roots organisation that encourages community members to 'put their patch on the map,' opening their community gardens to other like-minded locals. Participants can share knowledge, skills and tools, creating a wonderful community atmosphere where all are welcome. Currently, there are 12 locations located within the Georges River Council, providing locals with opportunities to grow, share and eat fresh food in the comfort of their own backyards. We discussed many ways in which we could work together to make gardening more inclusive of multicultural Australians and seniors, encouraging more people across the State to get involved in this fantastic initiative. Local produce is so important, helping to keep the community fit and healthy, whilst also mitigating potential environmental impacts from imported fruits and veggies. I commend Grow it Local on their fantastic work and I enjoyed our meeting thoroughly. I look forward to seeing all the great work that Grow it Local will continue to do in my community.

ROTARY INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN AWARDS

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors)—Today I congratulate finalists chosen for the 2022 Rotary Inspirational Women's Awards, which celebrates the achievements and contributions of women in communities across NSW. I recently attended the event held at Parliament on behalf of the Minister for Women, the honourable Bronwyn Taylor and I must say, it was an incredibly engaging day. There were so many excellent candidates for the award, however judges were given the difficult task of narrowing the selection down to just 16 contenders. The finalists chosen were exceptional community leaders. It is so important to recognise the tireless and generous work they do in our local areas. Finalists came from all over the State, including urban locations within Sydney and regional locations like Newcastle. I would like to thank Awards Ambassador, Louisa Hope and the RIWA Chair, Rae - Anne Medforth as well as the entire RIWA committee for hosting such an inspirational event. I again commend the award recipients on their nomination and look forward to the Awards Ceremony on the 11th of September.

SHOPFRONT ARTS CO-OP VISIT

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors)—I recently had the opportunity to visit the Shopfront Arts Co-Op, a haven of resources, training and opportunities for young artists in the Sydney region. Located in Carlton, Shopfront Arts Co-Op caters towards musicians, actors, filmmakers and dancers that are looking to further their creative development and professional careers. They are non-for-profit, which means that all monetary support goes directly back into providing a multitude of resources and opportunities for young artists. It was wonderful to meet some of the great young talent and see all the fantastic resources that Shopfront has to offer. This is truly a state-of-the-art facility and I am so proud of the staff who work extremely hard, day in, day out to support young talent. I would like to thank Daniel Potter, the executive director and CEO of Shopfront, as well as the entire team who do a fantastic job in ensuring young artists within Sydney feel supported and empowered to follow their passions. I enjoyed my visit thoroughly and hope to stop by again soon.

EDITH FRASER 90TH BIRTHDAY

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—It is with great pleasure that today I acknowledge Mrs Edith Fraser as she celebrated her 90th birthday on Sunday 7th August 2022. I trust Edith celebrated this special occasion accompanied by her closest family and friends. I take this opportunity to again extend my sincere congratulations to Edith and wish her good health and happiness for the future.

SES WOLLONDILLY & WINGECARRIBEE

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—I take this opportunity say a big thank you to the SES, our local police, fire, the selfless volunteers, and our neighbours out there who have braved the conditions [once again] to help our community navigate flooded roads, deal with fallen trees, damaged homes and the long list of other ways they assist in times such as these. Over the last flood period, between 27 June- 18 July, the region's SES branches were kept very busy, and responded to over 350 requests for assistance. Words cannot describe the invaluable work these members and volunteers do, braving the harsh conditions to help those most in need during their darkest of hours. The whole community is truly grateful for your continual efforts, as am I. And though we pray for blue skies and calm weather ahead, I know that Wollondilly is well in hand whenever disaster strikes.

RIVER ROAD CREATIVE ACADEMY

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—On 31 May I was pleased to attend the launch of a fantastic new space for the River Road Creative Academy in Tahmoor. The Academy supports students of all ages to explore their ambitions, creativity, and music via tailored learning experiences. Led by local Patrick Nellestein, the academy provides Wollondilly and Wingecarribee areas with a purposeful creative learning space, providing both Face to Face learning, or online delivery. I was very impressed with the space that Patrick and the team have designed for allowing people of all ages to come together and connect through their creative endeavours. The River Road team offer instrument tuition, music production, song writing and now Filmmaking workshops and Visual Arts, thanks to the new space. I very much enjoy watching the amazing talent of artists and musicians bloom in the Wollondilly electorate, and I know the River Road Creative Academy will continue to inspire passion for the arts in this new creative space.

LARRY ROBERTS- RECIPIENT OF NATIONAL HARDWARE AWARD

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—My congratulations are extended to Southern Highlands local, Larry Roberts, on receiving the National Independent Hardware Group Mighty Helpful Paul Murphy Service Award. The Award has recognised Larry's hard work, skill and significant tenure in the hardware business. Larry has more experience in the industry than most, having begun working at a hardware store in Mittagong at just 15 years old. After 46 years in the game, Larry has become a fixture in the local hardware community, with customers and suppliers recognising his exceptional service and vast industry knowledge. Larry's outstanding work is not confined to the boundaries of hardware as he also gives back to the community as a committee member of the Southern Highlands Division of the Master Builders Association. The Division sponsors the local Bowral Blacks Rugby Club, with Larry going above and beyond by volunteering to oversee the Club's bar during home games and helping raise donations for the Club. It is no wonder that Larry's colleagues nominated him and that he won the well-deserved national award.

TRIBUTE TO VAL SMITH

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)—With great sadness, I inform the House of the passing of Val Smith, a great local community member within my Electorate of Castle Hill. I first knew Val when I was on the Parliamentary Committee organising the bicentenary of Governor Lachlan Macquarie's reign. Given Macquarie's Scottish heritage, Val, as President of the Scottish Australian Heritage Council, wrote to me regarding her

disappointment in the lack of commemorative activities undertaken for our greatest Governor by the then Government. During this time the previous Statue of Governor Macquarie was discovered in a car park covered in old paint tins. Thankfully, Barry O'Farrell's new Government erected a statue of Macquarie in Hyde Park, gazing down Macquarie Street; an honour befitting the 'Father of Australia'. It was also my great pleasure, as Minister for Multiculturalism, to present the Heritage Council's Macquarie Medal to Governor Marie Bashir, an honour only bestowed on two other occasions. Val's zeal for her community and history also saw her being a proud member of the Annangrove Progress Association. Her impact on the area will be felt for a long time. She will be sorely missed, and I extend my condolences to her family.

STEVE FOLKES INAUGURAL COMPETITION

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I take this opportunity to recognise the Bankstown Sports Junior Rugby League Club [JRL] on their successful launch of the Inaugural Steve Folkes Under 9's Memorial Knockout Competition which was hosted at Steve Folkes Reserve, Georges Hall on 10 July 2022. Steve Folkes was an Australian professional rugby league football and coach of the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs. Before proudly representing NSW and Australia in rugby league, Steve was a Sporties junior. Sadly, Steve passed away four years ago, and in his memory, Bankstown Sports JRL have developed an annual event that they will host in his name. This year, the Steve Folkes Under 9's Memorial Knockout Competition consisted of 16 teams from across Sydney. The grand final was held between the Gynea Gorillas and Bankstown Sports JRL. Congratulations to Bankstown Sports JRL on the terrific achievement, and on being the 1st Runner-Up. I take this opportunity to recognise the referees, volunteers, parents, and coaching staff that helped to make the day a success. In particular, I wish to congratulate Bankstown Sports JRL Secretary Yasmin Harris, and Committee Assistant Robyn Bolin for their efforts in organising the event. Congratulations to all teams and players on their participation!

BANKSTOWN SPORTS WOMEN'S CRICKET CLUB

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I take this opportunity to congratulate the Bankstown Sports Women's Cricket Club on being a successful recipient of the 2021-2022 Local Sport Grant Program. The Local Sport Grant Program aims to increase participation in sport by providing financial support to sporting organisations to encourage the uptake of sport in our local area. I was delighted to support Bankstown Sports Women's Cricket Club in their 2021-22 Local Sport Grant Program application to secure \$5,000 for subsidised training uniforms for female players, \$5,000 to organise a school holiday try out day to encourage participation in cricket, and \$2,000 for courses for volunteers to improve their skillset. I wish to acknowledge Bankstown Sports Women's Cricket Club President Robert Smith, Vice-President Gus Fernando, Secretary Virginia Errington, Grants Officer Emma Newman, and Registrar Andrew Lawler for their terrific work in promoting cricket in our local community. I am proud to support Bankstown Sports Women's Cricket Club and wish all the Executive, volunteers, and the players a successful upcoming season.

34TH ANNUAL SERBIAN FOLKLORIC FESTIVAL

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I was delighted to attend the 34th Annual Serbian Folkloric Festival on 7 August 2022 at Bonnyrigg Sports Club. The Serbian Folkloric Festival is hosted across two days, with the aim of celebrating and promoting the Serbian Folkloric heritage and culture in Australia. The Festival is one of the largest Serbian events in Australia, with 5,000 people in attendance. The event showcased Serbian art, cuisine, history and music, featuring 46 performances from Serbian Folklore groups around Australia. I take this opportunity to recognise the dignitaries in attendance; Grace Bishop Siluan, Bishop of The Metropolitanate of Australia and New Zealand, His Excellency Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia to the Commonwealth of Australia Rade Stefanovic, Father Rade Radan and Anne Nicolou from St Sava College, John Pavasovic, Chairman of Ravna Gora Foundation, Nena Borak, Secretary of Ravna Gora Foundation, Cedimir Jesic, President of Bonnyrigg Sports Club, Sinisa Kos, Secretary of Bonnyrigg White Eagles FC, Michael Andjelkovic, Community Liaison Officer at Bonnyrigg Sports Club, Mayor of Fairfield City Council, Frank Carbone, Dai Le, Member for Fowler, Councillors Mihailo Mijatovic and Milovan Karajcic of Fairfield City Council, and my fellow colleague, Steve Kamper MP, and Lou Amato MLC.

WESTERN SYDNEY CRICKET ASSOCIATION

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—On 26 June 2022 I was delighted to attend Western Sydney Cricket Association's presentation night at Pennant Hills Bowling Club. The Association was formed last year and have executed two cricket tournaments over the last year with more than 500 young players participating. They describe themselves as "A group of crazy cricket fan enthusiasts who wish to promote cricket for juniors especially in the school vacations by keeping players engaged to the love of the game and by competitive tournaments help improve their life skills." Their enthusiasm for cricket was obvious at the event. The presentation was a celebratory event with awards presented to the top performing cricketers in different age groups in with an audience made up of team coaches, parents and senior delegates from various District Cricket Associations. Cricket is popular across

Australia and especially in my electorate. Cricket is always one of the top sports which local parents redeem their Active Kids vouchers so it was especially pleasing to see Australia win gold at Edgbaston to win Commonwealth Games women's T20 cricket in 2022. My thanks to Dharmesh Panchal, General Secretary for the kind invitation to join members for the very special occasion.

CUMBERLAND MULTICULTURAL SERVICES

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—On 14 July 2022 I was delighted to join CMCS for the launch of their vehicle to deliver mobile playgroup services to local residents. The project was supported with \$50,000 in funding from the Community Building Partnerships grant program in 2020. CMCS was first established in 1977 as the Holy Family East Granville Multicultural Centre to bridge the gap between the migrant school community and the school itself. Over time they grew and in 1981 they changed their name to the Granville Multicultural Centre and in 1993 moved from Clyde St to 8 Factory St, Granville. More recently, in 2016, they moved from Factory Street, to Granville TAFE and a year later changed their trading name to CMCS. Their long history has demonstrated a longstanding commitment to our area and their programs and services make a real difference to local communities. They provide family support, youth services, community services, financial counselling, emergency relief and school support. CMCS' "SuperSmart Play Bus" will help them do what they do so well – and that is continuing their support for our community. My thanks to Sera Pinwill, Family and Community Support team leader for the kind invitation to attend the launch.

RECOGNISING DIAMANTINA TUGBOAT CREW

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—I wish to recognise the three-person crew of Diamantina tugboat who successfully saved the state from a massive disaster after a stricken cargo vessel (Portland Bay) loaded with hundreds of tonnes of fuel drifted powerlessly toward the cliffs of The Royal National Park. The crew managed to keep Portland Bay off the rocks for almost four hours after the secure lines were torn off by the massive swells. I commend the Diamantina tugboat crew on their bravery to stop Portland Bay hitting the cliffs under the most dangerous of conditions battling eight to nine metre swells in a tiny boat. Portland Bay posed a huge ecological risk to the pristine coastline of the Royal National Park so I sincerely thank and congratulate the three heroic men.

OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE FLAGSTAFF GROUP'S NEW 'EMBER' APP

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—On Thursday 30 June 2022, I was extremely pleased to attend the official launch of The Flagstaff Group's new 'EMBER' App which helps people with disability plan and get help during times of natural disaster. As somebody born with a disability, I understand and appreciate just how important these apps are and this is a truly wonderful new initiative by The Flagstaff Group. In response to support people with a disability to plan, act early and be prepared for an emergency, EMBER [Emergency Management Backpack Evacuation Resource] was launched as a project comprising of resources and helpful accessible content including emergency backpacks, an emergency planning app, communication board app and checklists specifically designed to support individuals living with disability. Funded by Resilience NSW, the EMBER project will also offer tools for emergency personnel to help communicate with non-verbal individuals during an emergency including communication boards and a non-verbal communication app. I would also like to acknowledge and thank The Flagstaff Group's CEO Roy Rogers for his contribution and support for such a valuable tool for people with disability and their carers.

SHOALHAVEN HEADS ST PETER'S ANGLICAN CHURCH NEW PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT OFFICIAL OPENING

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—On Sunday 31 July 2022, I was extremely pleased to visit St Peter's Anglican Church in Shoalhaven Heads to officially open new playground equipment at the church. A huge thank you to St Peter's Anglican Church Reverend Rick Lewers, Rick's wife Janene and the wonderful St Peter's congregation in Shoalhaven Heads for hosting me. Rick married Janene in 1981 and together they studied at Sydney Missionary and Bible College before Rick continued his studies at Moore Theological College from 1984 to 1987. Rick was ordained in 1988. Back in 2020, Rick agreed to accept the position of minister in the parish of St Peter's Shoalhaven Heads. I was absolutely honoured and delighted to be able to secure some government funding towards this outstanding local project under the annual Community Building Partnerships Program for St Peter's Anglican Church which is a wonderful church doing some great things in the local Shoalhaven Heads community.

REGIONAL JOBS CREATION FUND PROJECTS ACROSS OUR REGION

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—I congratulate the following businesses for receiving funding as part of the Regional Jobs Creation Fund: Australian Food and Pharmaceutical Industries Pty Ltd: \$810,000 to modernisation of equipment to meet international demand for product; ProBev International Pty Ltd: \$220,000 to upgrade existing equipment and training for staff to improve output and efficiencies; Nowra Chemical

Manufacturers Pty Ltd: \$150,000 for the Installation of new production lines to increase production capacity and I was pleased to join with the Managing Director John Lamont at Nowchem to make this major announcement; The Trustee for the Prosser Family Trust in Gerringong: \$100,000 for the purchase of a centrifuge for the brewery to improve production, capacity and quality. Having grown up in a small business family, I know how hard local businesses work to turn a profit and employ local people and I am still fighting hard and delivering for our community. At the heart of a strong economy is a resilient private sector that embraces innovation and change. Given our region is home to these businesses, our local economy will benefit through their expansion and success.

LIZ FARQUHAR

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—In Newcastle there are things that are so iconic that you can't imagine the city without them – Merewether Baths, Super Hubert, the Knights, Big Dog going to bed at 7.30, and ABC journalist Liz Farquhar. Liz is part of the city's fabric but is stepping away from the microphone after 27 years reporting for ABC Newcastle. You would be hard pressed to name an event that Liz was not at the forefront of; fires, floods, wild storms, Liz was there providing an invaluable and often life saving service to the people of the Hunter. But it wasn't just the big stories or breaking news where Liz left an indelible mark, bringing to us the achievements of local schools, rising sports stars, and quirky little tales that we may never have known of otherwise, always done with creativity and compassion. Although I don't think she'll miss hearing my voice giving grabs before the sun has even risen, I always enjoyed chatting to Liz and hearing her deliver bulletins. Best of luck for the next chapter, you have left big shoes to fill.

NAUTICA DINING

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to the Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club's Nautica Dining eatery for their recent success in the Clubs NSW Perfect Plate Awards. This year there were over 140 participants, and Nautica Dining took out Newcastle and the Hunter's top honour with their Pan roast Barramundi. This win comes as no surprise to me, after taking a parliamentary colleague to Nautica Dining for a wonderful meal during their recent visit to the city. The past few years have been incredibly difficult for the hospitality industry, with local venues wearing the impact of successive waves of COVID-19. They have weathered this with determination and creativity, and Nautica Dining's recent success is testament to their hard work. Once again, congratulations!

CHALDEAN NATIONAL DAY – INAUGURAL FESTIVAL

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—It was a pleasure to attend the celebrations for the Chaldean National Day Festival at Fairfield Showground with my NSW Labor Parliamentary colleagues Chris Bowen MP, Guy Zangari MP, and Nick Lalich MP. We were also joined by Fairfield Labor Councillors George Barcha and Carmen Lazar OAM. This was a fantastic event celebrating the rich cultural history of the Chaldean people, who have a strong sense of their Catholic faith and social justice. The Electorate of Prospect has the largest Chaldean population in Australia. We are very proud of the important contribution which they have made to our Western Sydney community. Congratulations to the Chaldean League Australia on a very successful inaugural festival, especially President of the League, Samir Yousef, and Secretary Laith Alchinno, as well all of their volunteers for the festival. This was a brilliant effort for the first ever festival in our community celebrating the Chaldean National Day. I hope this will be the first of many festivals celebrating the Chaldean National Day and I look forward to attending more festivals in the future.

ASSYRIAN MARTYRS AND GENOCIDE DAY 2022

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—On Sunday 7 August 2022, I joined members of the Assyrian community as a guest of honour, to commemorate the Assyrian Martyrs at the Assyrian Genocide Monument, Bonnyrigg. We paid tribute to the Assyrian men, women and children who, because of their religious faith and race, became victims of genocide at the hands of the Iraqi Government. They were persecuted and murdered not because of any misdeed or wrongdoing they committed but simply because of their birth, their culture, their faith and their humanity. Thank you to Hermiz Shahen, President, Assyrian National Council Australia, and David David, Vice President, Assyrian National Council Australia, for inviting me to this commemoration. We heard from keynote speaker Dr Ramina Jajoo-Frindrich MD, President and Strategic Consultant, Seyfo Center, Arizona Chapter who delivered a very moving speech. This was followed by a wreath laying ceremony paying tribute to the martyrs. I will continue to advocate for Assyrian Christians in the Electorate of Prospect, who deserve to be free of persecution, practise their faith freely and have the tools for self-determination, after centuries of suffering and oppression.

LOUISE BROWN

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro)—Today I bid farewell to respected Monaro Elder, Aunty Louise Brown. Aunty Louise passed away on 19 May leaving a big hole in our local community and in the hearts of

many. Louise was a proud Ngunnawal woman, who worked tirelessly for reconciliation and the betterment of her community. Each year Louise led the annual Reconciliation Walk across the Queen's Bridge to the town park where she delivered the Welcome to Country. She also performed many other memorable Welcomes to Country and speeches for Government agencies, businesses and school across the Monaro and the ACT. Aunty Louise advocated on behalf of all Ngunnawal people as well as other Aboriginal people living in the Monaro. She held positions on the: Australian Alps National Parks Kosciuszko Aboriginal Working Group, ACT Government's United Elders Council, ACT Heritage Council, Queanbeyan Aboriginal Working Group, Aboriginal Legal Service. Louise was a dearly loved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and Aunty. She will be sorely missed.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:04 until
Tuesday 13 September 2022 at 12:00.**