



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Thursday 13 October 2022

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday 13 October 2022

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Announcements

NUTRITION WEEK BREAKFAST

The SPEAKER: Our health is very important, as is the health of all the people we represent. I have just attended a Nutrition Week breakfast. The event was hosted by the Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors, the Hon. Mark Coure, and the guest speaker was the Hon. Brad Hazzard. Parliamentary representatives from across the Parliament attended. I commend the President of Nutrition Australia, Barbara Ward, who is also the president of the Lupus Association. I am wearing a ribbon for Lupus Awareness Month.

MENTAL HEALTH MONTH PARLIAMENTARY SHOWCASE

The SPEAKER: Currently the Mental Health Month parliamentary showcase is being hosted in the Speaker's Garden. I urge those who have an interest in mental health, in particular, which should be all of us, to take a moment to look at what is on show in the Speaker's Garden this morning.

WORLD SIGHT DAY

The SPEAKER: Today is World Sight Day. Members and anyone working in the Parliament can receive a 15-minute eye check in the Education and Learning Centre on level 6 between 9.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m. today. Those wishing to attend can pre-book by replying to the email address provided in an email that was circulated to everyone recently. Happy World Sight Day.

[Notices of motions given.]

Budget

BUDGET ESTIMATES AND RELATED PAPERS 2022-2023

Debate resumed from 12 October 2022.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (09:47): Yesterday I spoke about the investment that the New South Wales Government is making in education. I spoke about early childhood and preschool education, and an important matter for the Albury electorate, which is the investment in a new primary school for the growing area of Thurgoona. That new school is part of \$8.6 billion worth of capital infrastructure for education over the next four years, including the delivery of 160 new and upgraded schools. It builds on \$9.1 billion in projects delivered since 2017—a pipeline of \$17.7 billion in public education infrastructure. It is the largest investment in building schools in the history of New South Wales.

In speaking of education, on behalf of all members of the House, I take the opportunity to send our best wishes to our students who are sitting the HSC. We wish them well. I commend the work that our teachers do. From my conversations with teachers, I appreciate the challenges they face, and I will explore a little bit further where the New South Wales Government is placed in assisting teachers. Teachers talk to me about teaching conditions. It is important to note that as of next year teachers will receive additional release from face-to-face teaching for curriculum planning. High school teachers will receive more than six hours release time per week. This is more than any other State or Territory.

The Government is also enlisting the help of education experts and teachers to develop the Rewarding Excellence in Teaching program, which will see great classroom teachers paid significantly more. The central aims of the program are to create a more attractive career path for classroom teachers, while raising the status of the profession. That is very important. Recently I had a conversation with the Independent Education Union about the importance of having pathways for classroom teachers to continue their careers whilst doing what they cherish, the face-to-face teaching of students. Secondly, the program aims to seek the leverage of skills of highly effective teachers to strengthen teaching practice across the public education system for the benefit of all students. Once consultation is complete, a policy paper will be finalised and the program looks to be implemented in 2023.

Another important measure to support our teachers and all of our public servants, paramedics, police officers, teachers and other public sector workers across the State so that they can spend precious time with their young babies is the major changes to the New South Wales public service parental leave entitlements. Again the New South Wales Government is leading the way. The New South Wales Government is one of the largest employers in the nation. In the 2022-23 budget it has committed and put in place funding to allow public sector workers, including police officers, paramedics and teachers, to receive 14 weeks paid parental leave. This is part of groundbreaking changes in the New South Wales Government paid parental leave scheme that remove the distinction between a primary and a secondary carer. Parents can now also use their leave up to two years after the birth, adoption, surrogacy or permanent out-of-home care placement of their child. This is significant reform. This is the New South Wales Government supporting our paramedics, police officers and teachers. [*Extension of time*]

The Government is again supporting frontline workers. Another important measure, particularly because of its focus in regional areas, is the introduction by the Treasurer of the shared equity scheme. This was a significant announcement in the 2022-23 New South Wales budget. In relation to housing, this measure will again support frontline workers. There will be a two-year trial of the shared equity scheme. This will support up to 6,000 first home buyer teachers, nurses and police, as well as single parents and older singles. Importantly, 50 per cent of these places will be locked in for regional housing. This will be significant. As a member of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services, I became aware of the shared equity scheme in Western Australia. It is an important way to help people get into the housing market. The New South Wales Government should be commended for introducing the scheme and focusing on supporting our frontline public sector workers to help them get into housing earlier.

Finally, in terms of supporting our teachers, we also look at how to bring teachers into the workforce. I note that the New South Wales Government is introducing a program so that mid-career professionals with an intensive Masters unit are supported to work in a school while they complete their study. This is a bespoke program designed to attract high achievers into teaching careers in high-demand areas across New South Wales, in partnership with the Australian Catholic University. This is capital investment, including in the Albury electorate, that supports our teachers as part of a suite of programs through housing, mid-career entry and parental leave support.

I note the focus that the New South Wales Government has on supporting families across our State, particularly as it relates to the Albury electorate, with the cost of living. Following the latest interest rate rise, the New South Wales Government remains focused on taking pressure off families and small businesses. We know that the people of New South Wales are facing external cost-of-living pressures. The Government has introduced more than 24 cost-of-living initiatives: 141 tax measures, such as payroll exemptions, first home buyer concessions, primary producer tax concessions and land tax concessions.

There are 56 non-tax measures: energy, water and rates rebates; toll relief; public transport concessions; and, importantly for my community, measures such as the Active Kids and Creative Kids vouchers and the seniors travel card. Recently at the Thurgoona men's coffee morning we talked about the importance of seniors travel and the discount cards on offer. This has been an important initiative, particularly in regional areas where there is not necessarily the access to public transport that is available in metropolitan areas.

The \$128 million Energy Bill Buster package will assist up to 30,000 households across the State. There are several initiatives that will allow eligible energy rebate recipients to swap their annual rebate for a solar system or a suite of energy savings solutions. Home owners and those living in suitable Land and Housing Corporation properties will be able to swap their energy rebate for a free, fully installed solar system. Again the Government is supporting the people of New South Wales, and particularly the people in the Albury electorate, to reduce cost-of-living pressures.

An important focus for me in the 2022-23 New South Wales budget was \$45 million for Albury Wodonga Health. This was something the Government took to the 2019 State election campaign. For me, Albury Wodonga Health is paramount in the work that I do. My predecessor Greg Aplin fought for and received funding to help redevelop the emergency department. Earlier this year it was pleasing to have Minister Taylor there to see that work start. When I was elected to Parliament in 2019 it was quite clear that the clinical services plan for Albury Wodonga Health at that point was no longer fit for purpose and did not meet the needs of our communities. The funding that Albury Wodonga Health had sought and received from the New South Wales Government has not been matched by the Victorian Government to date. Since 2019 we have been looking at the planning to get in place what our communities need.

In 2019, together with my colleague in Victoria, Bill Tilley, the member for Benambra, I brought together a round table. Out of that came the recognition that we need to get the ball rolling. A clinical service planning process was embarked on. I acknowledge and thank the late Michael Kalimnios, the Albury Wodonga Health chief executive at the time, for recognising the need for contemporary clinical service planning. That planning

recognised that Albury Wodonga Health has one of the busiest regional hospitals in New South Wales and Victoria.

From there, we moved into master-planning. I thank the Minister for Health, Brad Hazzard, who ensured we had the funding straight after the clinical service planning to go into master-planning. The delays of that master-planning have been a cause of frustration and concern for the people of my electorate and me. As the master-planning reaches its fulfilment, it needs to be translated into funding that takes forward Albury Wodonga Health. In this House and in my dealings with the Premier and health Ministers, I have been clear about the need for the consolidation of acute services for Albury Wodonga Health. We currently have obstetrics in Wodonga and intensive care units in Albury. If a mother with a bub in the maternity service in Wodonga needs intensive care, an intensivist needs to jump in a car and drive from Albury to Wodonga to attend to them. That is not on. That is not right. We must do better.

I have been making these calls for funding to go forward between Victoria and New South Wales. I hear the concerns of my community, and I share those concerns and will continue to prosecute that case. I welcomed the 2019 funding. Albury Wodonga Health was telling the New South Wales Government it needed that funding at that point in time. We know full well that clinical service planning was not contemporary and not reflective of the needs of Albury-Wodonga. The clinical service planning is now in place, as is the master-planning to completion, as I understand it. We must move on with that. I want to see that \$45 million go towards what that master-planning calls for. Initially it was calling for an intensive care unit, but it needs to be part of a broader suite to make sure that Albury Wodonga Health gets the development that it needs. It needs to be a consolidated campus that is contemporary and fit for the future, meeting the needs of the Albury-Wodonga community. I will continue to drive that and will not let up on it.

A budget must remain a dynamic document that responds to local, national and world pressures and events. New South Wales has underlying elements of strength, and that reflects the good work of the New South Wales Government. The Treasurer said that with an unemployment rate of under 4 per cent and record-high workforce participation, New South Wales can continue to look forward to the future with confidence. Over the past decade, we have cut taxes by \$10.5 billion and made New South Wales more competitive. We have recycled infrastructure assets to build new ones. We know the people of New South Wales are facing external cost-of-living pressures, and that is why we continue to support them through a whole suite of programs. This budget is a massive program of work and support, and of coming to the aid of those who are particularly vulnerable to economic shifts. The program of support is born from experience, insight and caring for the wellbeing of our people in our towns, cities and throughout regional New South Wales. Who else can the people of New South Wales trust to lead the State's economy?

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (10:02): I am delighted to speak to the Government's budget and highlight some of the many and varying concerns that local families and businesses are confronting at this time. I will also draw attention to my shadow ministerial portfolios of Western Sydney, Local Government and Veterans as well as, most importantly, the financial difficulties and the economic effects in the Campbelltown electorate. Local families, businesses and organisations are now paying the price of the consequences of a lazy government that has been in for 12 years and has neglected the important economy and has caused the situation we now find ourselves in. I will come back to the legacy of this Government that has had multiple Premiers and Deputy Premiers.

I begin by highlighting a few specific facts, particularly why the budget is affecting local families, workers and organisations. Costs are absolutely out of control in many ways. There were reports that supermarket prices have surged up to 17 per cent, adding around \$1,400 every year to local families' grocery bills. Fuel is 33 per cent up. Property is up a minimum of 10.3 per cent. Rent is up 17.4 per cent. Transport costs are up 12.7 per cent. Beef, veal and other meats are up 12.4 per cent. Fruit and vegetables are up 8.2 per cent. Buying a car has skyrocketed, with prices up beyond 8 per cent. Medical and hospital services are up more than 5 per cent. Child care is up by around 5 per cent as well.

Last financial year State and local government tax revenue went up 9.4 per cent to \$4,795 per person. That is the highest per capita tax take of any State or Territory across the country. New South Wales is the highest taxing State. We are the most tolled State in the world. Sydney is the most tolled city in the whole world under this Government. Adding insult to injury is that many of the toll roads are not even in public hands any more; they have been sold off. Revenue that would normally be reinvested in our State is now going to the private sector.

I draw on one local example at Campbelltown Hospital where taxpayers' money was ultimately used to build a car park for the private sector to profit from. When patients, staff and carers go to the hospital, they have to pay to park. That is absolutely absurd. The fury in my electorate and across west and south-west Sydney on that issue is white hot. I note that the member for Prospect is in the Chamber. He has been taking that matter up in his western Sydney electorate along with my other colleagues. I also note the member for Prospect's continued

advocacy and passion for not only that issue but also other issues at Westmead Hospital and other hospitals around west and south-west Sydney. I was talking to a friend of mine the other day whose partner is in hospital. He has not been very well at all and has been in and out of hospital. She paid \$14 to go and see him. He said to her, "Look, don't come." She said, "How can I do that?" How do you not see a loved one when they are in hospital? They are pensioners. They do not have a lot of disposable income. It is grossly unfair. It is totally out of line with community expectation.

The Government talks about astounding unemployment figures but unemployment is up from last year. I acknowledge that many factors have contributed to that, particularly the pandemic, but looking at other data points, by 2025-26 we will be at \$182.2 billion of gross debt. Interest repayments will be at \$6 billion a year. The people of New South Wales are paying for that. Think of what a community out in west and south-west Sydney, like my own electorate, could do with that \$6 billion. Think of what that could do for what the member for Prospect has been advocating for at Westmead Hospital, or Londonderry or Penrith. My good friend in Macquarie Fields Anoulack Chanthivong is trying to get a Service NSW back in his local government area. I want to see one in Campbelltown. I will come back to those points.

Ultimately, our triple-A credit rating has been shredded, and it is not coming back this decade. Interest repayments grow at 24 per cent every year. By 2025-26, the debt will be equivalent to every person in New South Wales owing over \$21,500. S&P said that budget repair has been "adjourned" and gross debt is "climbing". Additional spending of \$71 billion compared with last year's expenditure profile means that the Government will go to market via TCorp to borrow \$118 billion over the next four years at a time when interest rates are on the rise. Those startling and frightening figures are a reflection of not only this State's economy but also, most of all, a lazy, out-of-touch Government that has had the wrong agenda.

Members often talk about this Parliament. Members opposite speak about the virtuous nature of everything they are doing. They praise the Government and everything like that. But many of my colleagues on this side of the House have a true understanding that this is the people's Parliament. We may walk into the Chamber through the beautiful fountain gallery and sit on these benches, but, like all of my colleagues, I know this is not our place. This is the people's place that belongs to our workers, our families, our children, our nurses, our doctors and our truckies. They matter more than any of us in here. That idea goes to the very foundation of where this Government has gone wrong and continues to go wrong. They just do not see it. They need to get out of Macquarie Street and into west and south-west Sydney to listen to those families and workers about the hardship that they are confronting and what they are trying to navigate at this time.

People call my electorate office about the very serious financial issues they have. It comes down to affordability. This Government has sold off more than \$90 billion of assets, many of which were revenue raising. That was not revenue for the Government, which is merely an overseeing body, for want of a better term, that is there to deliver services and the best outcomes that it can for working families, local workers, businesses and community organisations. It has failed at that fundamental point. The Government's biggest failures are that it does not see or concede that point. It sells off everything and privatises anything it can, and sells off roads and puts on more tolls. As I am sure the member for Prospect would agree, the daily reality for families in west and south-west Sydney is a choice between sitting on a congested privatised toll road or turning up to a train station where they either cannot get a car park or they catch a train that is either cancelled, late or overcrowded. That is the daily reflection of a Government that has not given the attention and priority where it is needed.

Many on this side of the House would recall the outbreak of the pandemic in the eastern suburbs. When it happened, the first thing this Government did was shut down west and south-west Sydney with some of the most draconian measures and harshest restrictions. Police helicopters flew above Campbelltown, Liverpool and right across the west and south-west to make sure that we were not going anywhere or doing anything. But the outbreak was not even in our area. In the area of the outbreak—nothing. They went to the beach and we could not even leave our houses. People lost their jobs, their livelihoods and their families. Families whose parents did not live with their children could not see them. Those are the fundamental things that this Government just doesn't seem to understand. It just does not get it.

I draw the attention of the House to my shadow portfolios of Western Sydney, Local Government and Veterans. I begin with Veterans, because during the veterans royal commission submission period, the Government did not even put in a submission. I acknowledge Minister David Elliott. When he became the Minister for Veterans, he rapidly pursued to have a submission put in on behalf of the Government. I thank all of my colleagues, including the member for Prospect, who is also a passionate veteran and an advocate for veterans, for giving me feedback that we put in a submission. We contacted the commissioner, who I later met with, and the submission was tabled and considered. The Government did not even do that. What does that say to every veteran in this State? I add that New South Wales has the highest population of veterans in Australia. We also have the

highest levels of suicide and homelessness in the country, and we face the very serious issue that many veterans confront: transitioning from military life to civil society.

Imagine what we could do to provide that bridge into civil society, industry and the workforce. Many veterans have qualifications from the air force, the navy, the army or other services, and they could work in civil society and industry. But they need support to have that bridge. The qualifications they have gained from the military qualify them, in theory and practicality, to be effective throughout the workforce, but they do not. That is a massive opportunity for the Government and something that a future Labor government would address, making sure that we look after those who have looked after us. If it is good enough for us to ask our men and women to serve and defend our nation, then it is good enough for us to serve them after they have done so.

Many local councils have borne the brunt of the pandemic. They are the closest level of government to the community. Everyone always says it but it is a reality. The financial hardship of councils, with lost revenues and inflation, is absolutely enormous. Many are struggling to deliver their programs whilst also sustaining services and providing adequate working conditions for their workers. Many council workers are the lowest paid workers throughout all of industry, but they are public and community servants who are out there fixing our local roads and footpaths and cleaning and building our community halls. These are daily requirements for local families and businesses throughout each of the 128 local government areas in New South Wales.

Sadly, during the pandemic there was little to no support for local councils. Their workers were not entitled to JobKeeper. Investment from this Government went into the private and corporate sectors, but nothing went into communities. Many councils had fully scoped, planned and shovel-ready projects in place. All they needed was a financial injection, but that did not happen. It was a good opportunity to directly stimulate each and every community to build lasting infrastructure, a legacy of projects, whilst also sustaining local jobs and driving local economies, but that did not happen.

Debate interrupted.

Bills

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

Second Reading Speech

Debate resumed from 11 August 2022.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (10:18): I continue my second reading speech on the Road Transport Amendment (Prohibition of U-turns and 3-point Turns in School Zones) Bill 2022. On the last occasion I highlighted a number of situations where drivers had made a dangerous U-turn in a school zone. The bill will make it illegal to perform dangerous manoeuvres in school zones during school times under a number of circumstances. The current laws and rules regarding U-turns and three-point turns in school zones is confusing to drivers, police officers and local council traffic enforcement officers. The rules behind three-point turns are ambiguous and unclear for drivers. In fact, even police officers and council enforcement officers do not understand the rules completely because they are so ambiguous.

In order for a driver, police officer or local council traffic enforcement officer to understand whether a particular manoeuvre is legal, they have to analyse and interpret the Road Rules 2014 to understand if a three-point turn is covered under the definition of "U-turn" in the Road Rules in New South Wales. The object of the bill is to make the rules for drivers and enforcement officers clear to ensure that school zones are safe. The bill will make it clear when there can be no U-turns, unless there is a traffic plan, and no three-point turns across crossings and footpaths into traffic and pedestrians—which happens time and again.

I will explain the bill in more detail. It is necessary to insert a new road rule that provides clarity. Firstly, conducting U-turns and three-point turns should not be permitted during school times in school zones. Secondly, the Road Transport Amendment (Prohibition of U-turns and 3-point Turns in School Zones) Bill creates a clear set of rules and makes sense to drivers and law enforcement. It is the safest option for schoolchildren, parents, drivers and members of our community. To be lenient to drivers doing drop-offs and pick-ups in school zones or simply driving through school zones, the rule provides several exemptions. Rule 42-1 (1) states:

- (1) A driver must not make a U-turn or perform a 3-point turn on a road in a school zone during the times indicated on the school zone sign ...

But according to rule 42-1 (2), subrule (1) does not apply:

- (a) if complying with the rule is unsafe or impractical, or

- (b) if there is a school traffic management plan for the school zone—in the circumstances under which making U-turns and performing 3-point turns are permitted in the school traffic management plan ...

Many schools have management plans and situations where it is impractical to avoid U-turns. Many schools have long roads, short roads or roads that are not based on a great deal of planning under the council or the State, but it is safe to perform a U-turn or three-point turn. Where there is no threat to children under those circumstances, it is fine to do a U-turn or three-point turn, and the bill does not apply. For the purposes of the bill, a "school traffic management plan" for a school zone is defined as:

... a document describing how traffic is to be controlled on public roads in the school zone to provide for the safe flow of traffic approved by the school administration authority for the school.

Most, if not all, traffic management plans have been negotiated between the council and the school itself or the education department or, if it is a private provider at a Catholic school or an independent school, between its authority and the police. They have covered every element and they have decided, "This is the safest plan for our children." The bill endorses those plans. There is no reason why the bill cannot work beside such great plans. Under the bill, if a driver breaches the U-turn or three-point turn rules, the maximum penalty is 20 penalty units. That is in line with similar traffic offences in the Road Rules.

The bill is a commonsense safeguard to protect schoolchildren during peak pedestrian traffic hours. Although the bill will be at no cost to the taxpayer to implement, it removes several highly dangerous situations that can occur in school zones during school times. I reiterate that it does not cost anything to do this. It is not about changing the traffic flow, spending millions of dollars on extra lines on the road or putting in new barriers or new street signs or anything like that. It is a simple change to the Road Rules. The only cost will be education on changing the Road Rules for driver licence exams so that the rule is known. In fact, the NRMA made it quite clear when discussing the bill in its early stages that it would support and run an education program. The private provider and insurer will fund an education program for this. It will be at no expense to the taxpayer.

A significant amount of evidence and statistical data suggests that these safeguards must be implemented. I will use most of my time today to thoroughly explain these factors. Vital details cannot be missed when dealing with the safety of our children and all pedestrians. I will first discuss the origins of the bill. I thank the Hon. John Graham, MLC, the shadow Minister for Roads, for his consultation, advice and support in drafting the bill. I also thank the other relevant shadow Ministers in the Labor caucus. I was originally approached by a number of western Sydney police local area commands and public and independent school staff and parents who raised concerns about drivers performing dangerous three-point turns and U-turns in school zones during school pick-ups and drop-offs. Last week I witnessed that myself. I had just dropped my children off at school. A driver did a three-point turn and then a U-turn in front of me through the traffic as children were using a nearby crossing. It was unbelievable.

In particular, I mention Senior Constable Matthew Green's advice from the Fairfield City Police Area Command. He first brought those concerns to my attention in a very detailed manner. Senior Constable Green's advice and experience has been integral to the drafting of the bill. The New South Wales police has found there to be a number of motorists conducting three-point turns and U-turns in school zones. Police officers are concerned that in many school zones roads are relatively narrow and usually heavily trafficked. When a driver conducts a three-point turn or U-turn, they often reverse back into heavy traffic. When they are waiting to reverse and cannot see behind them, other vehicles pass around and often cross over unbroken or broken lines. The combination of limited visibility and partially crossing to the other side of the road increases the chance of collision, causes traffic issues and is highly dangerous for pedestrians and other motor vehicle drivers and passengers.

Additionally, there is concern regarding three-points turns by pulling into a driveway. Police officers are concerned that while entering a driveway or waiting to reverse, drivers often cross onto footpaths. There have been numerous near misses and pedestrians injured. Alternatively, while a vehicle is waiting to reverse, pedestrians are unable to pass. That results in them walking onto the road to avoid the vehicle. Time and again I have been told about young children not fully aware of the danger of a car crossing a footpath, who step onto the road to avoid the car and put themselves in harm's way. The main concern and most urgent reason for the introduction of this bill are those drivers who turn into driveways next to a school crossing—like the situation at my child's school recently. The driver will often reverse directly back onto the crossing, while children are crossing with the attendant. That has been seen on several occasions by police and me; it is extremely dangerous.

I acknowledge the stakeholders who have assisted me in drafting the bill and provided a great deal of information, evidence and support, and they continue to do so. I have held discussions with a number of stakeholders important to the drafting, implementation and enforcement of the bill. The Police Association of New South Wales believes that the reforms introduced by the bill will enable its members to better perform their work and help to ensure safety. As discussed previously, there is no reference to school zones in any of the rules pertaining to U-turns in the Road Rules in New South Wales. There is also no reference to three-point turns.

Therefore, it is currently extremely difficult for the NSW Police Force to enforce compliance and stop questionable manoeuvres when it observes dangerous U-turns and three-point turns in school zones during busy times. Additionally, I have consulted with police officers from the Blacktown, Cumberland, Fairfield and Parramatta police area commands, who have raised the issue as a serious concern.

Further to my discussions with the NSW Police Force, I have also consulted with the education sector. Members of the NSW Teachers Federation are supportive of the bill, particularly since teachers supervise children as they leave school, and the bill will ensure that they can keep children under their supervision safe. Members of the Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of NSW also believe that measures proposed in the bill will improve safety around school zones, especially along narrow secondary roads. Many of the roads in question will be local government roads rather than roads under the jurisdiction of the New South Wales Government.

I have also held discussions with the Local Government Association, which offered its support for the bill. Finally, as I have mentioned before, I have consulted with the key non-government stakeholder, the NRMA, which is supportive of the proposal and would like to be involved in an education campaign once the bill is hopefully passed. It is clear from my comments that all the major stakeholders support the bill—every single one. On a more personal note, and to further reiterate the dangers that exist in school zones, I briefly inform the House of a heartbreaking personal story that gives gravitas to this issue. A child lost his life and another was seriously injured due to a circumstance that the bill could have helped to avoid. Although the story may be confronting, I believe it is important to explain the real, tangible value behind amending the Road Rules.

In December 2013 a driver fatally struck several pedestrians outside a local primary school while performing a three-point turn. The driver, a mother who had two daughters in her car, pulled into the school's driveway and hit a woman and three children. A six-year-old boy was pinned between the car and a fence and, tragically, died. His mother, who was walking with him, sustained serious leg injuries, and his four-year-old cousin had her pelvis fractured in two places. This is a terrible, traumatic story for all involved, and it is especially tragic to occur outside a primary school. A young life was lost, and several people experienced severe injuries. However, conducting a three-point turn that day was not illegal. Until the time of the collision, no-one had broken any laws.

I cannot imagine the shock or trauma experienced by the driver, a young mother, who would have never intended to do any harm. If at the time the New South Wales Road Rules had prohibited U-turns and three-point turns in school zones during school times, all ambiguity of the Road Rules would have been avoided and this tragic accident may not have occurred. Therefore, making a three-point turn or a U-turn within a school zone should be prohibited. It is a simple safeguard that makes sense and is not controversial. It could be the difference between an awful incident like this occurring or not occurring. Although in some situations it may seem safe to manoeuvre a three-point turn or a U-turn, we all need to take extra care looking out for children when driving and parking around schools.

My discussions with the Government regarding the bill began some years ago with former Minister for Transport and Roads Andrew Constance, MP, who has unfortunately since left this place. He was supportive of the bill, and we talked a lot about it. COVID intervened, amongst other things, and there was a change of Minister. Mr Rob Stokes became the Minister, and now the Hon. Natalie Ward, MLC, is the roads Minister. We have had discussions all the way through. Unfortunately, unlike former Minister Constance, Minister Ward does not support the bill for a number of reasons, which I do not have the time to go into. But I do not believe that those reasons are just or correct.

However, the data from correspondence with the transport department is interesting. It talks about just how many children have been killed or injured. A letter from the department dated March this year said, "Data collated by the Centre for Road Safety highlights that during the 5-year period 2016 to 2020 there were 1,049 crashes reported in active school zones of which 23—around 2 per cent—were identified in the data as involving a U-turn type movement." Those 23 accidents, in which children were injured in that time, might not have happened if the bill was in place.

In conclusion, the Road Transport Amendment (Prohibition of U-turns and 3-point Turns in School Zones) Bill 2022 creates a simple addition to the Road Rules 2014. The amendment is succinct, easy to understand and does not contradict any existing rules. It creates clarity for what is allowed and what is not allowed in school zones during school times, making one clear rule for all school zones in New South Wales. By prohibiting U-turns and three-point turns in school zones during school times, drivers can easily understand the Road Rules, while law enforcement can enforce those rules without ambiguity, as they have requested. Substantial evidence reveals that conducting U-turns and three-point turns in school zones is not safe, with many parents, teachers and police officers expressing major concern. Several dangerous situations can be caused by performing U-turns and three-point turns in school zones, which can lead to serious injury or death. Those circumstances have been sighted

firsthand by parents, teachers and police officers. Important stakeholders in the New South Wales police, education and local government sectors, in addition to the private stakeholder, the NRMA, all support the bill.

Important evidence has also been provided through a number of studies, including fatality studies provided by Transport for NSW, NSW Centre for Road Safety progress reports and inquiries of the Parliament of New South Wales Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety, which all reveal that school zones are at elevated risk. The evidence also reveals that more needs to be done to prevent those risks. Finally, as the demand for new schools increases, especially in western Sydney but also throughout New South Wales, the number of children and drivers using school zones will increase. We must look at new and arising issues caused by the increased use of school zones and adapt the Road Rules accordingly. I am sure that all members of this House—Government, Opposition and crossbench—wish to make our roads safer and would support any legislation that helps to prevent injury and death. Like all parents in New South Wales, I want to know that the Road Rules make it safe for my children as they enter and leave school. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: BILLS

Mr ALEX GREENWICH: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to provide that general business order of the day for bills No. 5 [Animal Research Amendment (Right to Release) Bill 2022] has precedence over all other general business orders of the day for bills this day.

Motion agreed to.

Bills

ANIMAL RESEARCH AMENDMENT (RIGHT TO RELEASE) BILL 2022

Second Reading Speech

Debate resumed from 23 June 2022.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (10:40): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I introduce the Animal Research Amendment (Right to Release) Bill 2022. At the outset, I thank the member for Balmain for allowing me to take precedence over his bill and I appreciate the support of The Greens for this legislation. All dogs and cats deserve a home, but many of those who are used for experiments their entire lives live in clinical facilities. What happens to them in these environments will vary on the type of research, but it is never a happy life. When they are no longer being used, most of them are killed. I am proud to sponsor the Animal Research Amendment (Right to Release) Bill 2022, an Animal Justice Party bill from the Hon. Emma Hurst that will give cats and dogs used in experiments the opportunity to one day have a home and a loving family.

Many people do not realise that cats and dogs are still used in research in Australia. While their use is declining, it remains high, with almost 1,000 dogs and 500 cats used in 2020 in New South Wales alone. In that year, no dogs and only 75 cats coming out of this life were rehomed. It is common for animals to be born into research facilities, which means a life of experiments is all they will ever know, but it does not have to be this way. Animals that have been used in research can be rehomed. The Animal Research Review Panel has guidelines for rehoming animals after they are no longer used in experiments, and the two rescue organisations dedicated to rehoming dogs and cats coming from research are Beagle Freedom Australia and The Liberty Project. In June I was lucky enough to meet Buddy, an adorable dog who is a survivor of experiments who has now been given a loving home. His family had nothing but glowing things to say about Buddy.

Why does it not happen more often? The guidelines are only voluntary. Discussions between members, the Animal Justice Party and researchers revealed concerns among researchers that rehoming the dogs and cats would bring attention to their use in animal experimentation, leading to a public backlash. This is not an acceptable reason to kill an animal. The bill would ensure that researchers make efforts to rehome dogs and cats when they are no longer used in research. The bill will add a new part to the Animal Research Act 1985 specifically on rehoming obligations for dogs and cats. Noncompliance will be a matter for the Animal Research Review Panel and subject to penalties.

Under the new part, animal researchers would be required to take reasonable steps to ensure that dogs and cats in their care will be suitable for rehoming in the future. This will involve basic animal welfare provisions, including giving the animal appropriate exercise, environmental enrichment, socialisation, handling and basic training. When the animal is no longer being used for experiments, or if it has been kept for research for three

years, the researcher would have to rehome the dog or cat with an animal rescue organisation or a suitable individual. The bill defines "a suitable individual" as a person who:

- (a) agrees to provide an animal with a home and appropriate care, and
- (b) agrees to not keep the animal for animal research ...

Labor moved amendments in the other place to provide exemptions from the three-year rule if, for example, the dog or cat is needed for a longitudinal study. Following productive discussions between the Government and the Animal Justice Party, I will move further amendments around this process. The bill requires animal researchers to give information on the dog or cat's health, physical condition and temperament to help determine an animal's suitability for rehoming. There are regulation-making powers to set up a database for this purpose. Where a dog or cat is not suitable for rehoming, they will be exempt following an assessment and certification from an independent vet. The certificate must be kept as part of the facility's records, with the facility required to report annually on the number of dogs and cats rehomed, the number able to be homed and the number deemed unsuitable. The bill includes a prohibition on rehoming organisations disclosing information about researchers and facilities from whom they receive a dog or cat. It also transfers reporting obligations from the regulations to the main Act.

This bill will not impact on animal research but will only give those animals whose early life has been sacrificed for experiments the opportunity for love, safety and comfort. Again, I thank the Hon. Emma Hurst, MLC, who has drafted this bill, building on a previous bill introduced by her colleague the Hon. Mark Pearson, MLC. Both are inspiring advocates for animals and must be commended for their work to reduce the suffering of our voiceless friends. This bill is a simple, compassionate and fair piece of legislation. I commend the bill to the House.

Second Reading Debate

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales) (10:46): I speak in debate on the Animal Research Amendment (Right to Release) Bill 2022. I thank the Hon. Emma Hurst in the other place for her work and effort on this bill, and the member for Sydney for bringing it to this place. Undoubtedly this is an issue of great importance. Let me be very clear: Ensuring the welfare of animals across the State is of paramount importance to the New South Wales Government. I also thank the Hon. Emma Hurst and her office for her collaboration and work on improving this bill from what was debated in the other place, with amendments to be moved shortly by the member for Sydney. This work is important to ensure that there are minimal unintended consequences to the industry and the animal welfare outcomes sought.

The New South Wales Government supports the rehoming of cats and dogs used in research where it is appropriate and practical to do so. But it also acknowledges the important role that research institutions have in developing safe products and medicines for our pets. We have heard from Animal Medicines Australia that providing the best welfare outcomes for cats and dogs is central to their activities, and that over the last three years almost every cat and dog retired from research has been successfully rehomed.

For the benefit of members, let me explain the current regulatory framework for animals used in research in New South Wales so that they can understand the bill before the House today. In this State the Animal Research Act 1985 regulates the use of animals in research. Animal research is required to demonstrate the safety and parasite treatment efficacy of critical animal health products, such as for fleas, heartworm and vaccines against infectious diseases and other illnesses that afflict our canine and feline companions. It is important to highlight that the regulatory framework is underpinned by the *Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes*. The code is the basis of a nationally consistent approach to regulating animal research across Australia.

The Animal Research Act sets out a co-regulatory model under which the New South Wales Government accredits animal research establishments, like universities, that in turn can issue animal research approvals to individual researchers seeking to undertake research projects involving animals. One of the key elements of this framework is the animal ethics committee [AEC]. AECs are responsible for assessing whether the use of animals in research is justified and providing oversight of animal research projects that have been approved. The Australian code sets out strict requirements around the make-up of these animal ethics committees and brings together a range of different members including researchers, veterinary practitioners, animal welfare advocates and independent community representatives.

Under the code, AECs are responsible for reviewing applications and only approving projects that are ethically acceptable and conform to the requirements of the code. They are also responsible for overseeing and monitoring the care and use of animals, including housing conditions, and conducting follow-up reviews of approved projects. It provides a robust framework of ethical review and ongoing oversight at every stage of a research project.

Understanding the framework, I will express some of my concerns with elements of the bill and the unintended consequences they would generate. Section 54C (1) (b) is possibly the most concerning amendment. It relates to the provision that requires animals used in research to be rehomed after they have been kept for research for three years. Under the Australian code, it is the role of the AEC to assess, on a case-by-case basis, whether animals should be rehomed at the conclusion of a research project, an appropriate duration of a research project and how long an individual animal should be able to be used in research. The bill undermines animal ethics committees and, by proxy, the Australian code and the nationally consistent approach that has led to New South Wales having a world-leading animal research regulatory framework. Essentially it duplicates the functions of AECs and creates additional layers of red tape, and that concern has been discussed in the other place.

I also draw the attention of members to the exemptions process. Section 54C (4) gives the opportunity for animal research institutions to request an exemption in order to keep the relevant animals for greater than three years. One flaw is that projects vary in intensity and time. While animals are often subject to a number of non-invasive, short-term projects, generally they are done not back to back. Animals are given time in between each project. A legislative time cap could lead to increased pressures on animal research and result in reduced animal welfare outcomes, which emphasises the need for each animal to be assessed on a case-by-case basis rather than being subject to rigid regulatory requirements. It is estimated that up to three times the number of animals may be required to meet existing data requirements to register veterinary medicines.

The Commonwealth regulator, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority, or APVMA, requires that all products demonstrate their efficacy against Australian strains of diseases and parasites. It requires specific Australian data. Without it, products cannot be registered. The target animal safety studies conducted by APVMA draw on global guidelines for providing that data and requires trials to be conducted. If products cannot be registered, pet owners will lose access to safe and effective tools to protect beloved family pets. The products that are on the market will, ultimately, contribute to better welfare outcomes, not only for cats and dogs in New South Wales but across Australia. Industry is already working with regulators in Australia, including the APVMA, to identify areas where we can further reduce the need for animal studies. That will ultimately lead to reduced numbers of cats and dogs used in research but not necessarily as a result of the bill.

In noting that, I thank Mr Alex Greenwich and the Hon. Emma Hurst in the other place for removing the requisite ministerial approval as it created additional red tape and delays in determining a suitable outcome. The new two-staged approval, while still not perfect—it adds another bureaucratic step in the process, which the current regulatory framework already provides for—is workable. It means the review of each case by the AEC and the animal research panel will ensure that a robust system is in place to appropriately consider the cap on cats and dogs used in research. It is also worth noting that that has been raised by the Australian Veterinary Association, which has said the process adds more red tape and undermines the role of AECs as set out in the Australian code.

The panel is highly respected and plays a critical role both in providing oversight of the animal research framework and in providing expert advice and guidance material to support AECs to exercise their functions. New South Wales is the only State with a panel like that, and it is of great value to ensure that our framework is robust. It does great work and I commend it for its efforts. As mentioned, animal research is essential to better welfare outcomes. I know that when people hear the words "animal research" they imagine medical experimentation. In New South Wales the vast majority of research on cats and dogs has a low impact on the animal. Low-impact research includes clinical trials of new veterinary medications or veterinary surgical techniques on privately owned animals, pet food palatability studies and observational behavioural studies.

I note the requirement to get category A member approval prior to submitting an application to the panel. A category A member is a person with a qualification in veterinary science who is recognised for registration as a veterinary surgeon in Australia and has experience relevant to the institution's activities or the ability to acquire relevant knowledge. I take the opportunity to acknowledge the integrity of the veterinary profession. While we understand the intent of the requirement, it is important to acknowledge and respect the expertise of animal ethics committees, which are responsible for ethically acceptable research undertaken on animals. Registered vets are highly regulated and have a high standard of personal and professional integrity. Vets hold the health, welfare and respectful treatment of animals as key concerns. That professional integrity extends to vets who are involved in animal research either through animal ethics committees or the research institution or facility.

Specifically, section 15 of the Veterinary Practice Act 2003 prohibits an employer to direct or incite a veterinary practitioner to engage in conduct in the course of professional practice that would constitute unsatisfactory professional conduct or professional misconduct. All vets practising in Australia are required to be registered with a veterinary registration board and to obey veterinary and other legislation in each State. Through that registration, veterinarians are robustly regulated and held to account for their actions. Any alleged breach of professional conduct is subject to investigation and discipline, with the potential for severe punishment including removal of their registration and their right to practice.

The Australian Veterinary Association has raised several concerns around inadequate consultation with veterinary and research sectors and the unintended consequences that could result in poorer outcomes for animal welfare, which would undermine the role of animal ethics committees. The Australian code sets out that all rehoming must be approved by the overseeing AEC, which ensures that rehoming is appropriate and safeguards are in place to protect the welfare of the animal. Section 54E essentially duplicates that role, providing the independent veterinarian with a parallel decision-making responsibility around rehoming. Given the entire nationally consistent framework of regulating animal research is built around animal ethics committees, which provide on-the-ground oversight of research projects, that duplication is unnecessary—even more so when one considers that animal ethics committees require veterinarians as members. That expertise is already factored into the committee's decision.

My point about animal ethics committees and duplication is not philosophical. I am concerned that if the committee and the independent veterinarian disagree, researchers may find themselves stuck between a rock and a hard place, with no guidance or certainty around what they are expected to do. In expressing its concerns with the bill, the Australian Veterinary Association noted that veterinary practitioners employed by research institutions will always be the most familiar with the individual animals and are best placed to work with AECs to assess whether rehoming would achieve the best outcomes for the dogs and cats in their care.

It is clear that the intentions of the bill are sound, but it is equally clear that the details of the bill would benefit from further consultation, specifically with industry. When the State's peak veterinary body raises such significant issues, it is evident the bill has not gone through the appropriate consultation process to ensure that it achieves the best outcomes for the animals involved. Again, I thank the Hon. Emma Hurst and the member for Sydney for their involvement and for taking a collaborative approach to the bill. I commend them for their efforts to improve welfare outcomes for dogs and cats in animal research.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (10:58): I contribute to debate on the Animal Research Amendment (Right to Release) Bill 2022, which seeks to give cats and dogs used in animal experimentation the right to be released and rehomed where appropriate. In 2020 around 1,000 dogs and 500 cats were used in experimentation. In the same year nine dogs and 75 cats were rehomed. Labor believes the legislation is important. The Hon. Mick Veitch in the other place acknowledged the Hon. Mark Pearson in reaching this point, and I acknowledge the good work of the Hon. Emma Hurst, who is in the gallery. The Hon. Mick Veitch also acknowledged then Minister Niall Blair for his contribution.

Previously the Minister commented that the legislation has unintended consequences. When I was the shadow Minister for Primary Industries and Medical Research—I note that this bill comes under medical research—the Government's review of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act [POCTAA] and the animal welfare package was then three years overdue, and is now up to half a decade overdue. That package was on the back of promises from Labor throughout the campaigns for the 2015 and 2019 elections, yet in 2022, three Ministers of agriculture and primary industries later, the commitments to introduce an all-encompassing animal welfare package, with the goal of bringing all the legislation under POCTAA, still has not been realised. That is quite a disappointment.

I was very critical of the previous Minister, and after 12 long years we are still waiting. Nothing has been done to bring together the full package of animal welfare legislation in this State. We are still tinkering at the edges. The pace of change does not appear to have increased. I thank the Hon. Emma Hurst for introducing this legislation, as she often does, because we need the Government to act on this. The Government should be doing more than just saying words about it. I had hoped we would be much further along the process than we are now. If members will forgive me saying so, the POCTAA review appears to have suffered a slow and agonising demise under this Government. The Animal Justice Party [AJP] has put forward a number of pieces of legislation from the crossbench, without having the resources of government or the capacity to send out departmental officers to do consultation, which is very difficult.

Labor's shadow Minister for Agriculture, the Hon. Mick Veitch, has done a great job of speaking to researchers and coming up with an amendment that addresses the concerns around the three-year cap for release, which requires longitudinal studies to ascertain whether release should proceed. Labor submitted that amendment because we are looking at unintended consequences. When a member of Parliament puts forward a bill and is up against all the resources of government, sometimes there are unintended consequences. I again acknowledge the work of the AJP and thank them for their advocacy. I also thank the member for Sydney for bringing the bill to this House and my colleague Mick Veitch, who has advocated for changes over a long period.

With regard to the issue of undermining the animal ethics committee [AEC], I note that the Minister has discussed more amendments. But the proposal was that amendments must be approved by the AEC; by no means was it intended to undermine the AEC. We want legislation in this State that is fit for purpose and will fit within a national framework. We want to have a single framework for animal welfare across the State. Labor would be

the last political party to be advocating for red tape; we want good animal welfare outcomes. That is the most important thing to people in the community. In reality, the Minister could fix this. At every stage the Government has failed to get it right on animal welfare in this State. The consultation processes have always been flawed. Over the past 12 years we have seen some massive failures of animal welfare initiatives that have gone horribly wrong. Government members have crossed the floor of this House because of the failure of the Government to properly engage with the community.

The debacle of the RSPCA's inspections of dog breeders' premises occurred because the Government failed to first ensure the mechanics of the legislation and the rules all were in order. Rather, the Government chose to create a perception of looking as though it was doing something. I am pleased that the current Minister is not as antagonistic as his predecessor was to supporting reforms when they come before him, but I can only urge him, for the good of this State and all the animals in this State, to complete the long-promised animal welfare reforms that are now half a decade overdue on a 1979 Act, which is now outdated. Let's have no more hodgepodge. Labor does not want it and the Minister does not want it. Just do the work so the Opposition and crossbench do not have to do it.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (11:03): I support the Animal Research Amendment (Right to Release) Bill 2022, brought to this House by the member for Sydney, Mr Alex Greenwich, and introduced in the upper House by the Hon. Emma Hurst, MLC. This Government, this Parliament and this State believe that an ethical approach to research is crucial. We support the welfare of animals across our State and across our communities. I note that the bill before the House goes a long way to ensuring that we can preserve and protect that welfare and the wellbeing of cats and dogs that have been used in research. I understand that there is an ethical framework and oversight already in existence for the utilisation of cats and dogs in research, but as a society we need to do more to ensure that we are doing the best we can by those animals and to ensure they can be rehomed.

A lot of people in the community probably are still not aware of the level of research that utilises dogs and cats. As I said, obviously there are rigorous ethical processes in place to ensure that that is done in the best possible way. There is also a general trend across our community of more and more people putting consumer pressure on organisations to reduce as much animal testing, research and medical experimentation as possible, so we are moving in a direction that our society supports—that is, a strong focus on the welfare and wellbeing of our dogs and cats. Particularly in medical experimentation and research, there is often a need for the utilisation of dogs and cats to ensure that we can have safe products and safe medical substances in our community. This bill will ensure that we can rehome dogs and cats that are utilised in medical experimentation.

In 2020 approximately 1,000 dogs and 500 cats were kept and used in animal experimentation in New South Wales. We do not have the full details of those that were rehomed, but at this point we know that in 2020 it is unlikely that any dogs were rehomed and only about 75 cats were rehomed. In the year prior to that, we understand that no cats and about 30 dogs were rehomed. Those numbers do not include companion animals that might be used in research, particularly in longitudinal and nutritional studies, because they do not require rehoming. As companion animals, they are already in a home. Voluntary rehoming by research organisations can be improved. We should always take steps to ensure that we have the best practice when it comes to welfare. As the member for Sydney acknowledged, there are already two dedicated organisations that offer to take these animals and have pathways for that to occur.

The bill before the House will ensure that we minimise the number of dogs and cats being killed and instead, as the member for Sydney said, will ensure that they find love, safety and comfort in a loving home. The bill will ensure that research institutions will be required to take reasonable steps to prepare dogs and cats for rehoming through environmental enrichment, socialisation, handling, basic training and exercise, which members of this House perhaps do not do enough of, particularly me. They are some of the elements that will ensure that research animals can readapt to life in a home that is best for them and best for the home that will welcome them. That will improve the quality of life of the animal and ensure that the rehoming process is successful.

An amendment was moved in the Legislative Council to include a requirement, after a three-year period of a dog or cat being retained for research, to examine whether a dog or cat could be rehomed. The amendment allows for the period to be extended, if the Minister, after seeking advice from the Animal Research Review Panel, approves. The Minister acknowledged in his contribution that that will ensure there are no unintended consequences and that there is the capability to ensure that crucial research can continue to be undertaken. That reflects some of the comments by the Minister for Agriculture, who spoke about the different intensities of research projects on different animals and ensuring that that is reflected in decisions made about the wellbeing and welfare of animals that are to be rehomed.

The bill ensures that the rehoming obligation applies only to animals within research institutions. It is very clear that that obligation has nothing to do with companion animals. A research animal can be rehomed to either a suitable individual or an animal rescue group, as previously recognised, and reasonable steps must be taken,

which could include passing on to a prospective rehomer information such as the breed of the animal, the status of the animal and whether it is vaccinated and desexed, the temperament of the animal, and which home the animal would be best suited to entering.

The bill also ensures that if it would be cruel for an animal to be kept alive, rehoming does not need to take place. A vet can assess an animal to ensure that the animal is suitable for rehoming. That provision will work to minimise the number of animals that need to be killed. A range of different new research protocols exist that could be put in place and that could be approved. The bill will take effect immediately on the date of assent to ensure that is reflected in the legislation.

As the Hon. Emma Hurst, MLC, mentioned, the 3Rs as a principle—replacement, reduction and refinement—focus on animal welfare. The reduction component of the 3Rs refers to the number for a statistically significant result, so reducing the impact on animals or reducing the number of animals. Can the experiment be done with fewer animals? Reduction should not be confused with recycling animals through multiple research projects. We know that the welfare impact on one animal used in experiments for its entire life is incredibly significant. Retiring more animals and ensuring that we have less impact on individual animals, which might potentially see an increase in the number of animals going through research projects, is preferable to those who give advice on animal welfare to ensure that we do not get to the point where an animal has been institutionalised for its entire existence and is not capable of being socialised and rehomed, and therefore cannot reach that loving, safe, comfortable home for the rest of its life.

The Government has worked very closely with the member for Sydney and the Hon. Emma Hurst in the other place. I thank the Minister for the work he has done to ensure that the amendments to the bill are put forward to reflect not only the best interests of the needs of the ethical medical testing and research process but also the crucial welfare needs of dogs and cats that are interacting in this system. It is an incredibly complex area. The Minister and his team have worked very closely with the Hon. Emma Hurst to make sure that the bill reflects the best interests of all involved with the process. I thank the Minister for Agriculture for his work on the bill. I commend the member for Sydney and the Hon. Emma Hurst for their work in bringing the bill to the House. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (11:11): On behalf of The Greens I make a contribution in support of the Animal Research Amendment (Right to Release) Bill 2022. I acknowledge the Hon. Emma Hurst, who is in the Chamber, who had carriage of the bill in the upper House. I also acknowledge the member for Sydney, who moved the bill in the lower House. As my Greens colleague Abigail Boyd did in the other place, it is wonderful to offer the support of The Greens in this Chamber for this critical bill. It is wonderful to see that there is support for it across the whole of the Chamber.

The bill will insert a new part into the Animal Research Act 1985 to specifically deal with rehoming. It requires researchers to take reasonable steps to rehome cats and dogs no longer being used for animal testing, or if they have been held for up to three years, whichever is the longer. It will also seek to increase transparency and greater reporting around animal research. We need to remember, as my colleague in the other place Abigail Boyd articulated strongly, that The Greens and many people recognise the need to adopt new technologies to ensure that animal research is not the answer. We are slowly moving to develop and invest in new technology so that we can undertake the scientific research that is needed without risking the welfare of animals, that are sentient beings, as a result of advancing science and technology.

We know that this kind of animal testing occurs every day in our communities, such as the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in my area. We need to imagine for a second how much sooner we would have acted as a community if those research laboratories had glass walls and doors. If people could see and watch what was happening in those testing facilities, the reality is that we would have seen a lot of action in this space. A lot more money would have been invested in technology that is needed to give us the same scientific outcomes without inflicting harm on animals. There is a need to have a balance between the welfare of those animals—those sentient beings—and the need to advance science and technology. We know that we can do amazing things when we invest in technology, but we can only do those things if there is a willingness in the community to do that. We need to recognise that the more transparency and greater reporting on how this is done, the more we will see an improvement in and motivation for testing and technology.

I put on record The Greens support for recognising the need to deal with animal welfare issues. I appreciate the Minister's contribution in the Chamber and the support that we are seeing. It is also important to again recognise that we need a Minister who is responsible for animal welfare who is not the Minister for Agriculture, otherwise there is a clear conflict of interest. That is no reflection on the current Minister, but the portfolio has a joint responsibility. We need a Minister for animal welfare and an office for animal welfare to address the issues so we can bring them out front and centre. That is key. Maybe some of that additional consultation that the Minister

was calling out for could be conducted by the Government so we do not have to rely on crossbenchers and others in the community to drive that work.

When a bill is developed a lot of stakeholders and community members have input, and in this case they have shared their passion, expertise and love of animals. Many people in the electorate of Newtown offer their support for animal welfare. They are in touch with us regularly and I can always assure them that The Greens in the New South Wales Parliament will stand with them to ensure that animals are treated with dignity and respect, and that they are not harmed in the pursuit of science or technology.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (11:16): I make a contribution to debate on the Animal Research Amendment (Right to Release) Bill 2022. I start by noting the object of the bill is very much around making provision for rehoming of dogs and cats. I note some of the debate has been around ethical treatment of animals during testing. I speak as a veterinarian and on behalf of researchers as well. People in this nation who have worked with animals in research facilities have the highest respect for the welfare of animals. We want to make sure that we are not slighting the good work that those people do. Many veterinarians are involved in research and many people, through their science degrees, find themselves working with animals. They have high ethical standards and we need to respect that. We also need to respect the organisations and a lot of our universities that are involved.

As the Minister for Agriculture and the member for Sydney noted, there is rigorous regulation around research in Australia through State legislation and through a code prescribing all aspects of institutional and research obligations for animals in their care. Those obligations are administered on behalf of the institutions by their animal ethics committee. Again, we need to note that real rigorous framework. I thank the Hon. Emma Hurst and the member for Sydney for bringing the bill to the House. I take a short moment to speak as a veterinarian and on behalf of my colleagues who work in research. I note the Australian Veterinary Association and the good work that it does and to bring before the House some of the principles that they raised in their submission paper to the upper House inquiry. The association stated:

The AVA supports and encourages a continuing commitment to animal research in NSW and the important role that it plays in the knowledge and improvement of health and wellbeing for humans, animals and/or the environment.

We need to identify any unintended consequences. If we put in place a process that has unintended consequences, where will that lead us? The AVA points out that in this nation we have research with high levels of ethics and regulation. We must exercise care because we run the risk that trials will move offshore, where there is less focus on welfare. The other unintended consequence the AVA highlights is around national harmonisation, which is one of its key recommendations. We need to make sure that is also part of our thinking when we legislate.

I think all contributions to the debate stressed the importance of the three Rs: reduction, replacement and refinement. In previous debates on animal welfare bills members have spoken about the need to reduce the amount of animal research to alleviate bad outcomes. I am pleased that the member for Sydney, the Hon. Emma Hurst and the Government have discussed the implications of longitudinal studies. The Minister for Agriculture made the point that a lot of those studies are low-impact palatability trials. I see that back home in Albury-Wodonga. I put to the member for Sydney the importance of consultation and making sure that we consider unintended consequences. We absolutely have the right intent but we must ensure that it is backed by the right process. That is our obligation as legislators.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (11:21): In reply: I thank all members who contributed to this important debate on the Animal Research Amendment (Right to Release) Bill 2022. I thank the Minister and member for Dubbo and his staff for their collaborative approach to this legislation and for addressing a number of the concerns raised by the member of Albury and other stakeholders in formulating the amendments, which I will soon move. I thank the shadow Minister and member for Maitland and the Labor Party for their support of this legislation in the upper House and in this place. I thank the member for North Shore for her strong advocacy for animal welfare and for this legislation. I also thank the member for Newtown for her support and that of The Greens in this House and the other place. Again, I thank the member for Albury for the expertise he brought to this debate.

I also thank another big champion of this reform, Patrice Pandeleos. Patrice ran against me as the Liberal Party candidate in 2015, but I have a great deal of respect for her and her animal welfare work. It is great to see legislation that she has championed come to this Parliament. Most importantly, I thank the Hon. Emma Hurst. This is the second piece of legislation introduced by the Hon. Emma Hurst that will pass both Houses of Parliament. That is quite an achievement. No-one has shown more leadership for animal welfare and animal justice in the history of the New South Wales Parliament than the Hon. Emma Hurst. She is backed by her amazing staff. Tess Vickery worked very closely on this legislation with the Hon. Emma Hurst and Tammie Nardone from my office.

I acknowledge the Government and its approach to working with the crossbench. It is significant that this Parliament has passed five private members' bills. Two have come from me, and two have come from the Hon. Emma Hurst. The Hon. Emma Hurst's legislation is somewhat less controversial than the bills I have introduced. The Parliament has also passed The Greens' constitutional amendment bill. That shows the goodwill that the Government shows to all members of this Parliament and the way parties can collaborate and work together to achieve important reforms for our community. I hope that continues. With that in mind, I thank all members for their contributions, and I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in detail requested by Mr Alex Greenwich.

Consideration in Detail

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): By leave: I will deal with the bill in one group of clauses and schedules. The question is that clauses 1 and 2, and schedules 1 and 2 be agreed to.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (11:25): By leave: I move my amendments Nos 1 to 9 on sheet c2022-158H in globo:

No. 1 Certain animals may be kept for longer than 3 years

Page 3, Schedule 1, Insert before line 2—

[1A] Section 11 Annual reports

Insert after section 11(1)—

(1A) Without limiting subsection (1), the report must include the following information about applications made to the Panel under section 54C(4)(a)—

- (a) the number of applications made,
- (b) the number of applications approved,
- (c) the number of applications refused,
- (d) for each application approved—
 - (i) the number of animals subject to the approval, and
 - (ii) the length of the animal research project, and
 - (iii) the reasons the relevant animal care and ethics committee was satisfied the project was justified to run for longer than 3 years, and
 - (iv) the nature of the research.

No. 2 Certain animals may be kept for longer than 3 years

Page 4, Schedule 1[3], proposed section 54C(4)(a), line 21. Omit "Minister". Insert instead "Panel".

No. 3 Certain animals may be kept for longer than 3 years

Page 4, Schedule 1[3], proposed section 54C. Insert after line 23—

- (4A) An application for approval under subsection (4)(a) must not be made without the approval of the animal care and ethics committee supervising the research project.
- (4B) The animal care and ethics committee must not give approval unless—
 - (a) the committee is satisfied the animal research project is justified to run for longer than 3 years, and
 - (b) at least 1 Category A member of the committee is satisfied animal welfare will not be compromised.
- (4C) An application under subsection (4)(a) must include—
 - (a) proof of the animal care and ethics committee's approval, and
 - (b) the reasons the committee is satisfied the project is justified to run for more than 3 years.

No. 4 Certain animals may be kept for longer than 3 years

Page 4, Schedule 1[3], proposed section 54C(5) and (6), lines 24–27. Omit all words on those lines.

No. 5 Certain animals may be kept for longer than 3 years

Page 4, Schedule 1[3], proposed section 54C(7), line 28. Omit "Minister's". Insert instead "Panel's".

No. 6 Definitions

Page 4, Schedule 1[3], proposed section 54C. Insert after line 33—

(10) In this section—

Australian Code means the document published by the Australian Government entitled *Australian code for the care and use of animals for scientific purposes* as in force from time to time.

Category A member, of a committee, means a member of the committee referred to in the Australian Code, section 2.2.4(i).

No. 7 Note concerning privately owned companion animals

Page 4, Schedule 1[3], proposed section 54C. Insert after line 33—

Note— An authorised person is not required to rehome a companion animal owned by an individual and primarily kept by the individual for purposes other than animal research.

No. 8 Keeping of records about applications to keep animals for longer than 3 years

Page 5, Schedule 1[3], proposed section 54F. Insert after line 20—

(e) a copy of—

- (i) each application made under section 54C(4)(a), and
- (ii) the Panel's approval or refusal of each application.

No. 9 Reporting requirements for applications to keep animals for longer than 3 years

Page 6, Schedule 2[1], proposed section 24(5). Insert after line 8—

- (ba) the number of applications made under the Act, section 54C(4)(a),
- (bb) the number of applications made under the Act, section 54C(4)(a) that were approved,
- (bc) the number of applications made under the Act, section 54C(4)(a) that were refused,
- (bd) the length of each animal research project for which an application under the Act, section 54C(4)(a) was approved,

Keeping a dog or cat institutionalised for research experiments for more than three years is not common practice and does not represent good animal welfare. That is why the bill includes a three-year cap on experiments. The industry, however, has argued that in certain circumstances a longer experiment will be justified and the bill incorporated Labor amendments that empower the Minister to approve exemptions from the cap. The industry has provided further feedback that the process for exemptions is too blunt, and the Government has negotiated with the Animal Justice Party a more nuanced approach, which the amendments will provide. I acknowledge that my Independent colleague Dr Joe McGirr raised similar concerns and is appreciative of the work that has been done.

The amendments will move the approval process for experiments that go beyond three years from the Minister to the Animal Research Panel. Before a research institution will be able to apply, it will need the approval of the Animal Care and Ethics Committee with the requirement for one of the vets on the committee to be satisfied that the welfare of the cat or dog will not be compromised. The institution will be required to provide proof of that approval to the panel before the approval can be given. The amendments require the research institutions to keep records of their applications, approvals and the reasons for decisions. The panel will also need to keep data on the number of applications received for publication in its annual report. The amendments make it absolutely clear that if a cat or dog is being used in experiments but already has a home there is no need to rehome the animal. The member for North Shore made that point. These are sensible amendments. I thank the Animal Justice Party and the Government for collaborating on the amendments. I commend them to the House.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that amendments Nos 1 to 9 on sheet c2022-158H of the member for Sydney be agreed to.

Amendments agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that clauses 1 and 2, and schedules 1 and 2, as amended, be agreed to.

Clauses 1 and 2, and schedules 1 and 2, as amended, agreed to.

Third Reading

Mr ALEX GREENWICH: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): I welcome to the public gallery guests of the Treasurer, and thank them for joining us today.

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT (CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSE) BILL 2022

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 19 May 2022.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (11:29): The New South Wales Government opposes the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Climate Change Response) Bill 2022, introduced by the member for Balmain. The proposed amendments to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 present myriad unnecessary requirements for how this Government is already adapting to and mitigating the risk of climate change. They would create additional layers for the planning system, including the introduction of new potential approval authorities that are not accountable to either a Minister or a council.

At a time when we are burdened with the challenges for first home buyers in particular, those burdens would add significant time and potential cost to home buyers across New South Wales. The Government believes that the objectives of the bill can be achieved through the existing planning framework and without the need for additional layers and uncertainty. That is a really important point. The Government does not reject the objectives of the bill but believes they can be achieved in a better way. The New South Wales Government therefore does not support these amendments.

I will now closely examine what the bill proposes and what it would mean for our planning system. The bill includes additional objects to the Environmental and Planning Assessment Act, new definitions, climate change response principles, and the establishment of an independent planning and climate change advisory group. It proposes changes to the development assessment process and assessment criteria, with added appeal rights for development, as well as a new commitment to review the Building Sustainability Index [BASIX], the New South Wales Government's building sustainability tool. As I said, many of the objectives, including better built homes that have better insulation and are better for the environment, already exist within our BASIX rules. The bill also includes ongoing commitments and added responsibilities for registered environmental assessment practitioners. The New South Wales Government does not support the bill for those among a number of other reasons.

I will now talk about this Government's climate change policy and net zero standards. The bill is inconsistent with established and effective New South Wales Government policy that is already enabling the State to deal with climate change impacts. Stage one of our net zero plan sets out the New South Wales Government's plans on how it will respond to climate change by 2030. It also sets out a stepped and measured approach to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050, which is consistent with the Commonwealth's commitments in the Paris Agreement.

Our planning system is already appropriately responding to the Government's net zero plan through a range of initiatives. Those include increasing sustainability standards for new homes through BASIX. The Government understands that, now more than ever, we need to ensure that our homes are durable and comfortable in all climatic conditions. While students from the member for Hornsby's electorate are in the gallery, I highlight that our energy sustainability policy, put forward by the Treasurer and Minister for Energy, the Hon. Matt Kean, is very strong in getting us to the 2050 net zero goal. In my electorate of Oxley we are very excited by a company's proposal to put in pumped hydro to ensure that we can have net sustainability.

The Government's commitment to a housing supply that positively contributes to our greenhouse gas emission targets remains paramount to decision-making. That is why the New South Wales Government recently introduced the new Sustainable Buildings State Environmental Planning Policy, which will feature sustainability provisions for larger commercial non-residential developments and require residential buildings to meet a seven-star rating under the Nationwide House Energy Rating Scheme, which is also being rolled out in other States and Territories. This will mean that we can build more comfortable homes, cut energy costs and contribute to our net zero targets. Through better design and insulation and more sunlight and solar panels we will create more energy-efficient homes and reduce emissions by an extra 150,000 tonnes a year.

With affordability at the forefront of everyone's minds, I clarify that the Government is only imposing these high standards where the benefits outweigh the up-front costs—that is, where reduced energy bills offset any increase in mortgage repayments. Some 16 per cent of the Australian buildings sector's total emissions come from manufacturing construction materials. As fossil fuels disappear from our electricity supply, embodied emissions will become the next frontier for the building industry in the race to net zero. As a step to address this, the Government will start to collect data through the BASIX tool to develop a suitable standard for the embodied emissions of building materials in the future.

As members would appreciate, the Government already has effective policies in place and the bill is not required. The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act was designed to respond to and implement Government policy. It is not a suitable piece of legislation to contain the entirety of the Government's position on matters such as setting climate change response standards. Another challenge is the duplication of the planning framework. The bill duplicates what is already adequately captured by the planning system. For example, the bill proposes an additional object to the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act that makes specific reference to climate change. However, this duplicates the objects of the Act, including section 1.3 (b), which aims "to facilitate ecologically sustainable development" and therefore the consideration of climate change impacts.

The bill also includes provisions to establish an independent planning and climate change advisory group. Legislation is not required to establish such an advisory group. The Minister already has this power under section 2.3 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. The Independent Planning Commission is an established independent decision-maker within the planning system. The bill causes much confusion with the potential for overlap. The New South Wales Government is already working to expand the role of the existing Independent Advisory Panel for Underground Mining. This would provide the Government with better access to independent expert advice on greenhouse gas emissions as part of the panel's assessment of mining applications. The establishment of an additional advisory group would therefore unnecessarily increase regulatory burden, duplicate sound existing processes, create confusion over responsibilities and place additional costs on government and taxpayers without delivering additional improved environmental outcomes.

The bill also tasks the Minister with a review of BASIX standards for residential development. It does not recognise that this work is already underway. This Government is delivering on its COAG commitments to the Trajectory for Low Energy Buildings to take stepped and measured updates to these standards up to 2030 to deliver carbon-ready homes. The bill includes new definitions of direct and indirect emissions that may be inconsistent with the definitions and assessment methodologies established for the assessment of major developments in New South Wales, particularly fossil fuel developments. What is specifically confusing is that it is unclear whether the member for Balmain's proposed definition of "indirect emissions" includes what is currently accounted for as "other indirect scope 3 emissions".

The bill also requires consent authorities to prioritise development that does not result in greenhouse gas emissions. Constraining the decision-making process for consent authorities with such an onerous and near impossible characterisation risks immediately curtailing almost all development types in New South Wales, because they would all require some level of indirect greenhouse gas emissions under the proposed definitions—for example, embodied carbon in building materials. For those reasons, the bill is unnecessary, adds superfluous regulatory burden and does not take advantage of current robust processes to deliver on its primary purpose.

The bill proposes further changes to the assessment process and assessment criteria, which are both onerous and counter efforts to streamline the planning system and reduce red tape and delays. A simplified and effective planning system is more important now than ever, particularly as our State faces a climate where housing demand is outstripping supply and affordability. To date, the New South Wales Government has reformed the planning system to ensure that the level of assessment for different types of development is commensurate with the type and complexity of what is being proposed. The bill goes against that approach by adding very high standards for all types of development, regardless of the scale or impact.

The bill appears to seek development to either not produce greenhouse gas emissions or to offset any residual greenhouse gas emissions. That proposed regime would have significant implications for the State, including our ability to produce coal, which is still required in the short to medium term for power generation as part of our transition to renewable energy. It would also have dramatic impacts to the viability of the agricultural industry. The bill also appears to redefine exempt development, which relates to the development of minor impact. The bill stipulates that exempt development must not include a material increase in greenhouse gas emissions, which implies that a merit assessment is needed. Minor additions to homes, like gas barbecues, could therefore no longer be carried out as exempt development. That would potentially lead to an exponential increase in development applications for matters previously not requiring development consent, which the planning system does not need.

We must make things simpler, not harder, for first home buyers and our communities. The burdensome changes are not effective or efficient. The bill also introduces a new requirement for certain types of development to be supported by a climate change impact statement. While consideration of greenhouse gas emissions is already given in mining proposals, in the case of many other non-energy developments, that would represent an additional requirement on each development and result in climate change responses being regulated on a site-by-site basis. That is not effective. Climate change should be a matter of State and national policy to be tackled holistically. The bill also defines "high impact developments" to cover a broad range of developments that would not have the

same environmental impact or may positively contribute to climate change mitigation or adaptation. For example, a solar farm proposal versus a coalmine.

Applying the bill's proposed decision-making framework and definitions to all State significant development and infrastructure brings significant risk to granting consent for large-scale renewable energy projects. That must be an unintended consequence. Further confusion to the merit assessment and decision-making process is also found in the bill's requirements for the exercising of functions in accordance with the proposed climate change response principles. Under the proposed provisions, an inconsistency with those principles would occur where there was a "material increase in greenhouse gas emissions" or "unacceptable climate risk" was evident. Those terms are passionate terms, but they are not well defined or quantified in the bill. When considering the weight given to those requirements in development decisions, the principles risk the introduction of substantial ambiguity for decision-makers and investors.

The bill also requires those climate impact statements to be prepared by a registered environmental assessment practitioner. Again, that would significantly hamper reform the New South Wales Government already has underway. As part of the Government's Rapid Assessment Framework, it is implementing the Registered Environmental Assessment Practitioners [REAP] Scheme. The aim is to increase the efficiency and environmental assessment quality for major projects. The REAP Scheme only commenced in July 2022, meaning that industry is still adjusting. Expanding the scheme, as the bill proposes, is a premature step and will disrupt its implementation, creating unnecessary uncertainty in our planning system.

The bill proposes additional layers of complexity in the assessment process and those involved in it. That undermines the certainty that our councils, industry and community need and deserve. The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act was significantly updated in recent years to recognise the evolution of best practice planning. That includes, amongst other things, strengthened consideration for ecologically sustainable developments, as well as strengthened strategic planning and community engagement sections in the Act. Those are all proportionate with the level of development or the proposal being put forward.

The bill goes too far in defining how development proposals should be considered. It also introduces appeal rights for both objectors and applicants for matters determined by the Independent Planning Commission, as well as considerations for all types of low and high impact development. Those new appeal rights would have the potential to reduce certainty in the planning system by opening up planning decisions for further prosecuting. That also adds significant time and cost to the assessment processes, making New South Wales a less desirable place to invest.

The expanded application of climate change requirements and targets are likely to add cost to development and time to preparation and assessment. Compounded with those additional appeal rights, it removes certainty in planning decisions and again reduces confidence for investors, significantly compromising the supply and cost of all types of development, including housing. Our economy has suffered enough over the past few years through COVID and disruptions to the supply chains and the construction industry. The State needs more houses in the market and the bill would be a terrible impost on achieving that goal.

The bill also proposes to provide consent authorities with the ability to modify an existing development consent at any time, without the need for a proponent's modification application, to introduce a standard climate change condition. Such a power presents a significant departure from the planning framework, which very tightly limits the circumstance in which a power is made available to a council or the planning secretary, as currently regulated by section 4.57 of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. Those proposed powers risk eroding trust in the decision-making process by consent authorities, further exacerbating uncertainty for applicants and investment in New South Wales. It also opens up the Government to claims for compensation from affected applications, meaning our taxpayers suffer.

Many of the member for Balmain's proposed amendments have not had their feasibility tested. That is critical to delivering a healthy supply of different types of development in New South Wales, such as housing, office space, industrial development, manufacturing development, tourist facilities, and retail premises. Without a thorough understanding of the costs and benefits, we would be directly compromising job growth, housing affordability and the State's overall competitive advantage.

Climate change is here and it is real. That has been obvious through many of the challenges the State has faced together. But this bill is not the answer. It undermines all of the good work the New South Wales Government has done to date in developing and implementing meaningful policy to reach our net zero targets. What is more, it would be completely disruptive to our planning system, which already follows a thorough merit-based assessment process and gives appropriate consideration to reducing emissions. The bill would also go against the Government's ethos of reducing red tape and increasing investor trust and confidence, which we

need now more than ever as we tackle housing affordability and supply challenges. The Government opposes the Environmental Planning and Assessment (Climate Change Response) Bill.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (11:47): I contribute to debate on The Greens bill, the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Climate Change Response) Bill 2022. I commend my colleague the member for Balmain on this excellent work. This leadership is needed. Eight years ago the House started talking about the changes required in the planning legislation and we assumed that we would have them by now. There was progress in this term with progressive Ministers but, with a move to the right, there was a backwards step in planning laws. It is incredibly disappointing and is actually fatal for people in my community. My heart goes out to everyone in flood-affected areas of the State. I note that the member for Tweed is in the Chamber today. The member for Tweed, the member for Lismore and I have witnessed extremely grim consequences from extreme weather events in the face of climate change.

Recently I had the good fortune of being briefed with the member for Tweed and the member for Lismore by senior executives of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority [QRA]. That was incredibly insightful because it was in a similar position to us in 2010 and 2011 after catastrophic weather events and the unfortunate deaths of 33 people. Over 200,000 people were affected. It got its act together and developed a systems approach. Absolutely fundamental to the QRA is the recognition of climate change in planning. Its betterment model means that it does not allow people to build on flood plains. It has made sure that climate change is part and parcel of the planning system.

Let us turn to the response to the German floods last year. I give a big shout-out to the German Greens, because they have shown real leadership on this. They have done heat maps and flood maps, all of the climate mapping to show areas where there should be absolutely no new development, and they are phasing out development in those hotspots. It means people are informed. They know basically where they should be going to build and preparing to adapt towards where we are heading. That is, of course, not accepting our extremely low targets and milestones that are forecast and accepting that we need to go so much further.

We know that the recent global summit on climate change agreed to limit global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees. Unfortunately we are already nearly there. To achieve anything like that, we need radical reductions. The New South Wales Government's target of halving emissions by 2030 and reaching net zero by 2050 will not be enough. Our response to climate change must be urgent in everything we do. The impacts of land use and development are so fundamental. It is extraordinary that consideration of those impacts is not part of our system now. Climate-ready planning laws are absolutely fundamental. In New South Wales, planning decisions on everything from apartment blocks, suburb size, subdivisions and new coalmines are made without any acknowledgement of climate change.

I belong to what is literally an environmental, social justice and climate party. Weirdly, we saw a massive shift away from the Liberals at a Federal level to teals, because the people in their communities are very concerned about the world that their children and their grandchildren are inheriting. It is not a fad. I have been talking about it in this Chamber for eight years. My colleagues and predecessors in my party have been talking about it for three decades. I am not showing contempt; I am not trying in any way to show contempt for any member of this Parliament or any side of government. What I am saying is that we need to move with the times and get on with it.

The bill creates a new object to the Act that will ensure landowners and planning authorities cannot proceed with development without considering that climate change is happening because of human activity; that climate change can and should be slowed by human activity; and that failure to address climate change poses continuing social, environmental and economic risks. We have seen court cases in which that has been upheld. It is only a matter of time before the Liberal-Nationals Government will be dragged, kicking and screaming. When it comes to planning proposals, development applications and approvals, the bill will establish new duties for the authorities to consider that we must prepare for the impacts of climate change and adapt where it cannot be avoided; that planning decisions are integral to slowing and adapting to climate change; and that we must avoid development that will increase greenhouse gas emissions and prioritise development that will reduce and remove emissions from the atmosphere.

The cruel irony in the Northern Rivers at the moment was made very clear to me in the location of temporary housing pods in Mullumbimby. I was very grateful to the Premier, who came with me and saw that what was happening was ludicrous. We had literally gone from the O'Kane-Fuller announcement of the findings of the flood inquiry in Lismore, travelled over to Mullumbimby and we were watching Resilience NSW building temporary housing pods in a flood zone with so much landfill that all of the neighbours on Prince Street and surrounds were facing a very grim next flood as a result. I am very grateful that the bureaucrats have gone back to the drawing board, and they now have a new model.

Let us go a bit further south and look at West Byron. We saw over 1,500 submissions against the West Byron development, primarily because it is literally in the swampland of Cumbebin Swamp, with the amount of fill that is going in to build residential homes, where the average land value will be \$1.5 million—so it is not affordable by any means; we still have the battle that it might all become short-term holiday letting—and it is a flood zone. It is like when I first got elected and saw the draft North Coast Regional Plan back then. I have made submissions to the new plan, which was under Minister Stokes, and it had a very noble aim that there should be no more development east of the Pacific Highway because of coastal zone protection needs and vulnerabilities. I thought, "Fantastic. We won't see any more development east of the highway."

Of course, with so much land banking and so much development already in the pipeline, I have watched massive residential development—that is not affordable and that is very vulnerable to coastal erosion and other factors including flooding—continue. By the time we implement the kind of laws we need—and I really am so disappointed that it does not have the support of Labor, the Liberals or The Nationals—which we absolutely will, so many more people will be left vulnerable to extreme weather events such as fire, landslides, extreme heat and floods, and they are all coming.

We have a responsibility. I am very proud of my colleague the member for Balmain and The Greens because again we are setting the agenda on where we have to go and where the majority of our citizenry already is. Citizens think we have those laws. They think responsibility underpins the planning laws, and it does not. Let us pause and think about the impact of not making this change today. We will be kicking the can down the road, and we are setting people up for trauma and enormous financial stress. We are accountable. Democracy means we are accountable to every single person in our community, and this is not ideological. This is about standing opposite our neighbours and making sure that they are living somewhere that is going to be safe for them for the long term, and we are not even talking about the absolute dire straits that we are in of not reducing our emissions fast enough. I am proud to support the bill, and I really encourage the other old parties to get with the program.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I welcome our guests joining us in the Legislative Assembly, the place to observe true representative democracy in New South Wales. I firstly acknowledge Kerry "Chika" Chikarovski, former Leader of the Liberal Party and a former Leader of the Opposition in this place. She is well known to all members. Chika has brought along some friends—she is very good at hoovering up friends. I will mention Mark Brewer, who is from Conduent Transportation in Washington, DC—there is nothing happening over there, I do not think. It has been very quiet recently, but it is nice to see he has the time to visit us today and I thank him. I thank Atif Maooid from the Netherlands for being here. Angela Vithoulkas is very well known by her reputation as a former City of Sydney councillor. Welcome to the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales, Australia's first Parliament. It is wonderful to have you all here.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (11:59): I contribute to debate on the Environmental Planning and Assessment Amendment (Climate Change Response) Bill 2022. I also welcome those guests who have joined us in the gallery, one of whom has of course been in this Chamber and seen it at some of its high points and some of its less high points. In leading for Labor in debate, I acknowledge my role as shadow Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. At the outset I state that I agreed with many points in the second reading speech of the member for Balmain. Members will recall that it stretched over a fair period due to the interrupted debate. During his speech I had pause to reflect and compare it with a contribution to a recent debate on a similar topic by the member for North Shore.

Having listened to the contribution of the member for Ballina, I appreciate that the bill appears to be born of frustration, if you will, with a government that talks a big game when it comes to addressing climate change but in reality finds its actions in many cases seriously delayed or lacking. I agree with the member for Balmain's central assertion, which underpins the bill, that climate action is not being addressed clearly enough in the New South Wales planning system. There is no doubt in my mind we can and should do better. The primary role of the planning system is to regulate land use and act as a means of deliberating on and determining land-use conflicts.

As all members know, land has many varied uses. Many parcels of land have had multiple uses over many years, dating back 60,000-odd years to Indigenous Australians. Those same parcels of land will have many more uses over the months, years, decades and centuries ahead. We put in place rules and regulations to allow us to make determinations over the best and most appropriate use of that land, and to make those decisions within a framework that provides certainty, transparency and accountability. Over many years the planning system in New South Wales has evolved through many amendments to legislation and other instruments of planning given life by that legislation. It has not always been a smooth path, with some more spectacular examples than others, and it remains a source of far too much contention and conflict.

It remains a system that is—and should be—subject to a great deal of scrutiny and examination. Its evolution is one born of changes to community expectations, needs and goals as well as changes to the way we

work, deliver and consume services, and move around and produce and consume goods. Over recent months we have seen greater community debate over how we adapt and respond to climate change. The bushfires of 2019-20 focused minds on the devastating impact that unabated climate change can have. The floods of recent months, which the member for Ballina spoke about earlier, and even those in recent days have shown another aspect of the impact of climate change.

The desire of people to live in more energy-efficient homes and built environments with materials that have a lower negative impact on the environment in their production and use is also influencing things. NSW Labor has a long history of taking action to address the changing climate. No doubt there are some who would criticise previous New South Wales Labor governments for not moving as fast as they would have liked. However, NSW Labor did take action when in government. Not only did we pioneer the first emissions trading scheme in the world but we introduced what has become a fundamental plank of our built environment: the BASIX system of addressing energy efficiency. In fact, BASIX has become so fundamental to the planning system that members opposite are now even claiming some credit for it.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: I didn't, actually. I just said it existed.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: For building on it. But it is the foundational aspect that we introduced, a great Labor initiative that is now flowing through into the built environment throughout New South Wales. I am pleased to see that despite other actions in planning decisions of late, it remains that foundation stone being built on by the current Government. That should be acknowledged. BASIX has become so widely accepted that it has even survived the worst excesses of 12 years of the current Government. Recently we have seen the passage of legislation through the Federal Parliament for climate targets that act as a floor, not a ceiling, and focus the minds of community, business and governments on the task before us all. Those targets were long overdue.

Recently NSW Labor sought to introduce similar targets in this Parliament. I acknowledge that the member for Lakemba, and shadow Minister for Energy and Climate Change, who had passage of that bill, is in the Chamber. Unfortunately for New South Wales, some grubby parliamentary tactics from members opposite sought to frustrate the passage of that bill. They used all the tricks of the parliamentary playbook to make sure that they alone stood in the way of binding legislated targets being set in New South Wales. It is clear from the contributions of members opposite who opposed that bill that they did not even really have a reason, even though the targets were the same as their own targets and those passed in the Legislative Council.

Ms Felicity Wilson: Did anyone oppose it?

Mr PAUL SCULLY: I will come to the member for North Shore's contribution to debate on that bill in a moment. The targets in the bill were opposed by Government members, supposedly led by the self-proclaimed best environment Minister Australia has ever had. I recall being quite stunned when the member for North Shore extolled the virtues of the Illawarra Renewable Energy Zone, which would not have existed unless I proposed and pursued the legislative amendment that added it to the bill during negotiations on the Electricity Infrastructure Investment Bill 2020.

Ms Felicity Wilson: You can say thank you.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: You should say thank you because it will be the energy from the Illawarra that is delivered to your home long into the future.

Ms Felicity Wilson: We love the Illawarra.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: The member for North Shore claims to love the Illawarra, yet her Government has frustrated it and not invested in it for 12 long years. Then again, members opposite are becoming old hands at talking a big game on climate adaptation and mitigation but dragging their heels on implementation. After all, in recent days we have even seen the Treasurer, and self-appointed best environment Minister in Australia, backflip on his own vehement opposition to the raising of the Warragamba Dam wall. The Government has delayed rolling out its commitments to fund hydrogen projects for well over a year; in fact, it is now edging towards two years. It is yet to implement elements of the renewable energy infrastructure plans that passed this Parliament with multi-party support following extensive negotiations, which included The Greens. Those negotiations were undertaken in good faith; however, the commitments agreed to have not been implemented with the same level of faith, trust, confidence or timeliness by the Government.

I am highly conscious of the need for planning to adequately accommodate and adapt to our changing climate. Anyone who accepts that the climate is changing as a result of human activity should also agree. I am highly conscious of the need for this to be done in a way that brings—or at least tries to bring—all stakeholders and the community along with it. We have seen what a decade of resistance to action has produced: Australia was left behind on the world stage. Thankfully, we are catching up now as a result of the election of the new Federal

Government. NSW Labor is concerned that elements of the bill before the House are yet to achieve that consensus, and we are not convinced that all parts of the planning system have been adequately brought along for the journey.

Elements of the bill are unclear and likely to create uncertainty. Certainty, transparency and accountability should always be the hallmarks of the planning system. Uncertainty in planning, as in many parts of life, creates easy avenues for malicious actors to undermine legitimate intent. NSW Labor has concerns about elements of the bill, including the establishment of the independent planning and climate change advisory group, which has an expansive brief. That is not necessarily a bad thing; however, the proposed group also appears to not have the oversight or accountability framework that should come along with an expansive brief and such an important role in society, legislation and the economy. I have discussed our concerns with the member for Balmain. NSW Labor is not averse to the use of experts to guide policy and practice in taking action on climate change and the built environment. I seek a short extension of time.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I grant an extension of time to the member for Wollongong. He may continue his contribution at the resumption of debate on the bill.

Debate interrupted.

Motions

NORTH SYDNEY WHARF UPGRADE

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

That this House:

- (1) Notes that the newly upgraded North Sydney Wharf is now safer and more accessible not only for local commuters but also for visitors to the North Shore.
- (2) Recognises that this upgrade includes a new accessible path, a completely new wharf pontoon, customer seating, a kiss-and-ride zone, bicycle hoops and weather protection.
- (3) Acknowledges that the Government and Minister for Transport are ensuring that we are providing the best public transport experience and infrastructure across the North Shore and New South Wales.

There is no better way to get around our beautiful Sydney Harbour than by ferry. I am fortunate to live in a community that can experience a picturesque commute to work, as can visitors to the area, who may visit by ferry and enjoy the beautiful harbour surrounds. I note a number of waterfront MPs are in the Chamber today, including the member for Balmain, the member for Oxley and the member for Port Macquarie. We know how fortunate we are. Thanks to investment in public transport, ferries are an incredibly efficient and longstanding way of moving people around Sydney Harbour. Ferries in Sydney are synonymous with our harbour. They have had a rich history over the course of the past 200 years. At one point in time they were the only way to go from one side of the harbour to the other. Thanks to the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government we are increasing accessibility for communities and travellers who use ferries on our harbour.

I made a commitment to my local community to upgrade our local ferry wharves at North Sydney, South Mosman and Taronga Zoo. It was a great pleasure to open our brand new North Sydney Wharf with the Minister for Transport. The wharf is now fully accessible for customers and visitors alike. It is located at the end of High Street, North Sydney, next to Kesterton Park, which has a beautiful little playground. The North Sydney Wharf is a hidden gem in our emerald city. The overwater walkway connects the wharf to Sub Base Platypus, which the Sydney Harbour Federation Trust has reimagined and re-engineered from an historic submarine base to ensure that it is a valuable community asset for everybody in Sydney.

Earlier this year the Minister joined me to open the wharf, which now provides a much-improved public transport experience for our Transport for NSW customers. The wharf has been transformed and features a new accessible path that leads to a new gangway and a covered, floating pontoon, which it did not previously have. That has improved the efficiency and safety for passengers at the wharf as ferries pick up and drop off passengers. There is improved weather protection from the wet weather as well as improved customer seating and a new accessible parking space. For those who know the area, it is very hard to find parking. In fact, it is hard to get vehicles down the street. We have made space not only for an accessible parking space to improve accessibility but also for a kiss-and-ride zone, which is very valuable given the type of urban street that it is. There are also bicycle hoops to ensure that people can utilise active transport to get around.

The member for Tweed is in the Chamber and he is very excited about ferries. He may seek leave to make a contribution later on. Prior to the upgrade, commuters and visitors with mobility needs were unable to access High Street from the wharf. That included customers with prams and those with assisted and unassisted mobility needs. The existing wharf included an uncovered jetty and tidal steps for pick-up and drop-off. The wharf is now fully accessible and designed to meet the disability standards for accessible public transport. It is a positive

outcome for local communities and visitors to the area, who can now disembark and board safely and more efficiently. I acknowledge the patience of my local community, who I am sure will join with me to celebrate that new and improved infrastructure.

The response has been overwhelmingly positive from those who use the floating pontoon to start their day or for others taking a trip to the city. The North Sydney Wharf is a fine example of the benefit of our Government's Transport Access Program, which ensures that commuters in the area can look forward to future upgrades at a range of other locations including South Mosman Wharf, which locals like to call Musgrave Street wharf, and the ever-famous Taronga Zoo Wharf, to ensure that everybody can access our ferries and our harbour. Upgrades to wharves around different parts of the city include at Parramatta, Rydalmere, Cabarita and Abbotsford. It is city-changing infrastructure. It is essential that our modern transport system can deliver infrastructure that is accessible to all commuters and is futureproofed to meet the demands of a growing population.

That is exactly what we have seen with the work at North Sydney Wharf through the Transport Access Program, which follows a range of different wharf upgrades that have happened in my community throughout the period of time that the Liberals and Nationals have been in Government including at Milsons Point, McMahon's Point and Neutral Bay. Those investments in infrastructure make a difference to people's lives. Beyond the benefits to North Sydney commuters and visitors, the Transport Access Program also provides a boost to local economies and industries. A range of different industries and providers across New South Wales have supported the delivery of those products. Members opposite often criticise the way in which we undertake public transport infrastructure in New South Wales but, sadly, they forget that more than two-thirds of the material used in the construction of those ferries and wharves is sourced in Australia. That supports not only Australian jobs but also Australian communities.

More than 80 per cent of the equipment value itself was sourced from Australian suppliers. Not only do we have jobs but also we have skills and manufacturing capability. We are investing back into communities including in Port Macquarie—I am sure the member for Port Macquarie will speak about the involvement of her community—Newcastle and across Sydney. Master craftsmen, designers and a range of different skills and capabilities go into constructing and designing the fleets and infrastructure at the wharves themselves. Sydney can be a really challenging place for which to design and construct ferries to ensure they can withstand the really high swells in Sydney Harbour. Due to the increasing wet weather and weather patterns across Australia, particularly the east coast of New South Wales at the moment, we must ensure that we build and deliver infrastructure to meet those challenges.

One night at Cremorne Point Wharf in my community, severe weather cracked the roof of the ferry wharf. That has never happened. The entire roof had to be removed, the wharf had to be shut down and a new roof had to be constructed. I believe it was constructed in Port Macquarie and floated down to Cremorne for installation. Even with the best skills, materials and Australian capability in design that has been put into this, it is an incredibly challenging environment. I salute those who did all of that work to ensure that we have that infrastructure and those services to make the best public transport for people in my area and across New South Wales.

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (12:17): I note the comments from the member for North Shore and I congratulate her on getting the ferry wharf that she appreciates so much. I refer particularly to comments she made about the new wharves along the Parramatta River, which were built to futureproof the ferry services along that river. The future that those wharves needed to be futureproofed for include the new River-class ferries that could not dock on the former wharves. We had perfectly good wharves along the Parramatta River, but they all had to be replaced for those stupid River-class ferries which, as with so much of the Government's public infrastructure, were bought off the shelf from overseas, instead of being built to tender specifications.

The Government regards building public transport to tender specifications rather than buying it off the shelf as an old-fashioned, silly thing to do, but it has been caught wanting. It thinks it can save money by buying goods off the shelves, but it has to spend money elsewhere to replace the ferry wharves so that the River-class ferries are able to dock. Let us look at the other problems with the River-class ferries. They were riddled with asbestos. If they had been built to tender specifications, it would probably be a requirement that they not have asbestos. They had faulty electrical equipment and cabling. They had a substandard fit and finish. They could not travel at night because of a reflective wheelhouse glass.

Mrs Leslie Williams: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 76, relevance. The motion is very clear: It is about the Sydney wharves. There is not a word in the motion that refers to ferries. Mr Assistant Speaker, I ask you to direct the member for Granville to confine her remarks to the leave of the motion.

Ms Jo Haylen: What comes to a wharf, Leslie?

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Order! The member for Summer Hill does not need to coach the Chair. I will rule on the point of order. I note a tendency towards some rather extended prologues to contributions, including those by Government members. I take the member for Granville's speech as preliminary comments, but I ask the member for Granville to be mindful that the motion is quite specific. However, in this type of debate some latitude tends to be given. The member for Granville may proceed.

Ms JULIA FINN: I am referring to local commuters and how they use those wharves, which is by ferry. The River-class ferries cannot travel at night because of reflective wheelhouse glass that has had to be replaced. They cannot travel under the bridges on the Parramatta River with passengers on the top deck at high tide because they might be decapitated.

Ms Felicity Wilson: Point of order: Mr Assistant Speaker, the member for Granville is flouting your ruling. She has just returned to talking about bridges, which has nothing to do with the wharves.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The motion refers to other public transport in New South Wales and offers wide latitude. I rule that the member for Granville has not directly contravened my ruling. The member for Granville may continue. If another point of order is taken, I will stop the clock.

Ms JULIA FINN: Please do, Mr Assistant Speaker, because I have lost about two minutes to superfluous points of order. The River-class ferries cannot travel under the bridges on the Parramatta River at high tide—at the Gasworks Bridge, in particular—with passengers on the top deck because they might be decapitated.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Government members will come to order.

Ms JULIA FINN: Looking at this Government's record on Parramatta heritage, I am really quite surprised the Government did not try to demolish the Gasworks Bridge to allow the ferries to pass underneath. Instead the Government stopped the ferries at Rydalmere and put everyone onto a bus. The engines have been stalling. The vessels could not enact an emergency stop. For once, the Government actually has been treating both sides of Sydney equally because there are as many, if not more, problems with the Emerald-class ferries that go to Manly. They have steering failures and cracked fuel tanks, and hot oil sprayed around the engine room after the lubricating oil system cracked. The emergency doors are locked because they are a safety hazard to passengers. Leaks have been discovered in the hulls. There is damage to the rudders in heavy swells and windows have shattered in heavy swells.

Heavy swells in Sydney Harbour should be expected and should be part of the tender specifications, and then the Government should make the ferries here so that people become familiar with the idea that there are heavy swells in Sydney Harbour. Internal warnings have been sent to masters that vessels could become airborne in heavy swells. They are often taken off the water when the swells are high, even though they are certified to operate in 4.5 metre swells. The ferries also cannot dock at their usual wharf in Manly during low tide. We have huge problems with the ferries that this Government ordered. A whole lot of wharves which were actually perfectly fine were replaced just to accommodate the new ferries.

The motion moved by the member for North Shore refers to "providing the best public transport experience and infrastructure across the North Shore"—which may well be true—"and New South Wales". I represent an electorate that has had its train services completely downgraded by this Government. Granville was a major transport interchange for 160 years until this Government took it off the T1 Western Line on weekdays. Now there are no express services at that station, even though this Government promised at the last election to bring them back. They have not been brought back. They are not there. If this Government is serious about public transport, it will restore services at Granville and start building ferries here to tender specifications.

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (12:24): I am pleased to speak to the motion moved by the very good member for the North Shore. It is no wonder, as referred to by the previous speaker, she is pretty excited about the new wharves—and why would she not be? It is because of her strong advocacy, as always, that we continue to see great upgrades in her electorate that are really for the benefit of all her local commuters. As mentioned, North Sydney is a major commercial district in the beautiful Lower North Shore, which is a well-connected suburb that is serviced by buses, trains and ferries as well as community transport. The New South Wales Government and Transport for NSW have consistently committed to supporting the improvement of those services and to ensuring that commuters and visitors can travel efficiently and safely. There has been a decade of investment in the Sydney ferry network. Commuter satisfaction with ferries is at an all-time high of 99 per cent as at May last year.

The recent upgrade that we are discussing today of the North Sydney wharf was delivered as part of the New South Wales Government's Transport Access Program, which is one of a number of significant continuing upgrades to train stations right across the State and to ferry wharves right across Sydney Harbour. The wharf is used by commuters and visitors on the F5 between Circular Quay and Neutral Bay, which is an absolutely

picturesque and very popular route. In fact, for almost five years I was one of those commuters. I absolutely loved coming to Parliament via the F5 ferry.

The member for North Shore referred to the floating pontoons that are part of a number of upgrades across Sydney Harbour. She also spoke about supporting our local communities and local jobs, which I will refer to in detail. As the member for North Shore mentioned, a wonderful local company, Birdon, operates out of Port Macquarie. I know the member for Oxley has visited recently, so she knows very well the great work that Birdon does in building our public transport facilities and in improving access through our ferry wharf program. In 2015 I was very pleased to announce that Birdon won the tender to building nine new pontoons as part of the New South Wales Government's Transport Access Program.

Birdon was selected after a competitive tender process. It built nine steel pontoons as part of the Government's initiative to upgrade commuter ferry wharves right across Sydney Harbour and the Parramatta River. It was great news for the Port Macquarie local community because it highlighted the very significant contribution that our local community is making to the broader State economy and because it meant that the skills and expertise of our local workforce were showcased right across Sydney Harbour and the Parramatta River. I am incredibly proud of the work that Birdon does. I commend Birdon for continuing to focus not only on local jobs but also on what it can do to make sure that there is a pipeline going forward in this particular industry.

I was also really pleased when, in December last year, I was able to announce a contract worth a combined value of \$5.38 million that Birdon was awarded under our Regional Job Creation Fund. It is a really significant investment for local communities. I know members opposite may find that a little bit amusing, but continuing to create jobs is actually really critical to regional communities. Birdon alone has created 208 new local jobs and has nearly tripled the size of its workspace so that it can continue to support the New South Wales building programs as well as other Defence work it is a part of.

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (12:29): I speak to the motion moved by the member for North Shore. First, I acknowledge my community and advise the member for North Shore that all the wharves in Balmain were upgraded from 2011 to 2015. I also acknowledge the former Minister for Transport, Gladys Berejiklian, because it was the Minister for Transport who came to the Balmain electorate, listened to the community, looked at our wharves and made a commitment with Roads and Maritime Services to upgrade them. I am delighted that over \$15 million was spent on upgrading wharves in the Balmain electorate. I acknowledge the contractors who worked in our local community, particularly the Australian Maritime Workers Union members [AMWU], who worked hard putting together the pontoons and wharves for the people in the Balmain electorate.

I raise some important issues. While infrastructure is critical, accessibility is also critical. I impress on the Government how important accessibility is. The three key wharves in my electorate were not accessible. It meant that getting onto the ferries was very difficult for people with mobility issues or people with prams or in wheelchairs. They are now fully accessible and that makes an incredible difference because public transport system is available for everybody to use, not just those who are mobile. I encourage the Government to extend and invest in our public transport fleet, especially our ferries. I am pleased that the Government has initiated the new ferry line from Glebe to Blackwattle Bay. There are significant issues with congestion. Getting people out of cars and onto ferries is important.

The Government has implemented a trial program to get people onto the wharf in Glebe and over to Barangaroo. Barangaroo is a major employment hub for people in my electorate. Banking, finance and insurance is the number one employment group in the electorate, similar to that in North Shore. People who work in those sectors need to get to Barangaroo. If we can offer them a good means of public transport that is quick and effective, it makes a difference. It is so fast to go along the water, so it is important to have that transfer so we can get people out of the cars and buses that we know are causing congestion in our city.

We call on the Government to maintain that service and to make sure that it is available on Opal. More importantly, the service should be expanded to Annandale so we can make sure that people in Rozelle Bay, where we have a high proportion in employment, can use that ferry service. We know that Circular Quay is at capacity for new ferry services, but when the revitalisation of that wharf takes place we want to see slots available for people from our side of the harbour so they can go to Barangaroo and Circular Quay. It is also particularly important for us to look at and expand services that we know are important, which have worked and can work again. This is a fantastic opportunity to reinvigorate the wharf at West Balmain so that we have services to the city and also Birkenhead. We believe that using wharves is a critical way to move forward so we can get people off the roads—get them out of buses that create a level of congestion but, most importantly, out of cars.

I acknowledge everyone working at the Balmain Shipyard. My dad worked on ships most of his life. When he emigrated to Australia he got his first job at the Balmain Shipyard. I also acknowledge all those workers who keep our ferries well looked after in the Balmain Shipyard; the Australian Services Union members, the AMWU

members in particular; and all of those people who maintain our ferries and look after our ferries in Sydney Harbour. We can do so much more. Our working harbour is precious, it should be protected and public transport on the harbour must be expanded.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (12:33): I enjoyed the contributions from the members for Balmain, North Shore and Port Macquarie. Sadly, and I do not think there is much that can be done about it, but accessibility to the Louisa Road ferry will always be a challenge with the big staircase. There is so much more we can do as a nation in terms of our waterways. I remember being on a public inquiry in the upper House which revealed there is no reason—and I can see this happening in another 10 or 20 years—not to transport freight on barges up and down the Pacific Highway, creating our third Pacific Highway access route for freight. We can reimagine how we deliver freight on this island continent. A lot of reforms need to happen at an industrial relations level in Australia to encourage more freight movement across the country.

But we are here to talk about transporting people. Through the Transport Access Program this Government has spent \$2.2 billion improving access. I acknowledge the work that we have done at the Urunga railway station and the Wauchope railway station. And at this very minute tens of thousands of dollars of investment is going into the Kempsey railway station where the car park is being relaid to improve safety and access. I particularly acknowledge disability access. I now have the opportunity to brag on record that last Friday we won the netball 27-30 in Auckland.

Mr Geoff Provost: Did you catch a ferry there?

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: We didn't. The next day I travelled with Liesl Tesch after the Wallaroos game. Whoever thought an Australian Rules person would be at Eden Park? I have to admit, there was a tear in the eye during the Kiwi national anthem. We were there at a full oval watching women play rugby. It was exciting; it was such a great feeling. The very important point is accessibility because Liesel was with us. It was the first time I used an accessibility lift to catch a train. We did that as a team; we all stayed together.

Mr Christopher Gulaptis: Before or after the game?

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: It was after the game. The point is important, accessibility is at the centre of the motion.

[A Government member interjected.]

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: I did. To be respectful and to make travel as seamless as possible is important. Our Government has done a good job. I also acknowledge Birdon marine and join with the member for Port Macquarie. It is on the Hastings River, quite near my electorate. I think it will still be in the Port Macquarie electorate after the redistribution. Many on the other side talk about how the ferries have been constructed and I encourage the member for Granville to fully understand it. They have not been bought off the shelf from a supermarket. There were tender requirements and 80 per cent of the Emerald-class ferries have been built and constructed in this country. The shadow Minister for Transport has also visited that facility and seen the hundreds of people employed there. We should be proud of what we can do in this country and not talk it down, and be proud of how we have made transport more accessible in this State. I commend the motion of the member for North Shore.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I appreciate the circuitous way that the member for Oxley told that story and brought it to conclusion. I note that neither the member for Port Macquarie nor the member for Oxley has yet mentioned Peter Besseling. Is he still at Birdon?

Mrs Leslie Williams: I do not know that we should discuss that.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (12:38): I thank the member for North Shore for moving the motion. I will be addressing paragraph (3) of the motion, which members have expanded to railway stations and other things. I want to highlight that whether it is a wharf or a station, a Coalition electorate versus a non-Coalition electorate, Como station, any of the wharves in North Shore, or any of the Liberal electorates, public consultation involves extensive community consultation and feedback. A local committee is appointed and they look at local history and design, quality environmental features, architecturally designed and award winning features, including accessibility. If we look at Doonside and many of the stations along the western Sydney line, when a design is considered, we get one Facebook post and a bit of a mail-out in the local area. We are asked for written feedback when, essentially, they have a predetermined design across western Sydney.

Look at any of the western Sydney stations, they are almost mirrors of each other. It is like the old Henry Ford agenda: Pick whatever colour you want for your Ford car as long as it is black. It is the same with our stations; they are all the same design. It is difficult to get any feedback from the Government. I suppose we should be thankful we got something. I congratulate the member for North Shore. The opening line to her contribution

was very modest. Apart from the North Sydney wharf, there is the Taronga Zoo wharf, the South Mosman wharf upgrade, the Kirribilli wharf—

Ms Felicity Wilson: Kirribilli wharf has not been upgraded.

Mr STEPHEN BALI: The budget papers state that \$54 million has been spent on all of those, including Balmoral Jetty and even Balls Head Coal Loader Wharf, which is historical. Something like \$54 million is being spent there.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: Government members will come to order.

Mr STEPHEN BALI: Wollstonecraft station is being upgraded. Compare that with Doonside station. Since 2009, 17 per cent more people have used Doonside station than Wollstonecraft station. That means on an annual basis 127,000 more people are using Doonside station than are using Wollstonecraft station. What did we have to do to get our station? We had 12 years of campaigning, 11,000 petitions and a debate in Parliament.

Mrs Leslie Williams: Point of order—

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Port Macquarie will be heard in silence.

Mrs Leslie Williams: It is under Standing Order 76. The motion is about wharf upgrades. It has nothing to do with trains.

Ms Julia Finn: Read part three.

Mrs Leslie Williams: I can read, and it is my point of order. I ask the Assistant Speaker to rule on it.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER: I shall rule on it. I rule that, in crafting her motion, the member for North Shore left open the opportunity in paragraph (3) to explore other modes of public transport. I do not uphold the point of order. The member for Blacktown may continue. The Clerk will restart the clock.

Mr STEPHEN BALI: No wonder he is the best Speaker on the panel. A report by the New South Wales Auditor-General stated that Doonside station should have been thirteenth on the list of upgrades. Compare that with Hawkesbury River station. How good was that one? The annual usage of Hawkesbury River station was the same as that of Doonside station between 1 January and 25 January. That does not even include Australia Day. Hawkesbury River station got upgraded because it was in the electorate of the Premier, who was Treasurer at the time. He could not even get that one right. To a large extent, the treatment of non-Coalition seats in western Sydney is revolting. Billions of dollars are being generated for WestInvest, which is ours but we only get 25 per cent back. We are being ripped off. The basic budget very rarely delivers anything for western Sydney, and yet the budget is there for North Shore and everywhere else. It is an absolute disgrace.

Mr Nathaniel Smith: I seek leave to make a contribution to the debate.

Leave not granted.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (12:43): In reply: We have had a wonderful discussion about our ferries, our wharves and everything else that was brought into the conversation. I am disappointed we did not get to hear from the member for Wollondilly. Opposition members are afraid of the valuable contribution he would have made. They want to spend their time misrepresenting the facts. I acknowledge the contribution from the member for Granville, which was fundamentally an attack on and criticism of our entire public transport system and those who work in it. She attacked all the Australian workers at Birdon and Incat Crowther, world-renowned naval architects who purpose built and designed the second-generation Emerald-class ferries for the F1 Manly service. Contrary to what the member for Granville said, they were purpose built and designed for swells of up to 4.5 metres. They were built to withstand Sydney Harbour swells by renowned naval architect Incat Crowther. When she wants to attack them—

Ms Jo Haylen: None of them are running.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: I acknowledge the interjection from the member for Summer Hill, who wants to attack and criticise Australian designers and builders who built the Emerald-class ferries. I am referring to those who designed and constructed them. I do not need to be shouted at about those facts.

Mr Stephen Bali: Point of order—

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The Clerk will stop the clock.

Mr Stephen Bali: That statement is false and misleading. The member for North Shore cannot lie in Parliament nonstop.

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

Ms FELICITY WILSON: That is unparliamentary. The member for Blacktown made a reflection on me, and I ask that he withdraw it.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The member for North Shore has requested that the member for Blacktown withdraw his comment.

Mr Stephen Bali: I withdraw.

Ms FELICITY WILSON: I thank the member for Blacktown. When it comes to our public transport infrastructure and local manufacturing, as the member for Oxley said, we should be proud of our workforce and capabilities instead of constantly putting them down. The Emerald-class ferries were designed to be faster, safer, more accessible and more fuel efficient and to have reduced carbon emissions. We know we need to invest in those approaches. As the member for Port Macquarie said, hundreds of jobs have been created in her community by the ferry wharves and the types of pontoons that are now used across the city, whether it is along Parramatta River, in Sydney Harbour or, as the member for Balmain said, at all the upgraded ferry wharves in his electorate.

I acknowledge not only Birdon and its contribution to pontoons and the delivery of wharves and ferries but also the contribution from the member for Balmain. All the wharves in his electorate were upgraded between 2011 and 2015—he is obviously an incredible advocate for his community. He recognised then Minister for Transport Gladys Berejiklian and her work to make our public transport system across the State more accessible. He made incredibly important points about the power and importance of having accessible public transport to ensure that everybody has the same capability to engage in our society. He offered some ideas for new ferry lines and the concept of the Glebe to Blackwattle Bay ferry, which is underway, to get people out of their cars and to Barangaroo. He also spoke about efforts to expand services.

I note that the member for Oxley also talked about expanding services and the great new idea for a third Pacific Highway on the waterfront to get freight from Sydney to the North Coast. She has also been deeply involved in transport infrastructure upgrades, a number of which she referenced in her community. Accessibility is very important to her, as she referenced in a longwinded way when speaking about her trip to New Zealand and her great success as a member of the parliamentary team that played against the New Zealand team. Then we ended disappointingly with the member for Blacktown, who focused quite heavily on Doonside station. It is disappointing when people criticise infrastructure investment across this State. I note that Yagoona station recently had a \$20 million upgrade. That is in a Labor-held seat. It is the first lift with sensors at any station across the State—or across Australia, I believe. We invest in New South Wales and Sydney to deliver the best public transport outcomes for our communities.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The question is that the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

PARAMEDICS

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (12:49): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that NSW Ambulance responded to an unprecedented 116,000 cases in April 2022.
- (2) Notes that COVID-19 related staffing issues, burnout and impossible rosters contribute to delays in response times.
- (3) Calls on the Minister for Health to ensure adequate numbers of paramedics are employed and rosters are fair.

I am really glad that the Government has allowed me a whole 20 minutes to debate the crisis that is happening in our hospitals at the moment, and the fact that staff are leaving the healthcare system in droves because of overwork, understaffing, under-resourcing and many other issues. Our ambulances, particularly the system and our hardworking paramedics, are under unprecedented pressure. No-one is going to deny it—all of our ambos are under pressure. Just last week an inquiry in the other House heard directly from emergency medicine experts about the increasing strain that our emergency system is under. The inquiry heard that patients are dying unnecessarily while waiting in hospital emergency departments all over the State in what a doctor called "Third World conditions".

Worryingly, the problem is not limited to emergency departments such as those at John Hunter and the Calvary Mater in my patch. We face a chronic shortage of paramedics and healthcare workers. We have fewer paramedics per person than every other State has. People in New south Wales are waiting longer than ever before for an ambulance. Intensive care paramedic Brett Simpson said, "NSW Ambulance is just short of lurching from crisis to crisis at the moment. It's chaos." Our paramedics feel the strain. They have told us as much, and they

have been telling us for the past 12 years. They are understaffed, under-resourced and exhausted. They got into this job to help people in their most desperate times, yet they are hamstrung by a system in crisis. Mr Simpson said plainly, "Paramedics are at breaking point. We're seeing massive, massive amounts of burnout." Burnout is a symptom of the exhaustion, decreased productivity, job dissatisfaction and cynicism that our paramedics feel.

An internal survey of its members by the Australian Paramedics Association revealed that 80 per cent of paramedics reported feeling too fatigued to drive home safely, with 28 per cent saying that this is a normal occurrence. It should not be a normal occurrence. How did it get to this point? Studies have explored the risk factors involved for workers who spend their days in contact with people in states of physical and psychological suffering. Police officers, firefighters and paramedics topped the list of at-risk jobs. Last year a New South Wales paramedic said, "We are hugely understaffed"—that word "understaffed" keeps repeating itself—and "There needs to be an injection of permanent staff. We're overworked." Instead, the ambulance service has introduced part-time and contract work, with no permanent security for the workforce. The existing workforce is not happy with that because it does not address the existing understaffing. The paramedic detailed how they and their colleagues are being hammered by the roster system and poor staffing levels. He said:

The minimum operating levels haven't been increased for 10 to 15 years. Workloads have increased massively. You just never get your breaks. There are never-ending streams of jobs that mount up and there are not enough ambulance staff to cover these jobs. The prospect of getting any meaningful work done, and downtime or rest, is just non-existent.

The toll that this workload takes on paramedics is underlined by the statistics. In 2018 a study of Australian paramedics found that 55.9 per cent suffered total burnout and 62 per cent suffered work-related burnout. The Government must be fair dinkum about getting better staffing levels for all of our ambulance stations and ambulance services. Horrifyingly, the rate of suicide among paramedics is four times that of the general population. COVID-19 and the related staffing issues have added to the pressure on a system that is struggling with massive underinvestment over the past 12 months to two years. Speaking to the inquiry in the other House, the President of the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine, Clare Skinner, added that the issue was not just a COVID phenomenon. She told the inquiry, "It's fair to say that COVID was the straw that broke the camel's back", and that this has been going on for decades due to understaffing, underinvestment, under-resourcing and poor coordination of community-based care. The Opposition has announced a \$500 million package to address the issue, which includes hiring an extra 500 paramedics. The Government needs to address this problem now.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (12:56): I thank the member for Wallsend for bringing this very important issue before the House. The New South Wales Government is committed to ensuring that the people of New South Wales can access emergency care when they need it. NSW Ambulance is an integral part of the New South Wales health system, delivering mobile health services and providing high-quality clinical care, and rescue and retrieval services to the people of New South Wales with emergency health and medical needs. Paramedics make an invaluable contribution to people's health and wellbeing. I take this opportunity to recognise the compassion, skill, professionalism and round-the-clock commitment of paramedics to patients in our community.

The New South Wales Government also recognises the unprecedented pressure that NSW Ambulance has been under, with call rates surging as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the recent winter flu. NSW Ambulance and the wider health system continue to experience the impacts and challenges of these unprecedented times. We have never seen demands like this before in our region, where there are around 3,500 triple-zero calls every day. With that in mind, I move:

That the motion be amended by omitting paragraphs (1) to (3) and inserting instead:

- (1) Notes that NSW Ambulance responded to an unprecedented 116,000 cases in April 2022.
- (2) Acknowledges the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on health systems across the country.
- (3) Notes that the New South Wales Government is recruiting an additional 2,128 NSW Ambulance staff to address the current challenges our paramedics are facing.

In 2022 NSW Ambulance had a total of 333,927 responses during the April to June quarter and there were 12,134 responses to priority 1A patients with life-threatening conditions, which is the highest number reported by the Bureau of Health Information since 2010 and is up 85.2 per cent and 45 per cent respectively compared with the same quarters in 2019 and 2021. However, despite the huge surge in demand—and thanks to our outstanding paramedics—NSW Ambulance's mean response times for priority 1A cases, which are the highest priority emergencies, remained within the 10-minute benchmark during this time.

These challenges are not unique to New South Wales. All jurisdictions across the country are managing a surge in demand of out-of-hospital critical care. NSW Ambulance has implemented a number of strategies to assist with resource capacity in responding to urgent and/or life-threatening incidents. Requests for ambulances are triaged according to urgency and clinical need to ensure the most appropriate response to all patients.

NSW Ambulance continues to expand referrals to other providers for appropriate care such as Healthdirect, for low-acuity 000 calls. NSW Ambulance continues to roster paramedics to meet the planned ambulance rosters recommendation issued by the Industrial Relation Commission in May 2021. With the implementation of the Statewide Workforce Enhancement Program, NSW Ambulance has been able to increase the number of staff rostered on a shift 24 hours a day in metropolitan, regional and rural areas.

To meet increasing demand for health services and changing community expectations, the Government has continued its record investment in NSW Ambulance infrastructure and workforce, ensuring that our paramedics are supported. As part of the 2022-23 budget, the Government announced funding for an additional 2,128 staff and 30 new ambulance stations in a \$1.76 billion budget boost to frontline emergency care. That investment in additional staffing is over four years and will fund 1,858 paramedics, 210 ambulance support staff, 52 nurses and eight doctors. The paramedics will be based in both metropolitan and regional areas, boosting numbers at existing stations and staffing the new stations that are being built. That investment will mean improved patient outcomes through enhanced ambulance performance and better health services for the community.

Paramedic recruitment and onboarding has commenced for the paramedic workforce enhancement. As recently as last month, just two months after the budget was handed down, an additional 300 staff have been employed by NSW Ambulance. That is more than half of what Labor is committing to deliver over four years. Contrary to what members opposite claim, those are not just last-minute announcements made on the eve of an election. In fact, last year's \$1.4 billion budget investment in NSW Ambulance saw \$34 million committed over four years to convert 246 paramedics to intensive care paramedics; NSW Ambulance equipped with 1,291 new state-of-the-art monitor and defibrillator units, which will enable paramedics to monitor changes more effectively in patients and send real-time information ahead of arrival to hospital; \$126 million over four years for the new fit-for-purpose NSW Ambulance State Operations Centre at Sydney Olympic Park, which will also house the 000 control centre, which manages more than 1.3 million calls per year; and \$54.3 million over four years for changes to the mix of aircraft within the aeromedical fleet to include jet aircraft to improve patient transport times.

That is further to the New South Wales Government's June 2018 funding announcement for an additional 700 paramedics and 50 control centre staff over four years under the Statewide Workforce Enhancement Program. The Government has also delivered nearly 100 new or upgraded ambulance stations since the Liberals and The Nationals came into government. Since coming into government, we have delivered a total investment of \$11 billion to NSW Ambulance, which is a record those opposite could only dream of. Whilst members on this side of the House do not disagree that paramedics and our entire health system have been under increased pressure because of the COVID-19 pandemic, we are the only ones with a real plan to rebuild and recover from the impact of the past two years. I support the motion with the amendment.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (13:02): I speak in favour of the motion, and I thank the member for Wollongong for bringing this important issue to the attention of the House. She brings many important issues before the House on a weekly basis, and for that I congratulate her. The New South Wales health system, including the ambulance service, is in crisis. Our hardworking paramedics are at the coalface of this crisis. The constituents in my electorate are not immune from the debacle that has unfolded under the watch of this wasteful and tired Liberal-Nationals Government.

Ambulance ramping is the worst it has ever been. One of my constituents recently told me about his experience of feeling unwell and attending the Shellharbour Hospital emergency department before being sent by ambulance to Wollongong Hospital. He tells a story of super impressive and hardworking paramedics, who were not only professional but also caring and understanding, going above and beyond with attention to detail and kindness. When he arrived at Wollongong Hospital his symptoms had subsided, and the paramedics' job should have been to get back on the road. But that did not happen. Due to the incompetence of this Government, those highly trained paramedics were forced to effectively babysit him for three hours while he waited to see a doctor. For three long hours two paramedics stood around instead of being out in the community saving lives and responding to 000 calls, attending to other emergencies or even taking a well-earned break—what a novel idea!

My constituent told me that the paramedics were understandably frustrated with a system that is clearly broken. They are working longer than 12 hours per day; missing meal breaks and missing time at home with loved ones. Those paramedics, who clearly deserve better, are represented by the amazing Health Services Union [HSU]. I congratulate the union for going to bat for New South Wales paramedics on a daily basis. I thank Gerard Hayes, the HSU general secretary; Lynne Russell, the HSU assistant secretary; Lauren Hutchins, the aged-care and disabilities division secretary; and all HSU officials for the fantastic work that they do each and every day.

Members opposite do not like the workers and those who represent the workers, but it is high time that this Government started listening to the HSU and taking its advice seriously. It is at the coalface every single day. HSU members know what is really going on and their concerns should not be dismissed by a Liberal-Nationals Government that has run out of ideas to solve those very real problems. Ambulance services across the Illawarra

and all of New South Wales are in desperate need of an injection of resources to fix this mess. Labor has committed \$150 million for an additional 500 paramedics and \$175 million to introduce safe staffing levels in public hospitals, starting with emergency departments, which this Government has failed to do after 12 long, tired and torturous years. The New South Wales health system will always be better under a Labor government. It is in our DNA because we actually care about workers in New South Wales.

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (13:06): I support the amendment of the member for Tweed. The New South Wales Government acknowledges the vitally important work undertaken by paramedics and their contribution to the New South Wales health system. The Government is committed to ensuring that the people of New South Wales can access high quality out-of-hospital care when they need it. That is certainly happening in my electorate, with a new ambulance station being built in the village of Iluka. The community asked for years and, thanks to the hard work of a couple of locals, this Government has delivered. I thank John and Ann Maclean for lobbying very hard for the ambulance station, as well as the Iluka Bowls club, which provided the land upon which the new station is being built.

The town of Casino is also getting a new ambulance station. The old station's use-by date has well and truly expired. The Government is committed to delivering health services to regional communities. Despite the unprecedented challenges over recent years, with a series of natural disasters impacting large parts of the State as well as the ongoing pandemic, the New South Wales health system continues to perform not just as well as can be expected but better than can be expected, given the circumstances around the world. That is due, in large part, to the extraordinary dedication and commitment of staff from across the health system—from doctors, nurses, allied health professionals and paramedics to pathologists, cleaners, booking clerks and everyone in between. Many, particularly those in regional New South Wales, were personally impacted by events such as floods and bushfires but still showed up to work so that their communities could continue to have access to health services. That is also due to the record, unprecedented investment in our health system delivered by the Liberals and The Nationals.

As has been mentioned, the 2022-23 health budget of \$33.5 billion includes \$1.76 billion for NSW Ambulance to recruit an additional 2,128 staff and deliver 30 new ambulance stations—like the two in my electorate. Those new ambulance stations will come with more jobs and increased workforce in metropolitan Sydney and across the regions. The demand for health services, including emergency medical care, has grown exponentially over the past decade. Even in this environment, New South Wales has consistently been the better-performing Australian jurisdiction for timely access to care in emergency departments.

NSW Health acknowledges that at times, despite our best efforts in those circumstances, the expectations of patients are not always met and their experience may be contrary to what the system and its staff strive to achieve. The focus of NSW Health remains to keep people well, to reduce unnecessary emergency department attendances, better manage the flow of patients attending emergency departments, avoid unnecessary admissions and ensure appropriate early discharge. As the NSW Health submission to the upper House inquiry into ambulance ramping identifies, factors affecting timeliness to care have included impact of natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic on the health system.

Ms Anna Watson: Excuses!

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS: I thank the member for Shellharbour for that interjection, but that is not quite true. The member knows that we have injected a fortune into our health system, which is why it is one of the better-performing health systems in this country. That is why I support the amendment of the member for Tweed.

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (13:10): I appreciate the opportunity to speak on behalf of The Greens in support of this motion. Two in three paramedics are either considering quitting or want to quit, according to a survey by the Australian Paramedics Association [APA]. We acknowledge that the New South Wales Government's announcement was a very significant increase in staffing levels, with an additional 2,128 paramedics and support staff positions funded, as well as 30 new paramedic stations. But it is important that there is statewide systemic reform. It is a far more concerning and significant issue in rural and regional New South Wales than in electorates like mine that are close to major hospitals. The Royal Prince Alfred Hospital is in my electorate—but there are still concerns in my area.

The Government has committed to 40 per cent of the staff going regionally, but it seems that the vast bulk of those staff will go to metropolitan and peri-urban areas such as Wollongong and the Central Coast. There needs to be a genuine commitment to make sure that more of those staff move beyond those areas. It is also critical that we have more extended care and intensive care paramedics. The extended care paramedics can do a lot of activities at people's homes like stitches, providing antibiotics, fixing catheters and so on. That can take pressure off the public health system. We also know that intensive care paramedics have advanced lifesaving skills.

The Government is seeking to limit the number of specialist paramedics in regional communities. It has forced paramedics to let go of their qualification if they relocate to a regional town, as they may be above the quota for specialists. That should change. The New South Wales Government should remove those limits on specialist paramedics and, rather, expand them. It is critical that the Government invests in affordable, accessible community care so that people do not call 000 in the first place. That means having access to a doctor and having financially viable opportunities. But we know that is related to the Federal Government's issue about bulk billing. In my community, it is very difficult for people to find a doctor who does bulk bill. For a lot of people, that means they will turn up at an emergency department or call an ambulance. Paramedics in New South Wales have had three successive pay cuts in three years—an effective pay cut. They may have received an increase in their salary, but the inflation ate away at that benefit in their salary.

[Government members interjected.]

It is a relative a pay cut. It is a real wage cut because in situations of a high-inflation environment, wages need to keep pace with inflation. It is one of the challenges of our State in order to fund that and also to make sure that that is managed in an effective way. Those types of pay rises are not feeding inflation; they are keeping workers up to date with the costs that they have to face. I acknowledge the Health Services Union. I acknowledge the strong lobbying of the APA (NSW), which has been very active. It contacted my office—and I am sure many others—to raise the issues about paramedics. I acknowledge all the workers it represents.

We all know that those workers go above and beyond. They do an incredible job and, like teachers, they deserve more than thanks. They need a pay rise. We need structural systemic reform to make sure that the services provided by those public service staff are done in an effective and sustainable manner. While we can talk about staffing, fundamental reform to the system is much needed and critical. That means collaboration with our Federal colleagues and the reforms that I have indicated in my contribution to this debate.

Debate interrupted.

Bills

ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS AND DOMAIN TRUST AMENDMENT (FACILITATION OF SYDNEY METRO WEST) BILL 2022

CRIMINAL PROCEDURE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (PROSECUTION OF INDICTABLE OFFENCES) BILL 2022

Returned

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): I report receipt of messages from the Legislative Council returning the bills without amendment.

PORT OF NEWCASTLE (EXTINGUISHMENT OF LIABILITY) BILL 2022

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Greg Piper, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (13:15): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Port of Newcastle (Extinguishment of Liability) Bill 2022 to the House. It is a simple bill with a simple intent, but that simplicity belies the fact that its passage will provide a profound benefit to New South Wales into the future. The intent is to fix a very bad deal brokered by a former government to the great detriment of the State's economic potential—in particular, that of northern New South Wales and the Hunter region. It was a deal that has become a dead weight on the State's future, and it was a deal that put the Hunter's potential into a straitjacket in order to deliver a short-term windfall.

I take the House back to 2013 when it all began. That is when then Premier Mike Baird set out to privatise all three of the State's public-owned ports at Newcastle, Port Kembla and Port Botany. It was a deal that netted the Government an extraordinary \$6.82 billion. It was a staggering result but, as is often the case with these things, the devil was in the detail. In 2013 a consortium called NSW Ports, which included a sovereign wealth fund of the Abu Dhabi Government, purchased a 99-year lease deal on Botany and Kembla for \$5.07 billion. The following year, a 99-year lease on Newcastle was sold to a consortium called Port of Newcastle for \$1.75 billion. What was not clear at the time was that the reason NSW Ports was willing to pay so much for Botany and Kembla was because they were essentially given a monopoly on container trade in and out of the State for the next 50-plus years. That did not happen by accident.

It later emerged that NSW Ports had lobbied the Government for the sweetest of deals, locking out competition on containers until 2065. That drove up the sale price for obvious reasons, and it was gladly accepted by a government with dollar signs in its eyes at the time and little regard for the long-term impacts on the State, on regional New South Wales, on regional industry and farmers, and on the world's largest coal port in Newcastle. The deal put a cap on the number of containers that were allowed to come into and out of Newcastle. Anything over 30,000 units a year at the time would trigger a compensation clause, which is estimated to cost about \$100 per container. That money was to be collected by the Government and paid to NSW Ports as compensation. The Government was the middleman. It is my very firm view—and certainly the view of most in Newcastle and beyond—that that clause constitutes a considerable restriction on free trade, is anti-competitive and creates a monopoly for NSW Ports to the detriment of the Hunter and other regional areas north of Sydney.

The competition watchdog, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission [ACCC], agrees. It began preparing a legal case, but for the next four years it was unable to name the State Government as a party to the case because of a technicality in competition law. Today that case remains under appeal in the Federal Court, with the ACCC arguing that the anti-competitive parts of the deed should be ruled illegal. ACCC chair Rod Sims stated:

... we consider that the purpose and likely effect of the compensation provisions entered into at the time the State of NSW privatised the Ports of Botany and Kembla was anti-competitive.

...

We remain concerned that the Port Commitment Deeds will effectively hinder or prevent the development of a competing container terminal at the Port of Newcastle for 50 years. This is a matter of significance for the Australian economy.

The Productivity Commissioner went further. The recent draft report on our maritime logistics by Commissioner Steven King estimated that inefficiencies in Australian ports are currently costing more than \$600 million a year, with more than half of that directly related to the inefficiencies in New South Wales, specifically around Port Botany. Commissioner King said:

Artificial barriers like the ones faced by the Port of Newcastle make no sense and should be removed.

We have ample evidence to show that delays, shortages and high costs are biting the State and local communities hard. The shortage in building products and supplies all members have read reports about is due, in large part, to port delays. All those Christmas presents and goods members buy online from overseas take months to arrive because of delays at our ports and the transport logistics around them. All those exporters members hear from in their local electorates who are having trouble getting their produce or products to international markets are largely in that position because of inefficiencies at our ports. This bill will go a long way towards fixing those problems.

What the Federal Court may say about the Government's ability to do the deal it did in 2013 remains unknown. But there is likely no doubt among the fair-minded people of New South Wales that the deal was done deliberately to drive up the sale price of Botany and Kembla to the disadvantage of Newcastle, market competition and the ability to ensure the most efficient container logistics in New South Wales. Sadly, this was about the short term. This short-term thinking has had significant impacts on primary producers, regional manufacturers and other businesses who are trying to get products to international markets.

While coal exports remain very strong in the Hunter region and continue to deliver billions of dollars worth of revenue to the State accounts every year, everyone knows that those billions are not guaranteed to keep rolling in forever as demand for thermal coal overseas diminishes in the decades ahead. The Government has a responsibility to the people of Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and the Hunter region—and indeed the State—as well as existing industries to diversify, transition and prepare for the future. That is what Port of Newcastle is trying to do. It has proposed a new container terminal which will accommodate ships that are too big to dock at existing ports. However, investors are unwilling to commit because of uncertainty over the existing deed and the penalty clauses, which could make building the terminal uneconomic.

Along with other members in this Chamber, I am not going to sit back any longer and watch thousands of jobs disappear in the Hunter region because of a dubious deal that put a handbrake on not just the Hunter's future but also the future of this State. I am not going to sit back and watch billions of dollars of new investment be lost to the Hunter region so we can enshrine a monopoly in Sydney and Wollongong—and nor should any other member in this House. As I said earlier, this proposed bill is quite simple: It creates a level playing field for each of the State's ports by removing the penalties clause in the Newcastle port commitment deed. It does not impact on any other part of the Newcastle deed. It simply removes a requirement that the Port of Newcastle pay a penalty to its competitor—albeit via a middleman, being the State Government—for every container it handles above the current cap. It is a fair and balanced outcome that will have all three of the State's major ports competing under the same rules.

Let me be clear: This competition does not just bring benefits to those economies north of Sydney; it will benefit the entire State. For example, importers and exporters in western Sydney would be given a choice in their container shipping. I am advised the increased competition alone could lower costs to those businesses in western Sydney by as much as \$40 million a year by 2026. This bill does not address the question of how NSW Ports will be compensated. I know that is a valid concern held by many members. This bill leaves to the discretion of the Government whether to negotiate a settlement of the equivalent deed of NSW Ports or negotiate an alternative option. I say to those members that there are options that do not involve a one-off large compensation payment. There are options that do not have to cost taxpayers anything. By the way, getting out of this deal now is going to be a cheaper option for taxpayers, our agribusinesses, our exporters and importers and, indeed, this State. The world has changed quite significantly since those deeds were signed a decade ago. What might have seemed fair then—even though it certainly was not—has not worked out well.

While I stand in this Chamber, backed by the likes of the ACCC and the Productivity Commission, and outline all the problems and the billions of dollars that this deed is costing New South Wales, I ask members to think about how much worse it is going to be while we remain straitjacketed in the same bad deal for the next 43 years. Let me detail some of the impacts that the current arrangements are having right across New South Wales, particularly in the Hunter and northern parts of the State. Members of this House might be surprised to learn that vast numbers of this State's primary producers are now shipping their produce overseas through the Port of Brisbane because of logistical bottlenecks at Port Botany and the cost of going through Port Botany or Newcastle. I know the member for Northern Tablelands knows that very well.

I encourage members, particularly those in the city and the State's south, to listen to the New South Wales farmers in the north, the State's primary producers, and the State's major manufacturers in the north and north-west, who say they are having to negotiate costly bottlenecks and significant logistical challenges in getting their products to export markets because they cannot ship through Newcastle without bearing extra costs imposed on the Port of Newcastle. Let those people tell you about the extraordinary cost of sea freight, which has skyrocketed sixfold since the start of the pandemic. The member for Northern Tablelands will understand this. The equivalent of a Big Mac—I know he eats a lot of them—

Mr Adam Marshall: Love them.

Mr GREG PIPER: —has jumped from \$6 to \$36 in a couple of years. That is what they are facing right now. Members can add to that the cost of logistical challenges in the New South Wales freight rail system and supply chains and, of course, the penalties associated with shipping through Newcastle. Ask Walgett grain farmer Ed Collis, who last year exported chickpeas through Gladstone, in Central Queensland, because it was cheaper than going out through Newcastle and Port Botany. He can get chickpeas from Walgett to Gladstone for about \$130 a tonne, but going through Newcastle would currently cost \$200 a tonne despite Gladstone being almost twice the distance from Walgett than Newcastle. It is an extraordinary and ridiculous situation.

We must put Newcastle and any other competitor on a level playing field before we can even think about getting the level of investment needed in port facilities and supply chains in the northern half of the State. I hasten to add that these logistical challenges cannot be resolved at Botany or Kembla because of existing traffic issues, population density and other congestion and restrictions. Only when we have a level playing field will we see things improve for grain farmers and exporters, and a lowering of the exorbitant cost of getting produce to international markets.

If we take out the container penalties in Newcastle, a farmer from the State's north-west would still save an additional \$16 to \$22 per tonne by shipping out of Newcastle instead of Brisbane if the facilities were in place. That equates to about \$3 billion in savings over the next 30 years for those farmers alone. It would decrease freight travel distances by 40 per cent, create thousands of new jobs in areas where they are desperately needed and generate about \$800 million in additional exports every year. It works the same on the flip side. Containers coming into New South Wales and destined for the State's north coast come in largely through Botany. That puts more freight on the northern rail line and adds more cost to the importers or consumers at the other end.

The fix starts right here with this bill. We must unshackle the port of Newcastle from a lazy deal that is good for no-one except the shareholders in New South Wales ports and their monopoly at Botany and Kembla. Our primary producers and exporters and the taxpayers of this State cannot remain shackled to the terms of this questionable deal for another 43 years. It was a bad deal and it would be far cheaper to get out of it now than face the restraints, losses and limitations that will cost us billions over that next 43 years. I believe there are very few members of this House who would not agree that the deals done back in 2013 and 2014 were genuinely deficient and anti-competitive.

On that note, I acknowledge the work that the member for Northern Tablelands and the member for Newcastle have done in this area over the years. I also acknowledge the member for Upper Hunter, who clearly

understands the impacts the current deed is having on his constituency. This was a rotten deal when it was done. It stands as a rotten deal today. But this Government can turn it around. This bill will do so for the Government if it will not do so itself. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

Visitors

VISITORS

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I acknowledge and welcome our guests in the public gallery, who have been in Parliament this morning for the Healthy Homes for Renters briefing and I understand are here to hear the debate on the next item of business.

Bills

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT (PROHIBITING NO GROUNDS EVICTIONS) BILL 2022

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Jenny Leong, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (13:32): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Today on behalf of The Greens I am introducing the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Prohibiting No Grounds Evictions) Bill 2022 to finally put an end to unfair no-grounds evictions in New South Wales. New South Wales is in a rental crisis that is worsening by the day. Every single day, renters are being hit with massive rent increases. They are too fearful to negotiate or ask for basic repairs because of the constant threat of being evicted. The rental vacancy rate is at record lows and rents have skyrocketed up to 40 per cent this year in some Sydney suburbs and as much as 30 per cent in regional New South Wales. Renters in this State are desperately in need of security. They need stability and they need urgent rent relief right now. With the bill before us in the Chamber, we could deliver all of that by Christmas.

Forget the cost of lettuce. The cost of rent is by far the most significant expense in people's weekly budget. The number of households experiencing moderate or severe rental stress is on the rise. The latest census data shows that a third of renters are in rental distress. This means they are paying 30 per cent or more of their household income on rent every week. Rising food and energy costs pale in comparison with the pointy end of this cost-of-living crisis. A recent report commissioned by Housing All Australians warns that more than two million lower income rental households will be in serious housing stress by 2051.

We know that the current no-grounds eviction provisions, which allow landlords to evict tenants at the end of a lease or during a lease with no reason whatsoever, are a key driver of this problem. Currently, tenants in New South Wales who meet all of their responsibilities and pay their rent on time can be evicted at the end of their lease without any reason. Tenants on an ongoing periodic agreement face even more insecurity. They can be asked to vacate the property with just 90 days' notice, again without the landlord having to give any reason. If a landlord believes that they can get more rent from a new tenant, they can simply terminate the lease of the existing tenant with no-grounds and no good reason. We are seeing this play out in real time in regional communities as Sydney's worsening unaffordability crisis is driving people from the city into the regions and causing chaos in the housing affordability crisis in the regions.

A recent report commissioned by the rental review site Rent Rabbit found that 20 New South Wales regional communities are deeply experiencing the rental crisis, with tenants in severe rental stress. Communities from Port Macquarie to Narooma, Swansea, Wagga Wagga, Tamworth and Tweed have rising rents and low vacancy rates. No-grounds evictions are driving and increasing this crisis because landlords know that they can just boot out tenants for city renters who they know will pay more because it will seem like less rent compared with what they had been paying in the city.

All of this cost comes at a great price to our society and our community. Many New South Wales renters do not know where they will be living from year to year or, in some cases, from month to month. This instability creates a huge amount of stress, particularly for children who are forced to move schools, elderly people or people who rely on local health and support services. It prevents renters from being able to put down their roots in their neighbourhoods and communities and contribute to our society. The Tenants' Union estimates that evictions cost the average renter more than \$4,000 and that up to 30 per cent of renters will face an eviction through no fault of

their own. The risk of eviction, particularly into homelessness, is especially high for people who are experiencing personal crises or other stressors.

The Greens recognise that in certain circumstances it is reasonable for a landlord to terminate a rental agreement. Contrary to what some on the other side may say and suggest to me at times in this Chamber, we recognise that there are cases which would have completely legitimate and reasonable grounds for a tenant to be evicted. The bill prescribes those genuine grounds and sets them out quite clearly. The first of those grounds is that the landlord themselves or a close family member of the landlord intends to live in the property for more than 12 months. The second of those would be that the landlord intends to carry out renovations or repairs that will make the property uninhabitable for a period of more than four weeks and has ensured that all the necessary permits and approvals have been acquired. The third would be that the premises would be used in a way or kept in a state that it cannot be used as a residence for at least six months. The fourth would allow any other grounds prescribed by regulations set out by the Minister.

The reason for that is because we know that there is always a risk that when we bring a crossbench bill to this Chamber that people will want to say, "What about this bit? What about that bit?" and say we have not consulted on these grounds. What we are saying is the urgency to act on this crisis and pass this bill before Christmas means that we want to give the power to the Minister to be able to set in regulations additional grounds, if required. If any member of this place is hearing the reasonable grounds that we are putting forward and wishes to advocate for other grounds to be included, there will be the space and opportunity to do that, but that can be done at a time after we have acted in response to the urgency of the crisis renters across the State are facing.

Those are the grounds set out under this bill that would be considered reasonable to terminate a lease. This bill would prevent unfair no-grounds evictions taking place. We know right now across this State of New South Wales, there are a whole lot of very unreasonable ways that landlords are kicking tenants out. It is not reasonable for a tenant to be kicked out of their home because they attempted to negotiate with the landlord or agent about the cost of their rent rise or dared to question the idea that they were subjected to a rent increase. That is absolutely unreasonable for a tenant who has requested essential repairs and maintenance because of a massive hole leaking water into their bedroom and onto their bed, or because their entire study is covered in mould from a damp issue or because their oven does not work. It is unacceptable for tenants who make requests for basic maintenance repairs to not do so because they are fearful of eviction as a result of making that maintenance request.

It is unreasonable for a landlord or real estate agent to put off repairs knowing they can wait until the lease expires, evict the tenants, raise the rent and get a new tenant in—and then start that process again. They know the rental market is so hot right now that they can kick someone out at the end of their lease, bump up the rent another \$30 a week to make more money and then do the same in six or 12 months' time. Those are not reasonable grounds for someone to be kicked out of their home, which could force a child to move schools or an elderly person to find a new GP. Those are not reasonable grounds to subject renters to exorbitant costs of moving every six to 12 months.

Those are not hypothetical examples and no member in the Chamber can ignore those stories. Once upon a time they may have been stories in the heart of Newtown, in which 50 per cent of people rent, but those stories are being covered each day in *The Daily Telegraph* and other Murdoch press. Those stories are as real and live in northern, western and southern New South Wales as they are in Erskineville, St Peters or Darlington. Everyone across the State may experience the housing crisis and members of Parliament have the opportunity to make a change to offer security to everyone before the year's end.

The other key provision in the bill provides remedies for tenants who are wrongfully evicted. New sections 85A and 85B make it a requirement for landlords to ensure that residential premises are used in accordance with the grounds on which an eviction is made, and empower the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal to compensate tenants if a landlord breaches the grounds of an eviction, including directing the landlord to use the property as per the grounds set out in the eviction, and/or reinstating a residential tenancies agreement to tenants who are wrongfully evicted, and/or paying compensation to a tenant to cover the costs associated with a wrongful eviction.

People who live in rental properties are not second-class citizens; they are families, children, individuals, retirees, students, migrants and young people. Those rental properties are their homes. Those people should be able to put down roots in a safe, secure and affordable house. They should be able to connect with their community without facing the ongoing stress and uncertainty of knowing that opening an envelope from the letterbox or an email could result in the uprooting of their entire family and life because a landlord wants to make an extra \$30 or does not want to fix their oven. We must recognise the two million people in New South Wales who face that stress every day. We should not be putting that stress on our communities, and we can act right now.

Housing affordability is worsening and home ownership rates are declining. Many people are renting for longer than ever before. Generations of people know that they will rent for their entire lives. It causes them stress knowing that they will be renting for their entire lives under that level of insecurity and lack of power. They do not know whether the place they call home now will be the place they call home in a couple of months. We must act on that. We have a moral obligation to resolve that issue. The 2021 census data tells us that over two million people rent in New South Wales in the private rental market. That is two million people who live with chronic insecurity and a power imbalance that have become features of renting in New South Wales. That balance must be tipped back and righted.

Introducing reasonable grounds to end unfair no-grounds evictions is the start to re-establishing that balance. It shows respect to those two million people in New South Wales. The issue is not and should not be controversial. Ending no-grounds evictions is a sensible and practical reform that the Tenants' Union of NSW has been pushing for years. In 2018 the Make Renting Fair campaign was backed and pushed for by a coalition of unions, social services, local councils and community legal centres, and the former Labor leader committed NSW Labor to that policy. Last week in question time Labor members interjected during an answer from the Premier, confirming that they also back ending no-grounds evictions. Even the Treasurer, then fair trading Minister Matt Kean, acknowledged that we need reform. In 2018 he said:

No grounds evictions, retaliatory evictions, all these things are currently undermining renters' rights in NSW.

It is time to get it done. We cannot wait until the next Parliament. We can provide renters with protection now. I acknowledge the Tenants' Union for its assistance and support in drafting the bill. I urge all members to seek a briefing from the union on the bill to understand why it is essential. I acknowledge in the gallery members of the Healthy Homes for Renters campaign. It is wonderful that they are unintentionally present in the gallery at the time of my second reading speech on the bill. I urge all members to look deeply at the bill. We could pass it before Christmas. The community needs the bill. At the end of this term of Parliament, members can come together and deliver for the two million renters who live in New South Wales. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.15 p.m.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I extend a warm welcome to the public gallery and Jubilee Room guests of the President of the Legislative Council from Down Syndrome NSW. They will now watch question time. I acknowledge that the President is currently in the Jubilee Room with a number of those guests sharing parliamentary knowledge. October is Down Syndrome Awareness Month. I thank all those involved in raising awareness of this important matter, including the President. I also welcome to the Chamber guests of the member for Gosford: Ana Rechberger, captain of St Joey's, East Gosford; and Sid Bezwada, captain of Gosford Selective High School.

I also welcome a guest of the member for North Shore, who is outside the Chamber. David Brady is the director of advocacy and engagement of The Shepherd Centre. He is here to see the new live captions in action. I am pleased that the new live captions are operating well and are being well received, particularly by those who are not able to hear proceedings in the way the rest of us can. I also welcome 43 year 10 students from All Saints College Maitland, St Peters Campus, who are guests of the member for Maitland. I welcome them all. Finally, I welcome my own guest in the gallery, Nick Farr-Jones, who is a former Australian rugby captain and also a constituent.

Announcements

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that the Premier's photographer has been authorised to take still photographs of question time today from the side doors and the members' doors.

Question Time

HEALTH POLICY

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (14:19): My question is directed to the Premier. Given that clinicians working at the John Hunter Hospital have written an open letter stating, "There is an inadequate bed capacity, inadequate critical care capacity and inadequate urgent theatre access", when will the Premier start listening to doctors and specialists on the front line and address the crisis in our State's hospitals?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:19): We do, and there is no question that when doctors have concerns, they should be raised. It is important that is done through the proper process, as always takes place. I understand from advice I have received from the health Minister that the process is going through the Medical Council. We know that the health system in New South Wales is by far the strongest in the country. Following a one-in-100-year pandemic we are seeing challenges across the nation in the health system. We have invested record amounts in the John Hunter Hospital.

This morning the Minister announced \$835 million for the John Hunter Hospital innovation precinct redevelopment. Multiplex has been appointed as the main works contractor on that redevelopment. That precinct is due for completion in 2026 and will include a seven-storey acute services building, emergency departments, more adult and paediatric critical care spaces, birthing suites, an inpatient maternity unit, a neonatal intensive care unit and a special care nursery. That \$835 million investment forms part of our \$11.9 billion health infrastructure package. There is record investment in hospitals across the State.

Mr Clayton Barr: That's capital, Dom. The complaint is about recurrent.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I will get to that. That is on top of over \$30 billion recurrent expenditure.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: As the Treasurer handed down in the budget, this Government is investing in 10,000 frontline health staff.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The Opposition sits there and plays politics when New South Wales, through the entire pandemic, has stood the strongest health system anywhere in the country, when waitlists are rampant and out of control in South Australia and when we are seeing the Victorian health system on code red. That is not happening in New South Wales where we have had the strongest investment than ever before in the history of this State.

HOME OWNERSHIP

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (14:22): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on how the Government is boosting home ownership to secure a brighter future for New South Wales?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:22): I thank the member for Holsworthy for her question because she knows the importance in her electorate of providing opportunity for young families across New South Wales to get their keys for the very first time. We know the problems are getting harder for people across our State to get their keys for the very first time. We also know that 37 per cent of individuals over 65 who are not home owners rely on social and community housing. That is why we have invested record amounts in housing affordability across our State. That is why this week we introduced our innovative, nation-leading shared equity legislation which, combined with our First Home Buyer Choice program, will make housing affordability achievable for people across New South Wales.

The SPEAKER: The member for Blacktown and the member for Gosford will remain silent.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The Treasurer knows that key workers, single parents and older singles will be able to have security of home ownership with a lower up-front deposit, a smaller loan with lower repayments, no lenders mortgage insurance and no interest on the Government's equity share in the property. Under the New South Wales Government's shared equity trial, we will have 3,000 available spots for two years designed for key workers, such as nurses, teachers and police officers, as well as singles over the age of 50 and single parents. There will be a minimum deposit of 2 per cent, and 50 per cent of these homes will be in none other than regional New South Wales. Our shared equity scheme is part of our 2022 Housing Package to make owning a property a reality for people across the State.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Yesterday we introduced the legislation for our first home buyers scheme of \$728 million. The investment the planning Minister is doing to co-fund and accelerate shovel-ready infrastructure projects will enable the construction of new homes, particularly in key regional areas. That is a \$300 million investment. A key focus for this Government is social and affordable housing. There will be upgrades to 15,800 social homes to improve the quality of properties and ensure that they are suitable for aging and less mobile residents. There will be 271 new and refurbished homes for key workers. It is measures like those that have helped around 40,000 people over the last year to get keys to their very first home. It is not a one-size-fits-all

approach. It is looking at a whole suite of measures—supply side and demand side. What we see from Labor is no ideas and no policies to help young people, singles and frontline key workers get access to the housing market. Labor should get out of the way of the approach that we on this side of the House are taking. [*Extension of time*]

Yesterday I raised my concerns about the Concord-Concord West - Rhodes branch having their motion on housing affordability removed from conference. Well, hold on, we have had a win: It is back on the agenda. I have got my delegate pass. I have fought for the Concord-Concord West - Rhodes branch and we are taking this fight all the way to the conference floor at town hall on Saturday. I stood up for them. I am fighting for their rights. I thought it was back, but is it? The motion on page 271 of the conference papers has been amended and something has been deleted. Aspects of the motion have been deleted. It has removed the following words:

Express support for the implementation of the tax to replace stamp duty and asking the party to reconsider its opposition to the proposed tax.

We are not going to accept this in the Concord-Concord West - Rhodes branch—no, we are not. The Drummoyne State Electoral Conference is taking this all the way on Saturday. We are standing up for our rights. We are not going to be silenced. We are not going to be censured. We are standing up for our branch members. It is a Ferguson branch. We are voting for—what is his name?—Cameron Murphy. We are voting for Cameron Murphy. But, no, we will not. We will vote for Rose. We are standing up for first home buyers, just like the Rhodes branch. [*Time expired.*]

HEALTH POLICY

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (14:28): My question is directed to the Premier. Given last week the Premier dismissed emergency department doctors who said that what was happening in an emergency department in western Sydney was "Third World", will he now listen to clinicians from John Hunter Hospital who say that every day as a result of inadequate resourcing they are forced to make decisions that "seriously compromise both immediate clinical care and longer health outcomes for patients"?

The SPEAKER: The member for Wakehurst will cease interjecting.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:28): As I said in the response to my last question—

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Minister, how many doctors?

Mr Brad Hazzard: Two thousand.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: There are 2,000 clinicians. There are 12 doctors who have an issue and raise concerns. We listen to those concerns. Obviously there will be concerns in a situation where there is a health system that has gone through a very difficult time during a 100-year pandemic.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: In relation to the question, the comments that were made by the clinician last week describing the New South Wales health system as "Third World" were incredibly unhelpful and untrue. On almost every single metric, the New South Wales health system leads the country. That has not happened by accident. That has happened because of the record investments we have put in as a government over time. In almost every single corner of the State, from the east to the west, from the north to the south, from metropolitan Sydney to regional New South Wales, there has been record investment, more hospitals being built than in our State's history. We have done that because we have managed money well. We did that during good times so, when the difficult times came during the pandemic, New South Wales was perfectly placed to respond the best that we could. That is why during the pandemic, unlike other States, we stayed more open and more free. We did not close our borders like Western Australia and lock people out because they had not invested in their health system.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: They did not invest in their health system. They have the worst health system in the country, hands down, whereas here in New South Wales our record investments in frontline workers—our nurses, doctors and allied health professionals—plus the record infrastructure hospital-building program, plus another close to \$12 billion investment over the next four years put New South in an incredibly strong position. That does not mean that there are not pressures on the system. When doctors or nurses have concerns, when clinicians raise issues, they are dealt with appropriately and they are listened to by the local health districts. The health Minister takes those concerns on board. To suggest that the health challenges that we are facing in New South Wales are somehow unique, when we have an entire nation under pressure when it comes to

the health system in this country, is playing politics with an issue that all Premiers are working on. In New South Wales we come to this issue from a position of strength compared with any other health system in the country.

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (14:31): I ask a supplementary question. Premier, given the number of clinicians from Hunter New England expressing concerns about the state of the New South Wales health system has gone from 12 to 45, does the Premier still reject their accounts that "the compromise to clinical care is now in a state that we can no longer ignore it, and it would be ethically wrong for us to stay silent"?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:32): As I said in my previous response, when doctors raise concerns, we take them on board and they are dealt with through an appropriate process.

Mr Chris Minns: You said, "There's only 12—what does it matter?"

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: No, I didn't. Go and read *Hansard*. I said that when doctors have concerns they are raised and we address them. There will always be different views in relation to this, but when I travel around the State and visit the doctors and nurses, in every hospital that I visit we have a world-leading health system in this State and it should not be talked down. Those opposite talk down a health system that has stayed incredibly strong during the pandemic and that has provided frontline health care to those people who need it. We were the first State during the pandemic to remove the non-urgent elective surgery backlog. Why? That is because of our record investment in the health system. There is a reason why other States are using hotels as hospitals and we are not seeing that in New South Wales. There is a reason why in South Australia, where the Labor Opposition ran a campaign on ramping, they are now seeing record ramping and we are not seeing that in New South Wales to anywhere near the level in other States.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: As somebody who sat in the National Cabinet during the pandemic, I saw every State's jurisdiction and the pressure on their health system. Even when we had more cases and more hospitalisations than any other State at that point in time, New South Wales had the most capacity in its health system than any other jurisdiction. They are facts. They are undisputed, and that is why New South Wales leads the way. Since coming to office in 2011, we inherited from the Opposition after they were in government a record closing of hospital beds across New South Wales, not because they lacked intent—they just did not have the financial acumen to actually deliver—whereas, on this side of the House, by managing our finances well and making the tough decisions, all opposed by members opposite, we have been able to put record amounts in the recurrent health budget. That is \$33 billion a year plus \$11.9 billion over the next four years in health capital expenditure. That is why New South Wales stands strong at the top of the pack when it comes to the health system in this country.

REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (14:35): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Police. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on what the Government is doing to support economic development in regional New South Wales?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (14:35): I thank the member for Clarence for his question. I think retirement is starting to look good for him. He is looking pretty sharp. I acknowledge the work that the member does in his community. He works tirelessly to ensure that the lives of the people in the Clarence electorate are better. I also acknowledge that recently I was joined by the Minister for Planning in the Upper Hunter. We announced our changes to agritourism, which is about supporting our farmers and vineyards in regional and rural parts of New South Wales. It is about cutting the red tape and allowing them to diversify their businesses and open them up for other causes. That means they can be used for farmstays, cafes, galleries, roadside stalls—

Mr Anthony Roberts: Glamping.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Glamping—as part of the changes that we have made. This is supporting our farming community. NSW Farmers was there and was very supportive of the changes being made by the Minister and the Government. So much activity is happening in regional New South Wales. It is booming. It is also creating business opportunities for people in our local communities. We also have a big bowl vision for regional New South Wales, which will ensure that young people can share in that vision as well. We want young people to be able to buy a house and get a job, and we want to make sure that regional and rural communities continue to be on the move. That is why we are ensuring that our investments are making things a reality.

We have special activation precincts across the State that are driving investment into regional areas. Recently I was in Parkes where I announced the very first business that is going into its special activation precinct. Masterpet, which comes from New Zealand, is making an \$80 million investment in Parkes and has already built

its factory on site. It will create 60 jobs within that local community. Masterpet can construct more buildings on site if it needs to expand in future. The other important factor is that a lot of the ingredients that Masterpet will use will be sourced within a 200-kilometre radius. That means it will work with our local farmers to ensure that another business and income is being provided to them. [*Extension of time*]

The mayor of Parkes is very supportive of our special activation precincts. We both toured the facility. The mayor of Parkes said:

This is the start of a new era for the region. The Special Activation Precinct will ensure that Parkes continues to boast a strong diverse economy and will create jobs and opportunities for the whole region ...

Another way of growing regional economies is supporting our farmers and producers as they work to reduce emissions. I have seen the approach that is being taken by the Labour Government in New Zealand. It is looking at taxing our farmers for agricultural emissions from 2025. That is a disgraceful act and an attack on our farming sector and farming community. They want to tax a cow and a sheep if they burp or if they break wind.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: You wanted to tax our farms.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I hear the member for Maitland, but the Labor Party wanted to put a tax on our tractors. They wanted to tax our hardworking farmers by putting a tax on them. I put on record today that the Liberals and The Nationals will not put a tax on our farmers. We will not be going with a methane tax.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: When Opposition members go to their conference this weekend, they should rule out a tax on our farmers. We have ruled it out. I note that the Federal Labor agricultural Minister has now turned around and said that he is going to rule it out, but they have not made any rules about the number of sheep or the number of cows that can actually be on somebody's property.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Again, Opposition members should rule it out and show us that they are not attacking our farmers.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Labor was against our Right to Farm Bill. Its members continually kick our farmers in the guts. They have a chance this weekend at their conference to deal with the things that are a real threat to economic development in this State. There are issues around biosecurity.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: There are issues that impact on economic development. At their conference, they should put rural sectors and regional New South Wales first.

FIRST HOMER BUYER CHOICE INITIATIVE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (14:40): My question is addressed to the Treasurer and Minister for Energy. Will the Treasurer update the House on how the Government's First Home Buyer Choice initiative will empower families and young people?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (14:41): I sure can. I thank the outstanding member for North Shore for her question. Never have the people of North Shore been represented by a better MP. That is because the member for North Shore believes in choice and in empowering young people to be able to choose between a high up-front stamp duty or a small annual fee.

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

Mr MATT KEAN: Who in this Chamber does not like choice? Miserable Minns. No-one hates choice more than miserable, miserly, mean Minns.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: The Treasurer knows that he should refer to members of this House by their title or their electorate.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order.

Mr MATT KEAN: I note the interjection from the member. It is Mr Miserable Minns, because no-one hates choice more than the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order: The Treasurer cannot defy an order that the Speaker has just made under Standing Order 75. He should be put on a call and told that he cannot do it.

The SPEAKER: I ask the Treasurer to resume in an appropriate way.

Mr MATT KEAN: I am talking about choice. The Government supports choice for young people to enter the housing market much sooner. No-one hates choice more than the Leader of the Opposition. Just ask the rank-and-file branch members who chose Jodi McKay to be their leader. Did he respect their choice? No.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

Mr MATT KEAN: Just ask the fearless corruption fighter, the member for Bankstown, who exercised her choice to speak out against corruption in the ALP. Did he respect her choice?

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Ron Hoenig: It is under Standing Order 129. He is not even generally relevant to the question asked by the member for North Shore.

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

Mr MATT KEAN: I am talking about choice. I am talking about the choice for people to be able to pay a large up-front stamp duty or a small annual fee to help them realise their dream of home ownership much sooner, shaving up to two years off the time it takes to save for a deposit.

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

Mr MATT KEAN: Did the Leader of the Opposition support the choice at the Concord West - Rhodes branch of the Labor Party to support first home buyers?

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

Mr MATT KEAN: Did he respect their choice? [*Extension of time*]

Just when we thought he could not crush any more people's choices, we found out that he has crushed the choice of the Sapphire Coast branch of the Labor Party to support first home buyers. In the conference paper—

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Michael Daley: My point of order is under Standing Order 73 and Standing Order 129.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr MATT KEAN: They have come out pleading with Miserable Minns and Spooky Mookhey to stop their scare campaign.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat. What is the member's point of order?

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. The Minister is also flouting your previous ruling about calling members by their correct title.

The SPEAKER: It is the wrong standing order, but I uphold the intent of what the member is trying to say.

Mr Greg Warren: He is not even being remotely relevant to the question asked by the member for North Shore.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will refer to members by their proper titles.

Mr MATT KEAN: The poor old member for Campbelltown—he has done the worst audition for the leadership we have ever seen. The Sapphire Coast branch of the Labor Party has put up a motion for conference tomorrow. It says, "Expressing support for the implementation of a land tax to replace stamp duty and asking the party to reconsider its opposition to the proposed tax." Does he support fair choice? No-one hates choice more than the Leader of the Opposition. But there is one choice that he likes when it comes to housing, and that is choosing how to spend half a million dollars on his home renovation—whether it is on a pool or a pool room. I have something that he could hang in the pool room. It is a framed copy of the Sapphire Coast branch members' motion for this weekend. It can go next to his beautiful photo of Huang Xiangmo and the holiday snaps from his junket to China. [*Time expired.*]

WAGGA WAGGA ELECTORATE FLOODING

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (14:46): My question is directed to the Minister for Lands and Water. Wagga Wagga has already experienced a flood event in August and received significant rainfall this year, and we are facing a third La Niña. In the Chamber on Tuesday the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience said that floodwaters will continue to be a threat for months. Noting this and the recent major rain and flooding now threatening the Wagga Wagga electorate, why was the Burrinjuck Dam allowed to reach greater than 97 per cent capacity just two weeks ago?

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing) (14:47): I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for his question and for his ongoing interest in this area. We have spoken many times. The member has rung on a number of occasions, alerting us and WaterNSW to impending challenges particularly with rainfall in his area and the impact that those floods have on downstream communities. There is no doubt that the wet weather across our State in the recent period is unparalleled. The State is completely saturated. It does not take much rain now for minor flood levels to cut roads, start to impact properties and put lives and property at risk. We are seeing our floods occur more frequently. Our dams are full. I think back to 2019 when we were in drought across the State, when we were bucketing water and wondering what the hell we were going to do about water restrictions. Where were we going to get our next supply of water from? Here we are; nearly every catchment in the State is flooded and every dam is overflowing. The Murrumbidgee Valley is no different.

At present, Burrinjuck Dam in the Yass Valley and Blowering Dam near Tumut are close to 100 per cent capacity, and downstream tributaries are running at very high levels. As the member knows, it has been a challenge in that valley for most of the year. Thankfully, outside of recent weeks, operators have managed to safely release water held in the storages when the downstream tributaries have had capacity. WaterNSW has been working on that closely over the past 12 months, to better monitor the impact that it will have on those downstream communities when it releases water and when it should do that. That sound management on many occasions has meant that storages have not spilled and downstream impacts have been significantly reduced. For example, in early August, noting the contribution of downstream tributaries, effective storage management by WaterNSW cut a flood peak in Gundagai effectively by half. It is really important to think about what WaterNSW does when it starts to pre-plan ahead of a flood event that is coming, and it is getting much better at doing that.

WaterNSW will carefully monitor and manage the levels of releases and look at storage levels before the rain forecast for later this week. Burrinjuck is currently discharging at a rate of 60 gigalitres per day now that downstream tributaries are reducing after the week's rain. Inflows continue at a rate of 43 gigalitres a day. The timing of the reduction releases from the dam will be based on Bureau of Meteorology information and regional modelling of downstream river flows. On 5 October Burrinjuck Dam was at 91.8 per cent as a result of the airspace releases, which helped to mitigate floods. *[Extension of time]*

To clarify, airspace means releasing some of that water to create some space in the dam for when the inflows come in so they can manage that water and control the outflows. On 5 October Burrinjuck Dam was at 98.1 per cent as a result of that airspace. Releases helped mitigate the flood impacts before the consecutive weekend flows, totalling 400 gigalitres. That was the equivalent of approximately 40 per cent of the dam's capacity. I am throwing numbers out here—90 gigalitres, 40 gigalitres, 50 gigalitres—like they are confetti. These are significant amounts of water. When you talk about 90 gigalitres, that is probably twice as much as most dams in regional New South Wales hold. These are significant rain events that are flowing into really large dams that are bursting at the seams. WaterNSW is managing that and doing its best. The amount of water that has been received is incredible.

Before I close, I thank the member for Wagga Wagga. The Government will continue to work with him to protect his downstream communities from loss of property and life. Dam operators are looking to release water, where possible, with continual rain events. We will continue to work with the member. I value his input and what he does on the ground to inform WaterNSW about how best to manage those dams to protect his communities.

SOCIAL HOUSING

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (14:51): My question is addressed to the Minister for Homes. Will the Minister update the House on how the New South Wales Government is delivering homes for people in need?

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove—Minister for Planning, and Minister for Homes) (14:52): I thank the member for Albury for his fantastic question. In fact, I could not have written a better question myself! The member for Albury knows that a social housing revolution is going on in New South Wales under the Perrottet-Toole Government. The Government will be spending over \$4.5 billion on social housing over the next four years. We are making a stronger and safer New South Wales, undertaking the largest social housing renewal

in the Commonwealth of Australia. It is a two-pronged approach: more homes for the vulnerable, and opportunities for jobs and training, making the builders of tomorrow.

The New South Wales social housing portfolio has increased by 8 per cent in the past 10 years. That is 4 per cent ahead of the country's total. In its \$2.8 billion housing package, the Government has set aside over \$550 million for new and upgraded social and Aboriginal homes across the entire State. We are investing \$300 million over the next four years to support vital upgrades to almost 16,000 of those homes, protecting around 455 homes from becoming unlettable and supporting around 900 construction services jobs. Some \$37 million is being invested in the Together Home program, which partners with 18 community housing providers to link rough sleepers with stable accommodation.

We are also making headway in closing the gap. We have invested \$150 million in the budget to deliver 200 new culturally appropriate homes for Aboriginal families, 260 significant upgrades to homes in regional areas like Menindee, Broken Hill, Coonamble and Cobar, as well as 4,440 climate resilience upgrades for Aboriginal homes. The delivery of these homes is also expected to create 700 construction-related jobs and at least 132 Aboriginal employments across regional and remote New South Wales.

Some \$68 million will also go towards the Strong Family, Strong Communities strategy to assist Aboriginal families in becoming home owners and Aboriginal students in completing tertiary studies. I am pleased to inform the House that for every million dollars invested in social housing, five new jobs are created, including one apprenticeship. In Coffs Harbour over the past 12 months the Land and Housing Corporation has invested about \$5 million on a range of social housing opportunities, with a view to deliver more. The Argyle Estate redevelopment will pave the way for hundreds of new homes, including both social and private housing, and bring more jobs and investment to Coffs Harbour. I am proud to be part of a government that is changing lives. *[Extension of time]*

Not too long ago I had the pleasure of heading to Peakhurst to mark the completion of another new multi-unit complex. The Peakhurst development is one of 12 projects from a \$35 million program that will give women safe and secure accommodation across Sydney. While I was there, I was fortunate enough to spend the morning with Connie, a woman who was left homeless and couch surfing after a particularly bad divorce. Connie is one of the many women supported by the Women's Housing Company to address homelessness in women over 55. I am proud that the Government is investing in the Core and Cluster program, with an extra \$430 million investment to deliver and operate 75 extra women's refuges, supporting women and children impacted by domestic violence. That is an example of the life-changing initiatives that are making New South Wales safer and more secure.

It is important to understand the hard work that the Government has done in managing the economy to ensure that there is enough money in the kitty to get us through the challenges of COVID-19 and to ensure that we are leading the country in delivering social and Aboriginal housing for the State's most vulnerable. As much as they would like to, members opposite cannot criticise the work the Government is doing because they can see that we are delivering for their communities. We are building new properties—

Mr Stephen Kamper: You're catching up.

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: Yes, we're catching up from the neglect of your Government. We are building new properties. Indeed, we are catching up. We are increasing the maintenance and looking after more people, which Labor failed to do. This side of the House cares and we follow through with action.

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

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS: Labor is out in the wilderness. The Liberals and The Nationals are making New South Wales a stronger and safer State.

The SPEAKER: I remind the member for Rockdale that he is on three calls. Yesterday the member was removed from the Chamber for two hours. I warn the member that if he continues interjecting today he will be removed from the Chamber overnight.

HEALTH POLICY

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (14:57): My question is directed to the Premier. Given the Minister for Health's response when presented with concerns about John Hunter Hospital was to admonish the doctors saying, "They have to recognise there is a process for raising issues," and given that moments ago you said there were 12 clinicians registering issues when in fact there were 45, is the Premier's head in the sand? Will the Premier continue to refuse to listen to frontline healthcare concerns?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:58): Whether it was one doctor, 12 doctors of 40 doctors, as I have said, the Government takes all concerns seriously. All concerns go through a proper process and are dealt with. As the Minister for Health quite rightly pointed out, whether it is today or whether it was a couple of weeks ago when the inquiry was on, issues are dealt with when they are raised. Unhelpful statements such as, "We have a Third World health system," which is completely wrong and untrue, should be called out as well. We must ensure that the public has information available to them and that there is competence in the health system, which is incredibly strong.

Mr Chris Minns: What about him telling them to go and work in the—

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will remain silent.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: That side of the House cannot be trusted when it comes to health care.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Ku-ring-gai to order for the first time. I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the first time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Not that long, the member for Wallsend, like all Labor members, was out there marching in the streets with the nurses calling for nurse-to-patient ratios.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: And then what happened? They backflipped. They were out there marching with them and then not supporting them. Even at the conference on Saturday over 50 branches of the Labor division are calling for Labor to back ratios. The recommendation is not to support but just to note. Well, we note that as well.

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

Ms Sophie Cotsis: I am on the committee. That is the draft from a month ago.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The member for Canterbury says she is on the committee. There she is.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Anyway how many motions do you think the Kogarah branch has brought forward to the conference on the weekend?

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

Ms Anna Watson: Point of order—

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Zero.

Ms Anna Watson: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. How is this in any way relevant to the question that the member for Wallsend asked? It is not anywhere near the question.

The SPEAKER: Given the breadth of the question, I am allowing the Premier some latitude. The member for Shellharbour will resume her seat.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The Kogarah branch has brought forward zero motions—not one. It takes its lead from the local member. When it comes to health care, the Opposition shut down hospitals and hospital beds when it was in government. This side of the House has invested record amounts. When there are challenges in the health system, the Liberals and The Nationals are the only ones to be trusted.

HOUSING SUPPLY

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (15:01): My question is addressed to the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is supporting local councils to fast-track approvals to deliver more housing for our growing and diverse population?

The SPEAKER: That question was directed to the wrong portfolio. Would the member like to redirect or rephrase his question?

FLOOD RECOVERY AND HOUSING

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (15:02): My question is addressed to the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery. Will the Minister update the House on the rebuild on the Northern Rivers community recovery?

The SPEAKER: I have given the member for Rockdale and the member for Tweed some leeway this week, but I ask members to get their questions right.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery) (15:02): That question is within my remit. I thank the member for Tweed for his question and acknowledge his continued advocacy on behalf of his electorate and the Northern Rivers. I also acknowledge the member for Ballina, who is in the Chamber today, and the member for Clarence for continually attending our weekly flood recovery meetings, which gives us an opportunity to brief them on what is going on. As the member for Tweed knows, housing is one of our biggest challenges in the flood recovery effort. We are working day and night to provide medium-term housing solutions as well as long term. We are in the process of establishing temporary housing sites or pod villages, as they are sometimes known, right across the Northern Rivers. Two sites are now housing many residents and a further two are coming online very shortly.

One that is up and going is at Wollongbar, which is now providing safe and secure accommodation with more than 100 individual dwellings, with the capacity for more than 300 people. Another one is at Pottsville, which is in the electorate of the member for Tweed. That site contains more than 30 caravans, with capacity to house more than 70 residents. One of those residents is 68-year-old Heather Emmet, who described this new home as like having a lovely warm blanket put around her. She also spoke of her absolute relief at knowing she didn't have to find somewhere to live for the next day or next week after months of couch-surfing.

In the coming days, we will begin handing over keys to residents at the temporary housing site at the Southern Cross University campus in Lismore. I thank them for working with us on this project. It has been wonderful. Once the site is fully operational, it will house more than 200 people. Our ambitious program of standing up entire villages with essential services and all the wraparound support for people to live in for the next two to three years is as unprecedented as the flooding event itself that we saw in February and March. Each site has had its challenges, but we continue to make progress. We are determined to get them all built so that we can provide a medium-term housing solution to the over 1,000 people still living in emergency accommodation. It is important that we provide this safe and secure housing. It has never been done on a scale of this nature before. It even dwarfs the pod housing program that we rolled out in the wake of the catastrophic Black Summer bushfire season of 2019-20.

Mr Geoff Provest: I seek further information from the Minister.

The SPEAKER: I will grant an extension of two minutes. There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. This is an important topic.

Ms STEPH COOKE: We have promised the communities of the Northern Rivers to meet the need of medium-term housing. As the Minister for Flood Recovery and with the full support of this Government, I am working to do that every day, despite all the challenges that we continue to experience in this space.

HEALTH POLICY

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (15:06): My question is directed to the Premier. Given one in every eight patients presenting at the John Hunter Hospital emergency department left without being treated, and given the warnings from not 12 but 45 clinicians at John Hunter Hospital of the dire state of the New South Wales health system, does the Premier still deny there is a crisis in our hospitals?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:07): It is the same question asked six different ways. As every leader across the country is aware, there is pressure on every State health system. There are pressures on the health system in circumstances where many people today across the country cannot access a GP. In fact, I was in Wyong with the regional health Minister last week to open the over \$200 million extension of Wyong hospital.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Speaking to the doctors at the hospital—

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: One of the things they raised with me was that it takes, on average, six weeks for somebody in the Wyong area to access a GP. What happens when people cannot—

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: The point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. I know very well about the wait times for GPs. I live it.

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough. The member for Swansea will resume her seat.

[Interruption]

The SPEAKER: The member for Swansea will resume her seat. The Premier is being relevant. The Premier will continue.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I was giving the member an education. It takes six weeks to access a GP. What happens then? There is more and more pressure on the public health system in our emergency departments from people who cannot access a GP or who cannot afford a GP because bulk billing rates are declining. It is taking longer—

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. If the Premier—

The SPEAKER: The member for Swansea will resume her seat. I place the member for Swansea on two calls to order.

[Interruption]

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Swansea to order for the third time. The Premier will continue. I remind the member for Swansea that she is on three calls to order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: In New South Wales we are focused on the integration of the public health system towards the primary care network. That is why, along with the Victorian Premier, we announced 25 urgent care clinics—25 in New South Wales and 25 in Victoria. Whilst it is outside our responsibility, it is to ease pressure on the public health system. Even through all of that, when it comes to pressure on the New South Wales public health system, it is much lower than anywhere else in the country because of the investments that we have made. Those are the facts. Through the federation we are working together to achieve substantial change to have a much more integrated network of primary care and the public health system. The Opposition should work constructively on this issue—like other Labor Premiers are working constructively—rather than politicising it.

WESTERN SYDNEY TRANSPORT NETWORK

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (15:10): My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport, Minister for Veterans, and Minister for Western Sydney. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is delivering a world-class transport network for the people of western Sydney?

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT (Baulkham Hills—Minister for Transport, Minister for Veterans, and Minister for Western Sydney) (15:10): Thank God we have a fantastic advocate and member for Seven Hills. Thank God we have someone who cares about transport in western Sydney, because if it was up to those opposite and their union mates, we would be getting a Cobb & Co coach to Parramatta and tall ships to Manly. That is what we would be using to travel in New South Wales because those opposite have no idea how to introduce a world-class transport network. But, as the member for Seven Hills has quite rightly identified, we have one in this State and it is thanks to the Premier of New South Wales. Let me inform the House and those in the public gallery of some facts that are not disputed. Only recently we upgraded the Clarendon train line—in the Premier's former electorate—as part of the \$2.2 billion Transport Access Program.

There are transformational mega projects like the \$11 billion Western Sydney Airport metro line, which is fantastic. I also highlight the fact that the Premier and I kicked off construction for the new Bradfield City, which will provide more than 17,000 jobs. That is what we are doing in New South Wales. We are building \$12 billion worth of investment to double the capacity on the Sydney Metro West between Greater Parramatta and the CBD—no Cobb & Co for us. The people of western Sydney will be on that wonderful Metro West.

The SPEAKER: The member for Rockdale is on his final warning.

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: In doing that, we are creating 10,000 direct jobs and 70,000 indirect jobs. An investment of \$2.87 billion will go towards stage one of the Parramatta Light Rail. What a fantastic light rail that will be, with 100 per cent of the tracks laid. I have some very—

Mr Michael Daley: You said that about our light rail.

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

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: I am not responding to the Grand Wizard from Maroubra. I will withhold my counsel.

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

Mr DAVID ELLIOTT: We have committed to a \$602 million investment for the people of western Sydney to connect stage two of the Parramatta Light Rail to stage one. Since this Government was elected, we have provided 13,000 commuter car spaces across Sydney, and Edmondson Park North Commuter Car Park has 900 new spaces. Only the New South Wales Coalition can deliver for western Sydney, and the member for Seven Hills knows that for a fact.

The SPEAKER: I think the member for Wollongong owes the member for Maroubra a beer. I call the member for Canterbury.

Mr Michael Daley: We're not allowed, Speaker! Make sure that goes in *Hansard*.

HEALTH POLICY

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (15:14): My question is directed to the Minister for Health. Given that when members of the healthcare workforce raise concerns with the Minister, he tells them there is a process for raising issues and they are doing it wrong, he tells them to go and work in the Third World, he calls them ridiculous, he calls their claims ridiculous and he denies there is any issue at all, is it an official policy of the New South Wales Government to ignore or reject anyone raising legitimate concerns?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health) (15:14): You actually know that is a silly question but you have asked it.

Ms Sophie Cotsis: It is not a silly question.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: You have had your bit. I sat down and let you do it quietly. You also know that when you ask me—

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

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

Mr Ron Hoenig: I ask that the Minister direct his comments through the Chair and not talk straight across the table.

[*Members interjected.*]

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister will direct his comments through the Chair. However, if Opposition members are going to take a point of order in the first 12 seconds of the Minister's answer while they are making interjections, I will not respond sympathetically in future. The Minister has the call.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The member knows, as do all members on the Opposition front bench and across that side of the Chamber, that if there is any issue to do with Health they can come to my office and I will sort it out.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister is answering the question. Opposition members will listen to the answer.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: That includes, I might add, the member for Canterbury, who I think quite properly has advocated for Canterbury Hospital in her electorate. I have visited the hospital with her and spoken to practitioners. As the Premier has said, we have been through the worst of times. It is nearly three years since COVID first hit us. The doctors, nurses, cleaning staff, security staff and everybody in hospitals are under pressure, tired and exhausted—as I think pretty well everybody in this place is—due to COVID. Members would understand and expect that of 160,000 health staff—the biggest public sector in the entire country—there will be a small number who have concerns from time to time, and it is proper that they are able to raise those concerns. However, there are processes that allow them to do so.

In the particular case that has motivated the excitement on the other side of the Chamber today, it was unfortunate that the process was ignored. I am not even going to waste my time now because it is just silly stuff, but I have got letters here in my hand from the co-chairs of the Medical Staff Council pointing out that there are processes and that these particular doctors have gone outside those processes. They tried to get it through the Medical Staff Council, but the majority of the council did not agree with them. Does that mean that their views are not relevant? No, of course they are relevant. If those doctors wanted to come and talk to me, as many other doctors have in my nearly six years as health Minister, I would talk to them. Finally, I say that this is just a bit juvenile. It is a bit transparent and a bit silly. Every other health Minister—

Mr Chris Minns: Forty-five doctors signed a public letter. That is not irrelevant.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will remain silent. I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the second time.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: Last week I was with every other Labor health Minister in the country. They all acknowledge that our health system is by far and away the best in Australia and is world class. Mr Minns, on the other hand, who is interjecting so I will direct this to him, spent 40 seconds at St George Hospital and one minute at Blacktown Hospital and thinks he is an expert.

Ms Sophie Cotsis: Point of order—

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

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: He has not even been to John Hunter Hospital. I tell you what, he knows nothing about Health—

Ms Sophie Cotsis: I ask the Minister to answer the question. Is it official government policy—

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: —except opportunism and having a go.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member for Canterbury will resume her seat.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: This is the health system that saved New South Wales. If those opposite were in charge, we would not have been in as good a position.

SENIORS SUPPORT

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (15:18): My question is addressed to the Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors. Will the Minister update the House on how the Liberal-Nationals Government is boosting household budgets for seniors across New South Wales?

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley—Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Seniors) (15:19): I thank the energetic member for Camden for his question. Seniors have worked incredibly hard and made many sacrifices to enable us to have the great State we do today. That is why the Government's priority is to ensure that seniors in New South Wales are able to enjoy their lives and the lifestyle that they helped build. One of the ways we are ensuring this is by providing rebates to seniors of all backgrounds, including pensioners and self-funded retirees.

Over 70 rebates are available, which have been made possible only thanks to our Government's strong financial management. These savings span right across government, from council rebates to the gold Opal card, which provides unlimited travel across Greater Sydney for no more than \$2.50 a day. It is available to more than 1.8 million Seniors Card holders in New South Wales. This is unlike those opposite. When it comes to helping seniors across New South Wales, Labor has no plan. The people of New South Wales do not need to wait until closer to the election; they need only to look back at Labor's track record to see it does not have a plan when it comes to energy bill relief for our seniors.

Mr Paul Scully: You've got 12 years of policies and you can't come up with one policy.

Mr MARK COURE: You might learn something here. In 2019 Labor wanted to cut, axe and burn our Government's \$200 electricity rebate for self-funded retirees.

The SPEAKER: Order! 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 MARK COURE: Unlike Labor, we have a strong plan to boost the budgets of our seniors. The people of New South Wales know our track record and the recent budget builds on it, with the introduction of the Energy Bill Buster program. This is a fantastic program that provides choice—there is a lot of choice being provided this week in question time—to our seniors on how they save money on their energy bills. This program allows pensioners to swap out 10 years of energy rebates for a free solar system or energy-efficient appliances up to the value of \$4,000. Since it was launched recently, the program has already received over 4,000 applications and already installed more than 1,500 solar systems. This program is going to deliver ongoing energy savings of up to \$600 a year, providing that much-needed boost to the household budget. We are getting on with the job of helping our seniors. We have a proven record of delivering savings for seniors and making a real difference across New South Wales.

ICAC OPERATION ECLIPSE RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (15:22): My question is directed to the Premier. Considering his stated support for the recommendations of the Independent Commission Against Corruption's Operation Eclipse report on lobbying regulation and practices, will the Government enact these recommendations before the 2023 New South Wales State election?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:22): I thank the member for Balmain for his question. I appreciate his strong interest in ensuring that we have the highest integrity and transparency in government, unlike those opposite. Members know our Government's record on integrity. In just one year we have instituted a comprehensive review of the administration of grants. As a result, we have updated the grants guide, which has led to significant reforms of the way in which the Government administers grants. This review, and the Government's implementation, have already been commended by the ICAC in its own work grants. We have led the way on reform of workplace culture with the Goward review, as a result of which we have implemented mandatory Respect at Work training at the ministerial level while working closely with the Parliament Advisory Group and Parliamentary Executive Group to support their ongoing response to the Broderick review.

In relation to integrity agency funding, we have introduced a new model that retains the agencies in the Department of Premier and Cabinet cluster but removes them from the usual financial practices of the cluster. There has been a re-baselining of agency funding for 2022-23 and there will be no more post-appropriation efficiency dividends. The relevant statutory parliamentary committee will receive notification of Expenditure Review Committee decisions after they have been made. The new model will also see a better method of contingency funding for those agencies that require additional funding. In addition to the changes to the funding model, this Government has delivered record funding to the integrity agencies—

Mr Jamie Parker: What about lobbying?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I am getting there; just bear with me. We passed the Public Interest Disclosure Act 2022, offering increased protections to whistleblowers, which I know is an important reform that the member for Balmain is championing and interested in. We have done that. As the member would know, the New South Wales Government supports all the recommendations directed to the Government in response to the ICAC report on lobbying regulation and practices. When those changes are implemented, we will have the strongest lobbying integrity measures in the country.

I advise the member that the Government has already begun working on implementation and is currently consulting—which is important—the NSW Electoral Commission on the 15 recommendations. We have to consult with the NSW Electoral Commission to enable and ensure that we have practical implementation done appropriately because the NSW Electoral Commissioner is the lobbying regulator. We are committed and we are working through those issues. As the member knows, integrity is important in government. Yesterday in the upper House, Labor voted against integrity and transparency, refusing to release their diaries, unlike Government members. That is okay because I found a way around it. I am doing it by way of regulation anyway, so none of their diaries will be spared under this new change— [*Time expired.*]

EVEREST CARNIVAL

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (15:26): My question is addressed to the Minister for Racing. Will the Minister update the House on how the Everest Carnival, supported by the New South Wales Government, will support jobs in New South Wales?

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing) (15:26): Set, lights on, waiting for the member for Terrigal. I am just getting my notes ready at the start of the 2022 Everest. Nature Strip—

[*Opposition members interjected.*]

The SPEAKER: I suggest the member for Rockdale remove himself from the Chamber before I do.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: Late scratching, on vet's advice. He's slow to hoof. Just waiting now. The starter is back at his rostrum; just waiting for Lupo to go up to the serjeant's chair. I thank the member for Terrigal for his question. The Everest spring racing carnival in Sydney will create 30,000 associated jobs across New South Wales. The jobs that it creates—from strappers to trainers, vets, track riders, drivers, curators and stable hands—are really important. Unlike many industries, the racing industry supports people across the State. Whether someone is out at Bourke or Brewarrina, in Bankstown, Maroubra or Gosford, or wherever people are in New South Wales, they are—

Mr Mark Speakman: Or Cronulla.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: Or Cronulla.

Mr Paul Toole: Or Bathurst.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: Or Bathurst. I feel like we are going everywhere. Stand by: Waiting for an update from Bathurst. There is a mixture of skills and very reliable, well-paying jobs. The vast majority of racing occurs outside metropolitan Sydney, where people are available to take part in an industry that is setting the

regional growth and economic development of our nation. It is driving our economy. Who would have thought just a few years ago that a horse race at Randwick would set the fashion agenda for the city of Sydney? We are getting shops, we are getting people—

Mr Anthony Roberts: What are you wearing?

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: Blue. It is a blue theme.

Mr Anthony Roberts: A blue frock?

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: A blue frock. Anybody can dress the way they want to dress; the Minister for Planning is going for a frock. But it does create jobs. We wish everybody going to the Everest on Saturday well—apart from members opposite, who are not going to the Everest. Which bright spark picked Saturday for the Labor conference? I will see the member for Maroubra at Everest. Chris, you gotta free 'em up, son. Let 'em go to the races. I know a few will be wearing their fascinators. We will see everyone at the Everest.

Documents

PARLIAMENTARY ETHICS ADVISER

Reports

The SPEAKER: I table the report of the Parliamentary Ethics Adviser for the year ended 30 June 2022. I order that the report be printed.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

The CLERK: I announce that the following paper petition signed by fewer than 500 persons has been lodged for presentation:

Connells Point Public School

Petition calling on the Department of Education to undertake upgrades to Connells Point Public School, received from **Mr Chris Minns**.

Community Recognition Statements

PENDLE HILL FOOTBALL CLUB

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (15:31): I acknowledge the Pendle Hill Football Club for the terrific work it does as a sporting club in the local community. At the end of the season I was at Binalong Park with the Premier to present the Pendle Hill Football Club committee with a grant for new soccer balls and sporting equipment. The Pendle Hill Football Club was established in 1966 and has been playing at Binalong Park, Toongabbie, ever since its founding. The club was formed and its first committee that same year had Bob Doherty as president, Henry Walters as vice-president, Shirley Doherty as secretary and Les Fields as treasurer. The club has grown to be one of the biggest clubs in the football association and recently celebrated its 50-year milestone in 2016. Its operation continues by dedicated community members who have a passion for the sport. I thank the current executive for their ongoing work and support of the club, including president Vanessa Carrett, vice-president Lucy Douglas, secretary Simon Lee and admin support officer Todd Douglas.

WESTERN SYDNEY WANDERERS GOALKEEPER LAWRENCE THOMAS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (15:32): I commend the efforts of Western Sydney Wanderers FC goalkeeper Lawrence Thomas. Lawrence is a fine representative for Western Sydney Wanderers and I had the honour to teach and coach Lawrence during my time at St Paul's Catholic College in Greystanes. Lawrence was an inspirational student, always kind and polite and a wonderful role model to those around him. In his position as goalkeeper for the Western Sydney Wanderers FC, Lawrence continues to be an inspiration to many fans of the club, particularly his young fans. I am sure that the late Mr Thomas Sr. would also be proud of his son's achievements. I wish Lawrence all the very best in his time with the Western Sydney Wanderers. Go the Wanderers!

CLUB PERSON OF THE YEAR AWARD WINNERS MICK AND LEA JAMES

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) (15:33): Despite flooding, COVID shutdowns and staff shortages, local clubs across New South Wales went above and beyond to support their local communities over the past year. Mick James, Chairman of West Pymble Bicentennial Club and his wife, Lea, are great examples of the importance of local clubs in the community. During

the lockdowns, Mick and Lea put in over 20 hours a week to help the club survive, with Mick delivering meals and puzzles to people's houses and Lea taking orders over the phone—something our family did on Thursday nights during lockdowns as we played trivia put on by the club. When the club was short-staffed, Mick and Lea stepped up to provide support with cooking, cleaning, fundraisers and much more. In recognition of their dedication to the club and the community, Mick and Lea won the Club Person of the Year Award as part of the 2022 New South Wales Clubs & Community Awards. Mick and Lea have gone above and beyond. I congratulate them on this well-deserved award and thank them for their tireless efforts over the past years.

KYOGLE SHOW

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (15:34): It was fantastic to be in Kyogle for the show on Saturday. After tough years with drought, bushfires, COVID and floods, it was wonderful to see the community out in force, enjoying the show. I thank Kyogle Show society president Matthew Painter, vice presidents Vicki Gordon and Amanda O'Reilly and secretary Lauren Schottelius, who also handles sponsorship and marketing. There were many displays, rides, food options and, of course, the usual competitions. There was something for everyone. I congratulate the winners at the show, including young woman Karrie Rogers, teen showgirl Pippa Kennedy, junior showgirl Mia Mackay, runner-up junior showgirl Charlotte Hogg, tiny tot Penelope Rixon, tiny tot runner-up Amelia Simpson, junior jackaroo Billy Kennedy, junior jackaroo runners-up Parker Kennedy and Danny Kennedy, and mini jackaroo Banjo Goldthorpe. I congratulate all entrants. They were adorable.

RACE WALKER ALLANAH PITCHER

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (15:35): I recognise the achievements of Terrigal local Allanah Pitcher, an incredibly talented young adult who has taken her race walking career global. The year 2022 marks Allanah's tenth as a race walker, which will likely be one of her most successful. After graduating with her HSC in 2021, Allanah has excelled and travelled internationally. She showed tenacity and spirit to place seventh at the 2022 World Cup Race Walking Team Championships in Oman. Off the back of that fantastic result, Allanah was one of 20 Australians to be selected to compete in the European tour. Allanah strode to victory in England, winning the under-23 English championships. She then competed in the AAI Games in Ireland, where she placed second in the three kilometre open event. On her return to England, Allanah won the five kilometre open English championship with a personal best time of 23 minutes and 39 seconds. Those are utterly excellent results. Allanah should be immensely proud. I know the Central Coast is very proud. I have no doubt that Allanah will also achieve her ultimate goal of representing Australia at the Commonwealth Games. We wish her all the best of luck for the future.

INTERCEPT TRAINING

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (15:36): I was honoured to attend the opening of the new Intercept Training safety centre at Tuggerah. Intercept Training Group has run job-ready training courses on the Central Coast and in Newcastle for more than 23 years. There has been an increase in demand for skilled construction workers in the region over the past year, which is one of the main reasons why they created the new construction-focused training centre. The centre has two learning classrooms in which to provide up-to-date training using industrial machinery and equipment. Intercept Training focuses on learning and best practice by providing a combination of classroom theory and practical industry experience. Courses include white card, enter and work in confined spaces, working safely at heights and forklift licences. Additional courses such as smoke hazards in confined spaces and harnessed abseiling will be offered next year. The warehouse is an excellent space in which to provide those courses to an exceptional level of service, all under one roof.

VIETNAM WAR COMMEMORATIONS

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (15:37): This year marked the sixtieth anniversary of Australia's entry into the Vietnam War and its fiftieth anniversary of its withdrawal from the war. In August I was privileged to mark the occasion by attending two memorial events held by the Honour Our Fallen group and the Southern Highlands Vietnam Veterans, Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Association at the Vietnam War Memorial in Settlers Park, Bowral. Attendees and I laid wreaths at the memorial to recognise the bravery and sacrifice of those who were killed, those who returned with physical and non-physical scars and current serving members of our Defence Force. I thank both hosts of the memorial service as well as guest speakers and musicians for a beautiful and touching service to commemorate our fallen soldiers. Lest we forget.

SUSAN ROSKELL TOY DRIVE

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (15:38): I acknowledge the annual toy and gift drive that was held in honour of the late Susan Roskell. Formerly known as the Calamity Toy Drive, the event is now in its seventh year. The drive was established to provide toys and gifts to children, parents and carers impacted by the effects of domestic and family violence, illness, injury, mental health and homelessness. Susan's son and Bulwarra resident

Todd Sheldon has made it his mission to ensure that as many disadvantaged children as possible wake up on Christmas Day with a smile on their face and a toy in their Christmas stocking. Todd's enthusiasm and hard work has ensured that the drive has grown from strength to strength. Since the first drive in 2016, donations have steadily increased. Over the past few years in excess of 20,000 toys and gifts have been donated by generous local community members and small businesses. My office has been a collection point in the past and will be again this year. I thank Todd for his ongoing commitment, compassion and dedication to ensuring that those in need in our community are provided with gifts in their times of struggle. Good on him for doing it in honour of his mother.

PADSTOW ROTARIAN KEN MCMILLAN

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (15:39): I congratulate Ken McMillan on his ninetieth birthday. Born in 1932, Ken has faithfully served Padstow Rotary. In fact in April next year he will chalk up 50 years of service. Ken's recent service has included facilitating a grant from Rotary to Padstow Community Care, whose service to our community is also outstanding. It did fantastic work throughout COVID. Even at 90 years of age, Ken has been helping as a live-in carer for a friend while her family organises an assessment for respite care. I thank Ken for his contribution to Rotary and our community. I was very happy to be able to celebrate Ken's birthday with him, his friends and his great colleagues in Rotary.

CANTERBURY CITY COMMUNITY CENTRE

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (15:39): Canterbury City Community Centre, known as the 4Cs, is a community hub where residents can engage in a range of activities and services. The 4Cs delivers services for seniors and training courses for young parents, and assists the most vulnerable in our community. In February 2021 my friend Esta Paschalidis-Chilas took on the role of CEO at the 4Cs. Taking on the role was no simple task as our community had entered one of the harshest lockdowns in the State and needed assistance more than ever. But that did not stop Esta from helping and caring for others. When the going got tough, Esta got going. She steered the ship through high tides and made sure she looked after our community. Esta has lived in the Canterbury area for over 50 years. She was a former Canterbury city councillor and worked for more than 30 years in the multicultural sector, public health, the advocacy sector as well as in government relations, policy and strategy. Though the dust has settled since the lockdowns, Esta still works hard with her team at the 4Cs to make sure that no-one is left behind. I thank her for everything she does for our community. I look forward to working with her and her team and seeing what the future holds under her leadership.

ILLAWARRA ACADEMY OF SPORT ATHLETE OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (15:41): I congratulate the 2022 Illawarra Academy of Sport Athlete of the Year award winners, including Keira Buckpitt, who won two prestigious awards. Keira was among 12 award winners. I congratulate them all on their hard work. They include Jack Gibson, Joshua Spark, Emerson McRea, Poppy Pollock, Sienna Clarke, Zali Schofield, Lauren Bancroft, Poppy Calder, Cruz McGuinness, Montana Doubell and Alexandria Smith. The community is incredibly proud of all of the hard work that Keira, in particular, has poured into her sport. Her passion and love for surfing will continue to take her far and wide. We will encourage her to keep smashing her goals in surfing. Keira's two awards are very well deserved. She has worked extremely hard over the years. Her 2022 campaign has reached a significant milestone with her awards as DRB Group Athlete of the Year and Lonestar Athlete of the Year. As part of those awards, Keira will receive a \$5,000 scholarship from DRB Group to further assist her development in the sport. What an incredible opportunity to help her keep achieving her goals.

SUP 11-CITY TOUR COMPETITOR DONNA-LOU NIXON

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (15:42): I congratulate Donna-Lou Nixon from Norah Head on completing the SUP 11-City Tour 2022, which was held on the beautiful canals of Friesland in the Netherlands. Donna-Lou finished seventh in the grand diva division for women aged 50 and over, paddling 220 kilometres over five days through Leeuwarden, Sloten, Workum, Franeker and Dokkum. It was Donna's first time competing in the tour. The tough conditions made for challenging stand-up paddleboarding with up to 45 kilometre headwinds and 70 kilometre gusts. Each day Donna had to finish within a certain time. She was blown from her board twice in the freezing cold and rain and had to pass under several bridges. No paddling on her knees was allowed, which made for the ultimate challenge. Donna was ecstatic on her daily achievements. She had great support from her husband, Mark Nixon. Together they shared boat accommodation with their lifelong friends. What a fantastic outcome from Donna. She put in a great effort and showed real determination to compete the SUP 11-City Tour.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS CAMPAIGNER AZAD ZAN

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (15:43): The struggle for basic freedoms and human rights continues in many parts of the world. I pay tribute to a Willoughby resident who is bravely championing women's rights in her homeland of Iran. I share her passion for fundamental freedoms. She goes by the name of Azad Zan, which is not

her real name and translates as "Free Woman". Azad is a Willoughby local who cares deeply about the oppression of women that has continued since the 1979 Iranian revolution. Azad notes that Iranian women have been subject to discrimination and arrest for offences as minor as not wearing the compulsory hijab correctly. Azad pointed to a recent case where a young woman was arrested and beaten by police for wearing her headscarf loosely. Tragically she died in hospital. Her death awakened a mass movement of men and women who protest under the banner "Woman, Life, Liberty". Azad is championing the cause and speaking up for the human rights of her Iranian sisters. I know she also speaks for many people in my local community. Dissenters to the Iranian regime are at risk of severe punishment. Azad Zari should be commended for her bravery as a voice for justice and freedom.

NORTH COAST NATIONAL LISMORE SHOW

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (15:44): I congratulate the North Coast National president, John Gibson, and the show committee for hosting the North Coast National Lismore Show this year. It has been at the heart of our community for the past 137 years. This year everyone is being invited to attend the community parade to recognise and thank those who stood in our time of need. This includes the tinnie army, the mud army and the sporting groups who helped in the recovery. They want them to join the parade that will also include crews of the Westpac Rescue Helicopter, the NSW Police Rescue, the SES, the Rural Fire Service, the VRA Volunteer Rescue and the 41st Battalion. They are offering a free gate, which is important this year, given everything that has happened, particularly in the Northern Rivers, particularly in Lismore. I hope there will be a big turnout next week when we have the show on for the three days.

BANGARRA DANCE COMPANY

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales) (15:45): I congratulate three Dubbo College students who have been chosen to learn from the internationally acclaimed Bangarra Dance Company in the lead-up to this year's Schools Spectacular. South Campus student Jobie Castledine, year 7, and Delroy Campus students Kynan Roworth, year 9, and Sarah Charlton, year 10, were selected to perform as part of the NSW Public Schools Aboriginal Dance Company after submitting video auditions. All three are currently rehearsing for the Schools Spectacular in November. They are also looking to the future. They are hoping that meeting teachers and performers from Bangarra could open doors for a career in the arts, and they would not be the first. Dubbo Ballet Studio alumnus Ella Havelka danced with Bangarra for three years before becoming the first Indigenous dancer with the Australian Ballet, and award-winning Bangarra dancer and Wiradjuri man Beau Dean Riley Smith was also born in Dubbo. I congratulate Jobie, Kynan and Sarah and wish them best of luck for the Schools Spectacular. I cannot wait to see what they do in future.

PENRITH PANTHERS

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith) (15:46): I take this opportunity to talk about the fabulous result of the Penrith Panthers in this year's grand final. It is the team's third grand final in a row and a back-to-back premiership for the mighty Penrith Panthers. What an absolutely fantastic result for all Panthers fans, but particularly for the Penrith community, to see this amazing team perform week in, week out. It has really lifted the spirits of the Penrith community. To win back to back was the icing on the cake. The wonderful playing group, led by Nathan Cleary and Isaah Yeo, is an amazing group of young men. They do a fantastic job in the community. Dylan Edwards won the Clive Churchill Medal with an absolutely outstanding performance. I cannot believe they did not give him a Kangaroo jersey. To the team off the field—Matt Cameron, Brian Fletcher and Peter Graham—we know winning starts off the field. The Penrith Panthers is a wonderful organisation. It represents the Penrith community with such pride. This year, we are absolutely the winners.

VISION 2020

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (15:47): I acknowledge the work of Vision 2020 in promoting World Sight Day, which celebrates the importance of regular eye tests and ensures that people are checking up. I thank all the members who got their eyes checked today. I know a few have worked out they need glasses. I thank Leanne Abbott in my office for her work in organising today's event.

MATER DEI WORKPLACE LEARNING PLACEMENTS

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (15:48): This is a fantastic opportunity to recognise a wonderful collaboration happening between Mater Dei School in Camden and Woolworths. Mater Dei's workplace learning placements offer their students and NextPath young adults a real opportunity to gain invaluable skills that provide a solid foundation for the students and young people involved. On behalf of the community and those involved, I thank Woolworths store manager of Camden, Teresa Nair. The framework and support carried out by Teresa ought to be recognised because it is an inspiring example of the kind of care and friendship extended to all in our

wonderful community. With heartfelt happiness, I hope that this collaboration continues and inspires others to continue to do the same. I trust that this relationship is beneficial to all involved. I again thank Teresa.

DOM BONDAR

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (15:49): I congratulate Dom Bondar of Illawong on receiving The Centre of Volunteering's 2022 Adult Volunteer of the Year Award for the southern Sydney region. Over the past five years, Dom has dedicated countless hours to protecting our local community through his volunteer service with the Rural Fire Service Illawong Brigade as a firefighter, community education coordinator and catering coordinator. During the past 12 months, Dom participated in 24 fire calls and invested over 400 volunteering hours with the brigade. Additionally, Dom regularly attends training, maintains essential equipment, coordinates community education events and has directed over 10 community safety videos. In 2019 Dom's selflessness and community mindedness saw him travel to northern New South Wales to attend several bushfires during one of the worst bushfire seasons in living memory. I take this opportunity to wholeheartedly thank Dom Bondar for his continued service to our community, and extend my congratulations on being recognised by The Centre for Volunteering.

FUNDRAISER LILY JAMES

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (15:50): I congratulate 11-year-old Lily James on her amazing effort raising money for sick children by participating in this year's Sydney's City2Surf run. Lily raised an incredible \$1,263 for the Starlight Children's Foundation, and I am proud to say she is a Hawkesbury resident. Her big heart and determined attitude are to be admired, and I am sure she is an inspiration to all athletes, both young and old, in Hawkesbury. It goes to show that even though someone may be young, they can still do incredible things if they put their mind to it. I understand Lily is intending to participate in the City2Surf again next year and will be raising money for Starlight Children's Foundation again. I say well done to Lily, and thank her for her kindness and generosity with her time, and for helping others.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AUSTRALIA AWARD WINNER SHAROMI DAYANAND

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (15:51): I congratulate Wagga Wagga City Council's environmental health coordinator, Sharomi Dayanand, who has been recognised with top honours for her excellence, dedication and professionalism by Environmental Health Australia. Ms Dayanand won the 2022 NSW Environmental Health Professional of the Year Award for her consistent efforts and career achievements since commencing her environmental health career with local government 16 years ago. She believes in improving environmental health standards and services to the community through advocacy, promotion and education. Alongside the council's environmental health team, Ms Dayanand has delivered innovative ideas and services that minimise risk to public health, protect the environment and contribute towards achieving safer outcomes in our community. According to Wagga Wagga City Council, Ms Dayanand's award highlights the preventative work undertaken by council's environmental health team on a daily basis in responding to a wide range of complex environmental and human health issues while providing a professional service to the community. I offer my congratulations to Ms Dayanand.

MILSON PRECINCT COMMUNITY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (15:52): I thank the Milson Precinct for inviting me to their recent community meeting and for their warm welcome. I always appreciate hearing the views of my constituents and listening to the feedback they have on the things that are important to their local community and their amenity. I heard from them on a range of issues spanning from the Sydney Harbour Bridge Cycleway project, local public transport and increasing access to local electric vehicle-charging infrastructure through to brush turkey management. I thank all precinct members who attended the community meeting, particularly those who shared feedback or had questions. I also want to thank precinct secretary, Estelle Blair, who works tirelessly to support the precinct and its members. I always endeavour to keep the community informed about local issues and, more importantly, to listen to them. It is particularly important because the New South Wales Government is delivering multiple essential infrastructure projects within the immediate area. I will continue to represent the views of my community, including the Milson Precinct residents, and fight to secure the best outcomes for our local community.

COFFS HARBOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (15:53): With the approach of National Carers Week, my thoughts turn to the many carers on the Coffs coast who are making life better for others. The Coffs Harbour Neighbourhood Centre is showing its appreciation by holding a free lunch for carers and family members who support someone who struggles with alcohol and/or drugs, and by welcoming them to meet, chat and eat on Tuesday 18 October from 12 noon. Bookings to join other carers at this lunch can be made on the Coffs Harbour Neighbourhood Centre website or by phoning 6648 3694. Di Woods, manager at the neighbourhood centre, says

the role of a carer can be rewarding but it is often very demanding—a sentiment we would all acknowledge. The Coffs Harbour Neighbourhood Centre provides opportunities for carers to connect, providing practical and emotional support to build the capacity, health and wellbeing of local carers. Their team is led by chairperson Roger Horton, secretary Louise Gillett, treasurer Paul Sekfy, and board members Jo Lawrence, Bronwyn Monaghan and Brian Bolt.

CLUBSNSW PREMIER'S WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL TOUR

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (15:54): I congratulate Menai High School student Kathleen Polson on her selection as one of six students to take part in the ClubsNSW Premier's World War II Memorial Tour, which departed Sydney on 21 July. To be considered for this trip of a lifetime, high school students were asked to submit a 1,000 word essay answering the question, "Are the lessons of World War II still relevant today?" Kathleen's essay spoke to the importance of today's youth continuing to have conversations about the noble sacrifices and commitment of our service men and women, and quoted the historian George Santayana who famously said:

Those who do not learn history are doomed to repeat it.

The 11-day tour provided Kathleen with the opportunity to visit World War II sites in Hiroshima and Pearl Harbour to learn about these defining moments in our history and the contributions and sacrifices made by those on the front line. I commend Kathleen for writing an insightful essay that led to her selection for this unique experience and extend my best wishes for the remainder of her studies.

EDUCATOR ANNA DICKINSON

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (15:55): I thank Loreto Kirribilli Principal Anna Dickinson for her many years of service to the school. Anna recently announced that she will be retiring after the 2023 school year. Anna has contributed significantly to the school community over her many years of service with her passion and dedication to improving educational outcomes for students. She nears completion of two five-year terms at Loreto, which follows 42 years of service to Catholic education. Loreto Kirribilli School Board Chair Sheila McGregor said:

Anna has upheld our Loreto mission and values and has brought them to life vigorously and thoughtfully. Her hallmark has been an inclusive environment that supports our students' personal development and aspirations.

Anna has seen the school through many transformations, including educational strategic plans, innovative programs, school upgrades, and of course the many challenges of COVID. I wish Anna the best for the remainder of the 2022 school year and into 2023. Her retirement is well deserved and I am sure she is looking forward to being able to spend more time with her family.

NUNDLE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing) (15:56): It gives me great pleasure to congratulate Nundle Public School on 150 years of learning, fun and play. Principal Stephen Gadd and his teachers are the latest in a proud history of educators who have been fostering the growth and development of generations of Nundle's kids. One hundred and fifty years is a very long time—150 years of learning in those classrooms, 150 years of playing on those fields and 150 years of fostering generations of locals. If we talk to anyone in this community we will quickly learn how proud they are of Nundle Public School. We are proud because it is a school that has always achieved. We are proud because the community gets behind the school and the school gets behind the community. At a recent celebration, stories were shared about when kids would arrive in a horse and cart to learn in a shingled-roof building. There were stories about 1894, when the community raised £245 to build a classroom. I sincerely thank all the parents, teachers, students and the community, and congratulate the Nundle Public School on a fantastic milestone.

SUTHERLAND 2 SURF

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (15:57): I celebrate 50 incredible years of the Sutherland 2 Surf and acknowledge the amazing efforts of Wanda Surf Life Saving Club in organising this successful event. Held in July every year, the Sutherland 2 Surf is an 11-kilometre fun run from Sutherland to Don Lucas Reserve in Cronulla. Over the past half a century, this event has continuously been organised by the many hard working Wanda volunteers who dedicate their time to make the day truly successful. In its fiftieth year, the Sutherland 2 Surf saw just under 4,000 participants enjoy the sunshine and festivities as well as raise money for Wanda to conduct educational programs, invest in rescue equipment and support volunteer emergency service activities.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge every volunteer for their contribution and dedication in making the day a success. I particularly recognise the Sutherland 2 Surf Organising Committee including Karen Byron,

Nathan Spinner, Todd Lester, Anne Caterson, Mick Brannock, Sue Brannock, Lizzy Sargeant, Tony Holland and David Gittus along with executive members not already mentioned, including Mark Sergeant, Kaylene Coles, John De Cean, Denny Rowlands, Mikaela Sutherland, Glenn Bell, Greg Pierce, Gerard Cafe, Natalie Buckley, Brett Thatcher, Gary McNamara and Fiona Sutton. I thank all involved in facilitating the incredible fiftieth Sutherland 2 Surf.

TALDUMANDE YOUTH SERVICES

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (15:58): I acknowledge Taldumande Youth Services, a not-for-profit organisation based in my electorate of North Shore that provides support services to young people from all across Sydney, particularly northern Sydney, who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. I recently had the pleasure of once again joining them at their annual dinner that is held to raise funds to go towards helping care for vulnerable and homeless young people and their families, and raising awareness of the ongoing socio-economic problems that we face as a community. The services that Taldumande provides are critical in ensuring that young people in our community who are experiencing difficulties are protected, provided with guidance and cared for. The past two years have been extremely challenging for our young people, and Taldumande has been vital in ensuring that help is provided where needed. Taldumande has been providing services for over five decades. This year alone it has assisted more than 1,000 young people and their families. I congratulate Taldumande on a fantastic night of fundraising. I thank CEO Lisa Graham, the chair, Virginia Howard, and all of the people who support it, particularly the service providers. I thank the team for their hard work and dedication on the night and for all of their services.

SUNDRIVE SOLAR

Ms ELANI PETINOS (Miranda) (15:59): I acknowledge the incredible work of SunDrive Solar, a small business located in Kirrawee, which I visited recently. Founded in 2015 by Vince Allen and David Hu, SunDrive Solar is a solar technology start-up that aims to create lower costs, higher efficiency and produce more material abundant solar cells. The company has grown from a small PhD project in a garage to producing some of the most efficient solar cells made in the world. Its mission is to provide clean energy that can sustain humanity's progression in the modern age whilst preserving the natural world for generations to come. I was delighted to meet the team and learn about this amazing Australian success story. I commend all members at SunDrive Solar for their commitment and passion to accelerate solar cell development in Australia and globally. I particularly recognise the team including founders Vince and David, Dr Jack Colwell, Peter Buggs and Jeremy Allen. I thank SunDrive Solar for the outstanding work it undertakes in our community and extend my best wishes for the future.

MOSMAN PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:00): I recognise a group of year 5 students from Mosman Preparatory School in my electorate for their recent efforts in raising over \$2,500 to support a preschool in Coffs Harbour that specialises in providing care for Aboriginal children. Students from Mosman Prep banded together in an incredible display of compassion. They gathered a large variety of books, blankets, bike helmets and basketballs, all to be donated to the Kulai Preschool as part of an inaugural camp. While the students were in Coffs Harbour, they were able to meet with the Gumbainggir people of the region and learn about their rich culture and history, as well as developing real and authentic connections. I congratulate the year 5 students on their fundraising efforts and support and thank principal Peter Grimes for initiating the trip and providing students with this significant learning experience.

Petitions

NATIVE FOREST LOGGING

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House will now consider the electronic petition signed by 20,000 or more persons that is listed on the *Business Paper*. It is about native forest logging and was lodged by the member for South Coast. Before I call the member for South Coast, I again welcome to the public gallery and the Cooper Gallery those who have joined us for the debate. I am aware that there are strongly held views on the matter we are about to discuss. Parliamentary debate allows that those with opposing views are able to express them freely without interference. I, therefore, ask that those in the gallery refrain from clapping or distracting debate in any way, including verbally or visually.

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

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (16:02): I reiterate my congratulations and welcome to everybody who has travelled obviously a long distance from the South Coast. Earlier I met my friends from Manyana, who are also present. I mention Manyana because it is relevant to the petition. I congratulate everybody, in particular Takesa Frank. I went to see Takesa but she was doing a media interview. I congratulate her because

she has communicated with my office on several occasions. She wanted to know who would be speaking in today's take-note debate, but I could not tell her because we did not know until this morning. That is what happens with petition debates. This take-note debate was deferred a couple of times but we are having it today. I congratulate everybody for coming along. I will read the text of the petition onto the record because it is important to know what the petitioners are asking the Government to do. The petition states:

To the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly,

Public native forest logging is pushing iconic species like the koala, swift parrot and greater glider towards extinction.

The 2019/20 Black Summer bushfires burnt over 5 million hectares of forest and have left them more vulnerable to the impacts of logging. The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) and the Environmental Protection Agency have recommended that in bushfire affected areas logging should cease entirely or face tighter restrictions—

Mr Jamie Parker: Hear, hear!

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: "Hear, hear!" indeed.

—as current logging practices may cause irreversible damage to ecosystems and wildlife.

Logging of public native forests is tax-payer subsidised. Forestry Corporation's Hardwood Division has been operating at a significant loss for the past decade. In 2020/21 it ran at a loss of \$20 million, with predictions that it will face losses of \$15 million until 2024.

Reports also show our state forests can generate far more income through their protection than from logging, through recreation, tourism and carbon abatement.

The Western Australian and Victorian Governments have already committed to ending this industry and have developed transition plans to support affected workers and businesses.

The petitioners ask the Legislative Assembly to:

1. Develop a plan to transition the native forestry industry to 100% sustainable plantations by 2024.
2. In the interim, place a moratorium on public native forest logging until the regulatory framework reflects the recommendations of the leaked NRC report.
3. Immediately protect high-conservation value forests through gazettal in the National Parks estate.
4. Ban use of native forest materials as biomass fuel.

This particular petition received well over 20,000 signatures. It has 21,046 signatures. It is a message to the Government. It is a message to all members that we on the South Coast, we in our region, were so severely affected by bushfires, unlike members opposite who were not affected in the same way as we were, whether it was Forestry or the National Party. Whatever it was, there were huge areas of—

[A crossbench member interjected.]

The member for Newtown wants to interject—she may not have been in the middle of the bushfires. We lost hundreds and hundreds of homes, member for Newtown. We lost lives. That was the impact in the South Coast region. The impact on us was significant and extremely serious. That is where the passion for this petition has come from. That is where the passion from residents—I referred to Peter from Manyana—has come from. We are all concerned about what is going to happen to an area of bushland in Manyana which was not burnt. We asked the Minister for Environment and Heritage to come down a couple of weeks ago; he did. I have good news. He is now going to re-open negotiations with council, and we will have an offer on the table to buy that land. If it is the last thing I do before I retire, we want to retain that bushland for Manyana. Anyone who has ever been to Manyana or Bandalong can see how precious it is, as with all of the bushland. If members have ever heard me talk in Parliament about our bushland and our beautiful natural areas, they will know how I feel about it.

There is always another side to the argument, and I know the Minister will outline that, to say that there are actions that the Government, to be fair, has taken in response to the 2019-20 bushfires. The Minister will no doubt outline what the Government has done, because we cannot just ignore the bushfires that ravaged those areas. He will tell us about accelerated replanting programs that are occurring, including two production nurseries planting approximately 16 million softwood and hardwood seedlings. Those kinds of actions are ongoing. I commend the petition to the House. I again congratulate all those who have worked so hard to bring the petition to this stage; it is not easy. I thank all members who are staying back this afternoon to speak on the petition.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (16:07): On behalf of The Greens, I speak on the petition to end logging in our public native forests. My colleagues the member for Newtown and the member for Balmain are also in the Chamber. I acknowledge that the petition was tabled by Ms Shelley Hancock. I give a huge shout-out to Ms Takesa Frank, who initiated the petition and got such a tremendous response. Getting over 20,000 signatures on a petition is an incredible effort. I also acknowledge two people in particular who reached out to my office, Janice Haviland and Martin Derby, and Sean O'Shannessy from the North East Forest Alliance [NEFA], who is in the gallery today. They have done so much incredible work on the petition. I acknowledge all of the environmental groups in New South Wales who have been arguing for many years that logging in native forests

is a travesty and must be phased out. It was so great to meet many of them outside prior to this debate. I thank them for coming today.

Public native forest logging is pushing iconic species towards extinction. What petitioners are calling for could assist in preventing that from happening in a really obvious way. I would have thought, and we think, that transitioning the native forestry industry to 100 per cent sustainable plantations by 2024, placing moratoriums on public native forest logging until a regulatory framework is developed, protecting high conservation-value forest through gazettal in the national parks estate and banning the use of native forest materials as biomass fuel are the absolute minimum next steps. I will focus on the biomass aspect of the petition.

The Australian Greens were able to secure a commitment from the Federal ALP to look into removing a Coalition loophole from the Renewable Energy (Electricity) Act which allows the destruction and burning of native forests to be classified as renewable energy to displace solar and wind power. I am not making that up. That is the loophole that exists. I am very proud of NEFA and other NGOs' campaigns around this. On 30 September the Federal Government's *Native forest biomass in the Renewable Energy Target: consultation paper* was released, and public submissions are open until 21 October. I urge the public to tell Labor that the loophole is a crime against humanity. The idea that native forests can be burned and turned into coalmines for carbon credits is absolute insanity.

Government members say that there is a high level of community interest and a range of views regarding the issues. We disagree. The public forest estate provides critical human life-supporting biodiversity maintenance and economy-sustaining services to the people of New South Wales through tourism and through engaging with our beautiful native forests. They are critical to our economy, and the welfare and wellbeing of the entire State. Even if we do not want to talk about climate change or the appalling business case that has failed in logging in native forests and the extraordinary impacts on vulnerable species over a long period, particularly since the Black Summer bushfires, we would still be arguing that native forest estates are the property of citizens in this State to enjoy. They are not a business model to cut down trees. With the climate crisis escalating, there is an urgent need to protect and enhance those critical functions of our native forest estates.

Industrial logging of the public forest estate harms all seven million citizens of New South Wales. The assertion that the New South Wales Government continues to support the sustainable management of our forests in New South Wales is simply not true. The fires of black spring and summer have caused significant and irreversible harm to the public forest estate. Five million hectares in New South Wales burned, including more than 890,000 hectares of native State forests. That is over 40 per cent of the coastal and tablelands native State forest in New South Wales. It is imperative that we save it.

The Greens support the move to a sustainable plantation model as long as there is the resourcing and the planning. My electorate has seen disasters where lots of money was invested and they were simply not maintained. Entire landscapes within the public native forest estate surrounding Coffs Harbour, for example, support globally significant conservation values and have been industrially logged since the black spring and Black Summer, and that is an absolute crime, and similarly in the Dorriggo Plateau. We absolutely support the petition. I thank and congratulate all of those environmentalists and citizens of this State who realise that we must see the end of logging in our native forests.

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (16:12): I speak in response to the petition tabled by the member for South Coast. I acknowledge the petitioners in the gallery for their efforts in obtaining 20,000 signatures, because it is an effort. I know that and I understand why they are present today. But I am really disappointed with the contribution by the member for Ballina, because it is misleading. One of the problems when we talk about native forestry in this country, and in this State in particular, is that a lot of the proposals that have been raised are based on a range of misconceptions, misinformation and unfounded beliefs.

When it comes to which side of the House manages forests better, this side manages forests better. That was shown when Bob Carr declared State forests national parks back in the eighties, because they were managed so well by what is now ForestCorp. They are managed well. It is like your garden: You cannot let your garden be overgrown with weeds; you have to manage it. Unfortunately, that is what the problem is. We let our national parks overgrow and when the bushfires came through, five billion native species were killed in 7.2 million hectares of national park. That is what happens in a national park when they do not have the resources to manage it.

Mr Jamie Parker: You're in government. Why don't you manage it?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS: Because the resources would have to come out of Health or Education.

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

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS: They would come out of Health or Education. The forests are managed in a responsible way, and we see that. Do we want native timbers from Borneo and attack the—

Mr Jamie Parker: We're about plantations.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Clarence will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS: We have plantation timbers and we also have native forests. The reason the forests were created in the first instance was to provide a resource for the inhabitants to build their houses and to construct this city. Parliament House is constructed from timber from our forests. That was the whole purpose of them, and still is. We want affordable housing, but where is the construction material going to come from? Members opposite talk about affordable housing, but how will it be provided if we do not cut down trees? Forestry Corporation plants four million seedlings every year to replace the trees it cuts. If that is not carbon sequestration, what is? It is a joke when members do not look at the evidence and the facts.

Mr Jamie Parker: We have looked at the evidence, mate, don't worry.

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS: Yes, look at the evidence. Five billion native species were killed in a hot fire because those national parks did not have the resources to be managed effectively.

Mr Jamie Parker: Well, give them the resources. You're in government.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS: Yes, and we will take them from Education and Health, because that is what you are saying.

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

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS: Yes, I will. The fact of the matter is that the Government's resources are finite; they are not unlimited. We cannot use a credit card and spend wherever we want to. State forests are managed effectively. They produce revenue that goes back into managing the forests and looking after feral animals and noxious weeds. Where is that revenue going to come from?

Mr Jamie Parker: It makes a loss.

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS: Do our national parks make a profit? No, they do not. Of course they do not. Native forestry is heavily regulated to ensure that there is long-term ecological sustainability, and robust science consistently demonstrates that those regulations are effective. The proposal to create public native forests would have substantial negative impacts on the State's economy and finances. We must remember that the forestry sector is worth around \$2.8 billion. It directly supports almost 20,000 jobs, 40 per cent of which are in regional New South Wales. I call on the Labor Party and members opposite to stop vilifying the timber industry and support the productive and sustainable approach that the Coalition Government has put in place to manage this incredible resource that has been used as a building material since Jesus was a boy. It is a terrific, sustainable product, so why do they vilify it?

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (16:18): I make a contribution to debate on the petition, which has some 21,000 signatures. I take umbrage at what the member for Clarence said. I am not vilifying the industry, but I want to be part of the debate because I have been involved in it in my area for some 40 years. The issue has been so divisive so many times, so we must resolve it in such a way that we get a sustainable industry. That is the objective that most people are going for. That is the objective of the people who signed this petition. Somehow we have got to get there. I understand that it is important. So many people in the Lismore electorate and beyond are passionate about this issue.

My electorate has huge environmental movements, including the North East Forest Alliance, whose members are here today. The Nature Conservation Council was also here this week. Local constituents have written to me in support of the petition. Local forestry and timber industry workers, as well as the unions, have also spoken to me about the petition. I understand the passion and the emotion in it. As I said, I have lived it for a long time. From what is happening in my area and on the South Coast—based on what I heard from the member for South Coast—and what I have heard in this debate, I can say that we are at the vortex of the issue. At the heart of it is the desire to have our forests protected from fire, flood and pestilence, and to have habitats for animals and rare plants that are free of weeds and predators, or at least minimally affected.

We all want a sustainable logging industry, wherever it takes place. I have recently read that under Premier McGowan—and I would hardly call him a radical Premier of any kind—Western Australia is moving to end native forestry logging. I note that Victoria is doing the same under its more progressive Premier Andrews. Those

desires and objectives speak to management, and that has been the problem that I have seen for so many years. We know that before European colonisation the forests, which were extensive, were managed. Of course, Indigenous nations practised cultural burning, which, thank goodness, so many are embracing now because they see the value in it. One thing that the member for South Coast said that really struck me was that this petition was a message to the Government and all members that we must take heed, and we certainly do.

I draw the attention of the House to the Legislative Council inquiry into the long-term sustainability and future of the timber and forest products industry. I read the report only recently. When I looked at the members on the committee, I noticed that there were no Greens. I am not sure why. It was chaired by a member of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party. The committee's findings and recommendations are telling about the state of the industry and what is going on under Forestry Corporation. There were 11 findings, and I draw attention to finding 2, 3 and 5. Finding 2 states:

In the last decade, there has been no increase in additional hardwood and softwood timber plantations.

Finding 3 states:

The lack of expansion of timber plantations by the NSW Government has significantly contributed to the current timber crisis which has only been further exacerbated by recent events, including the 2019/20 bushfires.

We heard about those from the member for South Coast. Finding 5 states:

The reduction in harvestable areas of public native forests and failure to expand native hardwood plantations has resulted in the loss of wood supply ...

Recommendation 1 states:

That the NSW Government identify and implement as a priority a long term funded strategy for the expansion of both softwood and hardwood timber plantations in New South Wales.

We can all agree that has to happen. Recommendation 2 states:

That the NSW Government establish further state-owned timber plantations

Recommendation 4 states:

That the NSW Government provide long term support to workers in the timber and forest products industry transitioning away from native forestry to other parts of the sector with access to worker transition services, training and retraining support, relocation support, and counselling.

They are some of the results from the inquiry.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (16:23): I note that 16 million hardwood trees have been planted on plantations in State forests this year. I agree with a lot of the sentiments that have been put forward in the debate. I particularly acknowledge the very rounded contribution by the member for Lismore relating to the need for a hardwood industry. I strongly argue, and I agree with the proposition put by the member for Ballina, that the Government should only be doing this type of work on plantations, and it is. Those native forestry plantations have been logged for more than 100 years. The hardwood industry is, and can continue to be, sustainable.

The member for South Coast was correct in talking about the dreadful impact that the 2019-20 bushfires had on the north and the south of the State. The most terrible impact was on the koalas in our national parks around Ebor Falls. That is the concern. There are finite resources. The member for Clarence is absolutely correct. Country people want to see forests managed in a more holistic way. We need our native hardwood for our floorboards, verandas and decking. We do not want to go to Bunnings and buy it from Borneo, the Philippines or Indonesia.

We have the strongest environmental considerations of any country in the world when it comes to logging. I respect the passion and efforts of the South Coast community, who have brought this petition to the House today. But we must find a better balance and a better way to have the conversation because, my goodness, we need that hardwood. We want affordable homes for our young people and we need to keep jobs in our communities. Timber mills in my electorate employ some of the most decent, hardworking and, may I say, less-educated people, as well as many from our Indigenous communities. I am proud of that. I am also proud that Byron Shire Council's energy supply comprises 100 per cent renewables, partly because of the Cape Byron energy plant near Byron Bay, which is a biomass plant. I take exception with the member for Ballina saying that we harvest forests to use trees for biomass. That would be economically stupid.

Mr Dugald Saunders: It's illegal.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: And it is illegal. Waste, bark or limbs and the residue that are of no use to the industry can help with biomass to give us 100 per cent renewable energy. Those are the types of conversations we should be having to support our timber industry in a sustainable way post the bushfires. The science showed that after the dreadful fires and as the trees started to grow again, koalas absolutely gorged themselves on the new

shoots. Koalas like new trees. Timber harvesting operations take place in only around 1 per cent of State forests each year, which is about 0.1 per cent of forested land in New South Wales. We are not out there clear-felling. In 2006 under Bob Carr the Pilliga forest was declared a protected national park. Sadly, that same year a bushfire came through and wiped out thousands of koalas.

Mr Jamie Parker: Oh!

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: It is not funny. That is exactly what happened.

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

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: We gave up the opportunity to better manage the Pilliga because we were told that tourists would visit the park. Tourists do not go to the Pilliga, I can tell you. We destroyed the forestry industry. We stopped thinning out the forest, we destroyed the ability to get rid of weeds and in 2006 it all went up in a big fire. That is the other side of the conversation. That is the debate we must have in the most respectful way to support our communities and this country.

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (16:28): By leave: I strongly support the petition signed by more than 20,000 New South Wales residents who are calling for an end to the deforestation of our native forests and a plan to transition the forestry industry to sustainable plantations by 2024 and protect forestry workers and communities. I welcome everybody in the gallery today and thank the member for South Coast for bringing the petition to the Parliament. As we know, Australia has a terrible history of biodiversity destruction, with the highest rates of species loss among developed countries. In New South Wales 100 animals and plants have become extinct since European settlement. But the extinction process has not slowed, with mass deforestation and habitat destruction continuing, even following the Black Summer bushfires.

The Black Summer bushfires burned through over five million hectares of land, including two million hectares, or 41 per cent, of the national park estate and 875,000 hectares, or 42 per cent, of State forests, killing over a billion animals and hundreds of billions of insects. Since then, a range of animal and plant species has been added to the already long threatened species list, including the koala and the greater glider. We face a massive extinction crisis unless we do things differently. The *NSW State of the Environment 2021* report identified habitat destruction and native vegetation clearing as the biggest threats to biodiversity in this State. We are logging about 14,000 hectares of native forest every year, with impacts across a range of threatened species.

Logging State forests is not sustainable. The NSW Environment Protection Authority has concluded that Forestry Corporation's environmental controls are severely inadequate, and the forestry industry has failed to achieve Forestry Stewardship Council certification for its timber. It also regularly breaches the protections that do exist, with 10 fines issued or proceedings commenced since the fires for breaches where protected giant trees, trees with hollows or koala feed trees were felled. A 2021 leaked Natural Resources Commission report recommended that logging cease in six different native forest regions in the State. Meanwhile, wood biomass emits up to 50 per cent more carbon dioxide than coal when burnt. During its inquiry into the sustainability of energy supply and resources, which I chaired, the environment and planning committee recommended a ban on the use of native forest timber for biomass electricity. There is more value in keeping our native forests intact. Bigger, older forests store more carbon and are more resilient to fires.

A 2021 report by Frontier Economics found that if logging ceased in the south-east forests, over 20 million tonnes of carbon would be abated in just 20 years, with the economic value in carbon credits worth \$61.9 million. Revenue from carbon credits reinvested in regions could create new employment opportunities, including in nature-based tourism. It is estimated that the Great Koala National Park would create nearly 10,000 tourist jobs. We do not need to destroy our forests for timber. Over 90 per cent of the timber products used in New South Wales come from plantations. The hardwood plantation timber industry has the potential to keep growing as demand increases. The softwood plantation timber industry already runs at a profit of \$47 million per year and is expected to expand further.

The speed at which this petition was able to achieve over 20,000 signatures demonstrates the widespread concern in the community about clearing our native forests. Polls have shown the practice's unpopularity and I personally receive regular emails from constituents and people across the State who oppose it. Victoria and Western Australia have already committed to a transition from native forest logging to plantation timber. New South Wales can do the same and ensure that affected communities have new and sustainable jobs into the future. I join the people of New South Wales in calling for an end to native forest logging and for the Government to start working on a plan that will transition the industry to sustainable plantations by 2024, with support to ensure that workers and communities have meaningful and sustainable jobs. I thank the member for South Coast for presenting the petition to Parliament.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales) (16:33): In response: I thank the member for South Coast for tabling this petition. I have listened to the debate with great interest. I will clarify a few misconceptions. First, logging does not occur in State forests; selective harvesting occurs in State forests. The Environment Protection Authority is in charge of activating the regulations around that, and it does so regularly. The sawlog part of a tree is not used for biomass production; it is the roots, the bark and the other parts that cannot be used for anything apart from chipping, burning or pulping. It is about turning that waste into energy rather than leaving it to become a bushfire concern. That is the point. As far as State forests, as the member for Oxley mentioned, only a tiny percentage of State forests are used for timber harvesting. We are talking about 1 per cent of the State forest that is harvested—that is, about 0.1 per cent of the broader forested landscape. It is a tiny amount, it is a managed amount, and it is not done in a way with disregard for the environment. That is the point.

Ever since I have been the Minister in this space, I have said that I hold Forestry Corporation to the highest level of compliance. That is absolutely what we need to do. On this side of the House, we all agree that there is no room for things to be done incorrectly. But to suggest that timber and State forests do not work hand in hand and do not support communities is just incorrect. It is also worth mentioning that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recognises that managing forests for sustainable timber production is one of the best ways to mitigate climate change. Removing trees, allowing more sunshine through the canopy and growing new trees actually sequesters great amounts of carbon, and we have a fantastic renewable, organic and regenerative resource that we love as humans.

State forests also support things like native-based tourism. State forests are already doing that. We are expanding the mountain biking, the horseriding, the picnicking and the walking trails. They are all managed because we have State forests that are managed to support those activities. I am interested to see what Labor does around forests as a policy matter, because we have complete support from a number of workers up and down the coast and inland who are saying they want support for native forestry. On this side of the House, we absolutely provide that support. It is worth \$2.8 billion and thousands of jobs. We have their back, but we also appreciate the petition.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (16:37): By leave: I briefly put on record The Greens' ongoing support for the petitioners. I thank them all for being present during debate on the petition. The member for Ballina spoke on behalf of The Greens in debate on the petition. I reiterate my support for her contribution and for the petition. I will clarify a couple of things. As a member representing a city electorate such as Newtown, quite often we get derogatory remarks from those opposite that we do not know the impact of the logging of our native forests, bushfires, floods or of other things that happen in regional areas that do not have an impact on our communities. As the member for Sydney alluded to, it is important to say that our city communities incredibly value the incredible natural wonders and beauties of our State. Because they live in the inner city, arguably they have even more of a desire and respect for wanting to go out into regional areas and appreciate our beautiful forests and our natural environment.

It is important to recognise that while I might be representing the electorate of Newtown in this Chamber, which sadly does not have any native forests, the community of Newtown is very much committed to ensuring that we stop the logging in our native forests. A lot of our communities were directly impacted by losing families, friends and loved ones in the bushfires on the South Coast, and they were also directly impacted as a result of the floods across the State. The idea that people in the city do not have a genuine personal impact and heartfelt connection to the bush, to the country, to the native forests and the logging of those forests and that they are not directly impacted by the trauma created as a result of bushfires and floods in our State—they also have family members, friends, loved ones and colleagues who live in those areas. It is important to put that on the record. And I interjected when the member for South Coast was speaking because I know there are a lot of people in our electorate who were directly impacted as a result of the bushfires that happened on the South Coast and the tragedies that occurred there.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast) (16:39): In reply: I thank all members who contributed to this debate and gave some really interesting and different perspectives. We are all entitled to have different views, and I think it has been done in a very respectful way. If the member for Newtown thought that I was making a derogatory remark about her, in a way, I guess I might have been, and she might have taken it personally because people in Newtown were not ravaged by bushfires. They did not lose their homes. They did not lose 300 homes. They did not have close friends who lost their lives in the bushfires of the South Coast.

Ms Jenny Leong: How do you know?

Mr Jamie Parker: How do you know that?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: My point is that the South Coast is a very special place, and it needs to be treated carefully and with respect because we have been through such trauma.

Mr Jamie Parker: Of course.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: We have all experienced that trauma.

Mr Jamie Parker: Of course.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: If you want to continue to interject, that is just what you do.

Mr Jamie Parker: I am saying, "Of course." I am agreeing with you.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: That is just what you do, member for Balmain.

Mr Jamie Parker: I said, "Of course." I am agreeing with you.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: Can we just restrict this to what we are talking about?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Balmain will come to order. The member for South Coast has the call.

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK: I will add another perspective to what has been said so far in this debate: The perspective we have always had—perhaps not all of those in the public gallery—is that the South Coast has had a very strong timber industry in the past. It is part of the heritage of Milton. This is what happened to the timber industry and the bushlands behind Milton. When the timber industry was really raging in the 1900s and earlier in the 1800s, we had a proliferation of red cedar, as those in the public gallery would know. Red cedar was ripped from the hills behind Milton by bullock teams and then sent to Sydney on boats. It was used to build sheds and fence posts. That is what happens when we do not take action and heed the message that is given to us.

In those days nobody understood the repercussions of not having red cedar any more, but it has gone from the South Coast. Nevertheless, we have had a vibrant timber industry in the South Coast ever since. However, we have been making sure that we do not affect our forests as we have done in the past. Again, I thank all members who participated in the debate, especially those who were not interjecting like the member for Lismore and the member for Ballina. Typically The Greens have to interject in the method that they have been doing, which is so unfair and unwarranted.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I thank the guests in the public gallery, who were visiting today to listen to the debate. I also extend thanks to those members of the public who have been listening online.

Petition noted.

Private Members' Statements

WATERLOO PUBLIC HOUSING

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (16:42): I again raise my very grave concern and opposition to the Government's proposal to evict 3,000 public housing tenants from Waterloo. In this House, I have repeatedly raised the issue of Waterloo public housing tenants who have lived under the shadow of eviction for more than five years. On 29 April this year, in a submission to the Minister for Planning, I made my views known when I said, "I do not support a proposal for the redevelopment of the Waterloo precinct that evicts thousands of social housing tenants, many of whom are vulnerable. You should not sell public land and assets to private businesses, and force social housing tenants out of the area."

I am gravely concerned that the current planning proposal that has been approved was designed to generate profit for the Government from the sale of public housing land. My view is that public housing land is required to be retained for public housing purposes. Sixty-five thousand people are on the waiting list, and 3,000 of my people will go on the waiting list if the Government's proposal proceeds.

I am also gravely concerned that the Government's decision to locate the Sydney Metro station in Waterloo was designed to inflate the value of the land for private purposes, as distinct from locating the station in the areas of Waterloo, Zetland or Rosebery. There is no point putting a station within 10 minutes' walk of Redfern or Green Square railway stations unless there is a vested interest in doing so. When the Government considered where to locate the station, it chose that location rather than the University of New South Wales, where tens of thousands come and go on a daily basis.

Since this Government took power in 2011, it has sold \$3.5 billion of social housing in this State when there is desperation for public housing. It is not for the New South Wales Government to sell. The reason that it

was sold can be found in a briefing note given to the current Premier when he was first selected by the Liberal Party as its leader. The briefing to him stated:

... additional funding is urgently needed to be given to the Land and Housing Corporation's unsustainable funding arrangements—
and—

... there are major operational risks driven by unsustainable financial arrangements, low growth in social housing stock, even with stimulus funding, an ageing portfolio and a mismatch of supply with tenant needs.

The Government is not only seeking to evict 3,000 public housing tenants from Waterloo. In Daceyville at the soldiers' settlement—the first planned town in New South Wales from 1921, and redeveloped as a historical precinct although used for public housing in the late 1980s—the Government sold the following public housing premises: 31 Colonel Braund Crescent, 21 Banks Avenue, 6 Boussole Road, 19 Boussole Road, 16 Cook Avenue, 16 Banks Avenue and 40 Cook Avenue.

Not only is the Government removing, selling off and proposing to sell off government-owned land in Waterloo rather than increasing density and providing more public housing in that location, within the general region it is continuing to sell off public housing land and public housing property. If any of those persons evicted from Waterloo thought they might end up in vacant properties in Daceyville, they will not be going there because the Government is in the process of selling properties. It is selling capital assets while 65,000 people are on the waiting list and 3,000 people in Waterloo are living under the shadow of eviction. It is an unsatisfactory state of affairs. I call on the Government to let the proposal go and to develop Waterloo only for public housing.

IRANIAN PROTESTS

Mr VICTOR DOMINELLO (Ryde—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Small Business, and Minister for Fair Trading) (16:47): Arguably, the greatest leaders are women. It is not because they are greater than men—we are all equal—but because, overwhelmingly, they have led from a position of profound structural inequity. For a contemporary example, I draw the attention of the House to Iran. The death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini after being detained by Iran's morality police has sparked unprecedented protests across the country. Women are leading those protests. Their courage is a beacon for all. Many of us have Iranian friends who are deeply impacted by what is happening. I and many others stand with them—not in front of them nor behind them, but alongside them. We are inspired by their leadership as the cause moves forward. Women, Life, Freedom.

OXLEY ELECTORATE FLOODS

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (16:49): Tonight I talk about the impact of floods on the rivers and waterways in the Oxley electorate, and the challenges we face within our communities due to the degradation of our rivers and water sources because of the constant flows and heavy rains. In a conversation this week with the member for Clarence, Chris Gulaptis, he said, "It's important that we acknowledge it's not just the roads where the potholes are; it's our rivers." That was a perfect analogy, I thought, to explain some of the issues we are having. One issue in particular is the damage to our rain gauges. I raised that issue at an SES briefing two weeks ago. In a very complicated and, I would say, convoluted historic arrangement, many of our river gauges are managed by at least three entities: Manly Hydraulics Laboratory, the Bureau of Meteorology and the councils. There are actually four managers of the rain gauges—thank God we have the farmers, who are coming through.

This week I had some correspondence from one of our great farming families on the Macleay, the Duffs. Carolyn Duff was very frustrated about the gauge on the Toorooka Bridge, one of the most important bridges and one which goes under very suddenly. That gauge was broken, then fixed—and now we have just realised it has broken again. This level of frustration is going on within the community. I acknowledge that in the briefing the SES stated it is a matter of complication, but to build our capacity for resilience we need to work together with the Federal and State governments to fix the river gauge and the monitoring system. If we do not get that monitoring right—and get the right warnings to our local communities—it can have devastating consequences.

The Macleay River is 298 kilometres long with a catchment of 11,000 square kilometres. It is the second fastest flowing river in the Southern Hemisphere when in flood. I point out for those members who think climate change is only a recent issue that the location of the Macleay River has actually changed in the past 120 years. At the start of last century it was at the beautiful community of Grassy Head and now it is at the river mouth at South West Rocks. We have had big events and big east coast lows for hundreds of years, which can interrupt river flows. The Macleay system has 28 gauges reporting conditions. Those gauges are operated by numerous different agencies. When a gauge is damaged, it does take time. State and Federal governments must work together with communities and let the communities lead the discussions, because often they know the best way to manage these things.

I also highlight some work that the Nambucca Valley branch of NSW Farmers has done in relation to restoring the health of the Nambucca catchment. Recently I received some important correspondence, which has been fed into the regional water strategy, in relation to how that river is filling up and the water is flowing over larger areas than it used to. We have to acknowledge that we have a different landscape than when the white man was not here. There is not as much vegetation so the rocks and the gravel find their way into the river and fill up the holes, and then the river is splashing over and creating bigger erosion. I have to tell members that there is nothing more annoying to country people—and they are very commonsense people in the Nambucca Valley—than the fact they cannot take the gravel from that river and fix their local road. Instead, they have to take the gravel and stones from maybe 80 kilometres away to fix their local roads. I acknowledge that the member for Wyong is nodding at my comments in a little bit of appreciation.

Mr David Harris: In furious agreement.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: That is a good thing. I do not know what goes on, but something happens within the bowels of the agencies where common sense completely disappears. That is a warning for us all to listen to our communities. They are full of smart people who often have decades and decades of experience and knowledge. If we do, we can fix some of these issues that are important to our incredible communities. I thank the House for its indulgence.

SANTOS WHOLEFOODS AND COFFEE

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (16:54): I recently had the privilege of visiting Santos Wholefoods and Coffee in my electorate. It is a family business in the electorate of Lakemba, started by Nicholas Avramides in 1973. Businesses like Santos, which everybody knows, are the lifeblood of our communities and local economy. It is people like Nicholas and his family whose incredible skills, experiences and contributions add immense value to our community. Nicholas Avramides grew up in Redfern. His father, a smart, hardworking businessman, arrived in Australia in 1952 from Lebanon. Soon after his arrival he opened his first Lebanese sweet shop, setting the pathway for the family to walk today. If anybody knows Lebanese sweets, I do not want to be too patriotic here, but they are the best sweets in the world and certainly non-fattening and not bad for your blood pressure or sugar diabetes at all—although I could be misleading the House on that one.

Nicholas went on to study pharmacy at the University of Sydney before travelling to London to continue his medical studies, and he tells me he was having too much fun doing his medical studies. In 1969, Nicholas and his father toured the Grand Bazaar in Damascus where they discovered their fascination with the process and care with which the local vendors made fresh coffee. They had seen nothing like it anywhere else. When Nicholas' father asked him what gift he would like to take home, he chose a sixteenth century walnut timber mortar and pestle. He had learned that the locals crushed their coffee beans in timber rather than stone, as timber gave off less heat and created better quality coffee grounds.

Nicholas purchased the Santos business in 1973 with the strong support of his parents. His father passed away just four weeks later. The first 15 years of the business was a struggle. However, through hard work, grit and resilience, the business started to thrive. Soon after that, Nicholas became known for his distribution of pistachio nuts, as he temporarily ceased his trade in coffee, which had increased 10 times in value due to the black frost in Brazil in 1975. Nicholas' hard work and extraordinary adaptability is why Santos' mission to bring the highest quality coffee and fresh snack foods to Australian consumers has been a great success. It is also why Santos is the longest continuously established coffee roaster in the country supplying consumers, corporates and food distributors with the finest quality coffee beans, specialist blends, nuts, cereals and dried fruits.

Nicholas, as the founder and chairperson of Santos, remains actively involved in the business, particularly in quality control. Santos has a policy of sourcing its merchandise from Australian-grown sources first. However, where the foods cannot be grown in Australia, Nicholas travels the world to source only the best products directly from growers. Santos remains locally owned—a family run business which remains true to its original values of supplying only the highest quality gourmet foods and outstanding customer service. The company has a strong reputation for integrity and enjoys excellent relationships with both customers and suppliers. It roasts coffee, nuts and granolas, and processes all other products at its five-acre manufacturing and logistics facility based in Riverwood in my electorate. It owns and operates seven coffee bars across New South Wales and distributes nationally and internationally.

Now, 60 years since it was founded, the company has built a strong reputation for integrity and excellent customer service. I am particularly proud of Nicholas and the Santos company's ongoing work in supporting our local community by emphasising the importance of hard work and resilience to nurture a successful business. One of its most heartwarming initiatives—and the reason for my visit—was its partnership with Punchbowl Boys' High School's food technology students. Nicholas was extremely motivated by the programs at the school to engage young people in food technology and decided to bring his years of experience to the table.

He currently assists Punchbowl Boys' High School students in developing a unique blend for their very own student run coffee shop to raise some funds. As a guest speaker at the school, he visited their coffee shop to educate the boys on the key skills on how to make good coffee and how to run a successful coffee shop. The company also hosted stage 6 food and beverage students from the school at the factory. This gave students the valuable opportunity to learn the key elements of business management and food manufacturing. Nicholas also took the time to share his lifelong experiences and tips for success. Practical experience like this cannot be taught in a classroom.

The Santos business has changed locations since its conception in 1975. But everywhere it has been, the family-owned business has made a laudable impact on the surrounding community. The whole family works at the business—Nicholas' five children, including three sons and two daughters. Four of his children work at the factory to maintain the family business. He strongly believes the success of Santos would not have been possible but for the family. As I said, he leads from the front. He goes to work every day and he still makes his own coffees for guests as well. The Santos story is a great Australian story. It is about family, passion and hard work. Nicholas was able to build a successful business from the ground up. Despite his success, he never forgets his roots, giving back by sharing his years of knowledge and experience to youth in my electorate. The Lakemba electorate is incredibly lucky to have a man such as Nicholas and his family in it. I thank him and the Santos family for the incredible contributions that they make on a wider scale.

SNOWY MOUNTAINS SPECIAL ACTIVATION PRECINCT

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro) (16:59): Some \$391.3 million is the incredible investment in the Snowy Mountains Special Activation Precinct, one of six of these transformative initiatives being delivered throughout the State thanks to this Liberal-Nationals Government. With Deputy Premier Paul Toole, I had the great privilege of announcing this commitment, confirmed in this Government's exciting and reforming budget in June and brought about through the \$4.2 billion Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund. These special activation precincts are areas identified specifically in regional New South Wales to become thriving business hubs, with a focus on planning and investment to grow economies, communities and regions. The Snowy Mountains Special Activation Precinct is a visionary, once-in-a-generation opportunity, not just for the Jindabyne area but for the entire Monaro region—a landscape and location unique in our great, vast land.

This incredible undertaking will secure its future as a place of ongoing potential, making it a diverse year-round tourism destination and economic powerhouse. It is a blueprint of development and possibility for our wider region, with the potential for all of Monaro to capitalise upon, attracting people to this wonderful area of southern New South Wales not only to take in our magnificent high country when it is glittering with snow but to experience its splendour throughout the year and, along with our incredibly popular ski fields and alpine region, in broadening that appeal, encouraging more to take in what is on offer throughout Monaro—be it museums, wineries, micro-breweries, restaurants, cafes and art galleries; whether at Braidwood and its rural environs at our northern top, or at Bombala and Delegate as Monaro's furthest points south. The Snowy Mountains Precinct is also about ensuring we are more than only a place to visit; we are also a place to work and live.

It will cover 4,879 hectares across three distinct areas around Jindabyne and connect to the alpine resorts of Thredbo, Perisher and Charlotte Pass. With a flourishing Jindabyne at its heart, it is intended to build a more economically sustainable community, including planning for its future population growth, investment in infrastructure and services and drawing on the already well-established focus of the Snowy Monaro as a seasonal tourist area. It will look to expand this in developing us as a region-wide all-seasons drawcard—with lively and connected towns, villages, hamlets and communities, better community facilities and transport options—enhancing our natural environment, growing jobs and attracting investment in areas such as agri- and ecotourism, tourism attractions, hospitality, heritage and more.

On 1 July 2022 the master plan for the Snowy Mountains Special Activation Precinct was finalised, outlining a 40-year strategic scope. It is about streamlining planning pathways to fast-track growth and development that will deliver world-class facilities and other community assets, including utilities and amenity improvements. Housing and accommodation are also pivotal, with the master plan providing for additional residential zoning for Jindabyne and increased bed capacity within the alpine resorts so as to better accommodate residents, seasonal workers and visitors alike. As part of the Snowy Precinct, planning was also recently approved for a purpose-built Jindabyne Education Campus. This will feature a new Connected Learning Centre being delivered by TAFE NSW.

There are huge benefits to be realised from this extraordinary initiative across Monaro, including for our vibrant arts scene. We recently opened Jindabyne's first ever public library, warmly welcomed by the community. The beautiful and contemporary space has been designed and planned for incorporation into the special activation precinct. Next comes the delivery phase of our precinct. We will see commencement of the construction program, including preparation of detailed designs, ongoing consultation and design, and construction of supporting

infrastructure. This is an incredibly exciting time for our beautiful and vibrant southern New South Wales home, as it progresses in its continued Cinderella-like transformation into a year-round destination, a sustainable, visionary tourism hub with so much to offer, transforming and confirming Monaro as the belle of the ball.

In the words of local businessman and member of the Jindabyne Chamber of Commerce, Gordon Jenkinson, "It's huge. There's no way the local shire could ever come up with the funding or manpower for the infrastructure to grow this area as much as what was needed. The fact the funding ultimately comes from the Snowy Hydro Legacy Fund, it's wonderful that the money comes back to support the Snowy." As the very proud member for Monaro, I welcome this opportunity and thank the many who have been involved—and will be involved—and the foresight of this Liberal-Nationals Government in seeing this visionary project come to fruition, and all it means for the future of Monaro.

KU-RING-GAI PUBLIC SCHOOLS PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION

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) (17:03): It is a daunting experience for many people both young and old to speak in front of a group. Even the Late Queen's father, King George VI, loathed public speaking and was embarrassed by his stutter. Yet the skill can greatly improve a person's abilities in a variety of settings. Indeed, public speaking is common across occupations, whether it be law, medicine, business, sales and many other work environments. It is incredibly important to be able to express ideas eloquently and coherently. It would be remiss of me to overlook the importance of public speaking for members of Parliament. It is essential both inside the legislative chambers and outside in our electorates. What better way to teach young people those skills than a tried and tested public speaking student competition for primary school students.

Public speaking is no doubt a cause of fear for many students, but another important skill is having the resilience to push through those fears and have a go. After two disruptive years that prevented the event from going ahead, I welcomed the return of the Ku-ring-gai Public Schools Public Speaking Competition, which was held on 8 September this year. It is one of my favourite annual events and takes place in this very Chamber in the New South Wales Parliament. The competition gives year 5 and 6 students the opportunity to get out of the classroom and apply their communication skills in the heart of democracy and the oldest Parliament in Australia. It was yet another enlightening, engaging and entertaining event. Students prepared a response to the question: If we work together, what could we achieve? That was followed by an impromptu speech on the topic: What to do on a rainy day?

It is no easy task to deliver both prepared and impromptu speeches, but the students answered the questions brilliantly, with exceptional delivery and nuance. The adjudication was pleasingly difficult for our judges, whom I thank for undertaking the task. I congratulate all students who participated, including Matthew Loke in first place from Waitara Public School, Nathan Milne from Warrabee Public School, Tia Woollam from West Pymble Public School, Neave Barker from Wahroonga Public School, Charlotte Ross from Turrumurra Public School, Samuel Xegas from Pymble Public School, Samika Abhichendani from Normanhurst Public School, Jasper Soo Thoo from Killara Public School, Grace Phair from Gordon West Public School and Zara Drinkwater from Beaumont Road Public School.

I also thank the parents for their participation and support, and the teachers who attended. I thank my electorate office staff as well as Margaret Wick and Aileen Woof, who helped to organise the competition and have done so each year since its inception in 2001 as a celebration of the Centenary of Federation. Since that time MPs and staff have changed, but one thing remains constant: The students of the electorate of Ku-ring-gai will always have a place in the halls and chambers of Australia's oldest democracy. It is a place of exploration, history, learning and knowledge. The event provides them with an opportunity to apply their communication and theoretical skills, which they have learned in the classroom, in an entirely new setting. No matter what their futures hold, the skills and confidence students develop will help them to become great leaders and communicators. Some past winners of the competition have turned into terrific adults who lead very successful careers in the business world.

I wish all students good luck in their future endeavours and look forward to seeing the continuation of that longstanding event well into the future. I am pleased that in the 2022-23 budget, students in every New South Wales public school will benefit from a \$1.2 billion commitment to planned maintenance. I spent all of my 13 years at school in public education. It is important that our schools are maintained and looked after. Many schools in my electorate had leaking roofs, unsatisfactory toilet facilities and the like, which we inherited from the former Labor Government. I am glad they have been fixed up. They will provide a much better, world-class environment for our students to develop. It is important to give them a brighter future and it is also important for our society as a whole.

LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (17:08): Last month I raised governance issues concerning Liverpool City Council and I raise further issues today. The entirety of the electorate I represent is located within the boundaries of Liverpool City Council. The matters that I raise have been brought to me by constituents, as will become evident. There is a very serious issue about the inconsistency in the council's approach to issues of compliance. In some cases there is an absolutely rigid insistence upon compliance, while in other cases there is a remarkable nonchalance in following up allegations of noncompliance or insisting upon compliance. The concern is that the inconsistency is not just coincidence or incompetence, though there is no lack of the latter in that part of the council. The real concern is that in some cases there is partiality in the prosecution of claims of noncompliance.

I turn to the case of a constituent of mine named Hany Gayed, who is an active member of the Coptic Orthodox community and an activist in a number of other communities. In November 2021 two people knocked on his door claiming to be council officers who had come to inspect allegedly unauthorised paving and an awning. The paving had been laid by a previous owner before Mr Gayed purchased the house, which he had bought seven years prior. Upon questioning by my constituent, the council officers said they were responding to a neighbour's complaint. That confirmed what the council wrote in a letter dated 21 December 2021. The officers subsequently denied that was the reason; they had to, because there had been no complaint.

The problem is that shortly after the incident Mr Gayed told multiple witnesses, including me, that that is what the council officers had said and that it was in writing. That leads me to conclude that the council officers have been untruthful in denying that they had said there was a complaint from a neighbour. The version of events provided by Mr Gayed was initially confirmed by senior council officers. When Mr Gayed requested ID, the council staff were uncooperative. Only one produced any documents, but before Mr Gayed could read or photograph the documents they were taken away. Interestingly, three council officers were present at the time, which is a breach of usual procedure. A third council officer remained in the car and tried to hide his identity. Council officers subsequently denied that three officers were present, asserting that there were only two. When that claim became untenable, the council conceded that three officers were present.

When Mr Gayed tried to photograph the vehicle and its occupant, he received an offensive gesture in return. There is interesting speculation about the identity of that third person. The council should identify who that person was. After the suspicious fracas, a property inspection was arranged for 15 November. Council prepared with alacrity a notice of various proposed orders dated 21 December, which the officers concerned served on Mr Gayed on 24 December. Anyone who has had any involvement with councils would hear alarm bells ringing at being served with papers on Christmas Eve, especially when it relates to paving and an awning that has been in place for years and about which no complaint had been made. Serving those documents on Christmas Eve was obviously suspicious in itself.

There is a possible explanation for that surprising series of events. Mr Gayed was an outspoken supporter of the Labor ticket at the 2021 council elections and an opponent of the Liberal candidate for mayor. Other constituents have also been victims of the Liverpool City Council enforcement section. One family who has complained to me owns properties in Flowerdale Road. The father of the family has known me for over 30 years and, in the interests of full disclosure, allowed me and other Australian Labor Party candidates to place election posters on one of his properties for decades. In February this year council officers appeared at one of the family's properties wanting to inspect it for allegedly unauthorised building works. The inspection occurred on 28 February 2022. The next day on 29 February the council sent a "notice of proposed demolish works order", requiring the demolition of a bedroom within what the council described as the hairdressing and garage area of the property. There are curious elements to that, apart from the alacrity with which the notice was issued.

The building work that was the subject of the works order was there when the house was purchased by the family 25 years ago. The council claimed there was a development for a hairdressing salon there. My constituents tell me it has not been a hairdressing salon for 50 years. I have known the site for about 40 years and I do not ever recall a hairdressing salon being there. It is curious that a complaint had been made about works that had been completed 25 years ago or longer. It did not come from the adjacent neighbour, as that property is owned by the same family. Council officers told my constituents that they had received a complaint over the phone, which presumably means there was no paper trail. In any event, to say that they had received a complaint rather than an inquiry is in breach of council policy, as I understand it.

However, it gets even worse. My constituents subsequently received another council letter dated 15 April 2022 with another proposed demolition order, which required more extensive demolition including, bizarrely, a requirement to remove the toilet despite an apparent approval for a hairdressing salon for the site. I suppose that says something about the compliance section's view of the bladder control of those who run hairdressing salons. Fascinatingly, those expanded and more draconian orders did not follow a further inspection, which may have

discovered further issues. However, the orders did follow after I made representations to the council on the family's behalf. One might suspect the constituent was being punished for having the temerity to have representations made on his behalf. The explanation for that is that shortly before the most recent council elections, a Liberal councillor and candidate asked if he could place an election poster in one of the family's properties, but permission was not given, which is hardly surprising as they are Labor supporters. There is something seriously wrong at Liverpool City Council. It must be fixed.

TRIBUTE TO CONSTABLE TANZEEL IFTIKHAR BASHIR

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown) (17:14): It is with great sadness that I speak of the recent passing of Constable Tanzeel Iftikhar Bashir from the Bankstown Police Area Command. Constable Tanzeel tragically passed away on Friday 2 September at the young age of 23 in Sydney's Royal National Park. Constable Tanzeel was a well-regarded member of our local community, having been raised in the Canterbury Bankstown local government area and having attended Canterbury Boys High School. His passing is an immeasurable loss to our community and to the people of our State. Constable Tanzeel was motivated to pursue a career in policing by his desire to help people following the tragic death of his friend's girlfriend. Constable Tanzeel went on to graduate from the New South Wales Police Force Academy as part of the class of 2019 and was sworn in as a probationary constable on 21 October 2019. On 19 June, Tanzeel commenced service in general duties at the Bankstown Police Area Command.

Constable Tanzeel was frequently described by those who had the pleasure of knowing him as a kind and gentle soul—somebody whom you could truly rely on. His policing colleagues, most notably Constable Charlene Challita, all fondly remembered Constable Tanzeel's kind-hearted, down-to-earth and charming personality, with Constable Challita describing him as her best mate. Constable Tanzeel's cousin Momin Ali depicted Tanzeel as being very dedicated to his job, and said that he wore his uniform with a lot of pride. He is truly a great loss. Constable Tanzeel was honoured with the Commissioner's Emergency Commendation in 2021. Constable Berkay Tustas, one of Constable Tanzeel's closest colleagues, could not fathom the loss of his dear friend, remarking that Constable Tanzeel "wouldn't hurt a fly, but he hurt himself." Constable Tustas said if you needed anything done at the academy or in general, Tanzeel would not even ask why; Tanzeel was always there for him.

Constable Tanzeel's funeral was held on Tuesday 6 September at the Lakemba Mosque. Hundreds attended the ceremony, including his family, friends and a large contingent of colleagues. He was remembered as a loving son, brother and friend and a widely respected police officer, with tributes posted on social media recounting Constable Tanzeel as being a "friendly face", a "funny guy" and an all-round great friend. The funeral procession was beautifully escorted by three police motorcycles for the entire 45 kilometres from Lakemba Mosque to the Narellan Cemetery, his final resting place. I had the honour of attending Constable Tanzeel's memorial service on Wednesday 5 October at the Revesby Workers' Club auditorium. It was a truly solemn ceremony—one that reflected the gravity and the tragedy of the community's loss, and celebrated and recognised Constable Tanzeel's life of service.

The service included a speech from Superintendent Adam Johnson, the Bankstown police area commander, who also gave us a beautiful insight into the life of Constable Tanzeel and how he contributed to the safety and peace of our community. Superintendent Johnson described Tanzeel as an immensely proud member of the New South Wales Police Force. He said:

He was a quiet achiever who displayed a positive enthusiasm with a work ethic where he demonstrated on a daily basis his professionalism and dedication to his duties. The strong relationships he forged with a number of his colleagues are an indication of the high regard he was held in by all around him.

In memory of Constable Tanzeel and in harmony with the best wishes of Tanzeel's family, a charity appeal partnered with the Australian Penny Appeal was established. The appeal is focused on providing assistance to the millions of people currently affected by the devastating floods in Pakistan. The appeal's GoFundMe campaign reached its intended goal and raised just over \$7,000. The funds will now be used by the Australian Penny Appeal to provide to those impacted by the floods various essentials such as shelters, groundsheets, food packs, hot food, and other materials. This is truly a noble cause, and one which contributes to Constable Tanzeel's already rich legacy.

Our local community is indeed in mourning following the death of such a fine young police officer, who contributed so much to our community and to the people of our State. On behalf of this Parliament, I take this opportunity to extend my deepest condolences to his family: Tanzeel's parents, Iftikhar and Rani; and his sisters, Zarah and Aleesa, who spoke beautifully at Tanzeel's memorial service. I acknowledge his friends and colleagues. I thank Constable Tanzeel Iftikhar for his service. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

LIVERPOOL LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (17:18): I congratulate the many local businesses that were recognised at the Liverpool Local Business Awards recently. The Local Business Awards aim to pay tribute to and reward the local community's best and most innovative businesses. They also aim to grow and strengthen the bonds between businesses and the community, thereby improving the standards of our local businesses. Local residents are responsible for voting and the awards give local businesses the opportunity to promote their business and its strengths, display their range of products and services, and provide instore displays of their Local Business Awards success. These awards offer the community and businesses the opportunity to come together to celebrate excellence and quality.

The Holsworthy electorate was proudly represented at the awards, with several businesses winning in their respective categories right across the board. Some winners include The Paper Mill Food in Liverpool, winner of the Outstanding Restaurant category. Although The Paper Mill has only been open since August 2019 and obviously has to get through COVID, it has become a landmark food destination for the region. It has four incredible dining venues and fantastic private dining and event spaces. It really is a great little hub for anything from a casual coffee to a more formal event. It is becoming the place to go. King Ananas Supermarket, located in Casula Mall, was the winner of the Outstanding Fruit and Vegetable Shop category. King Ananas has fantastic produce that locals love, as well as great specials every week. I know the Casula Mall likes promoting them on its Facebook page, which generates a lot of business. King Ananas is also an international grocer that has lots of unique produce for locals to purchase.

Fit Clinic, located in Casula Mall, was the winner in the Fitness Services category. Fit Clinic is run by exercise physiologists who offer a range of services and programs for locals who are looking for physical support and assistance. Enunciate Speech Pathology and OT Services, located in Casula, was the winner of the Health Improvement Services category. It offers assistance and support programs to adults and children in Liverpool—who might be able to say their name better, which would be good—and the surrounding region with the aim of making a real difference to people's lives. DJJeffcoat Constructions is based in Holsworthy and is the winner of the Outstanding Service and Trade category. It is a small, family-run business and its work ranges from small carpentry jobs to full renovations. I always find it humbling to see family businesses recognised at these awards because I can imagine the hours and commitment that go into a family business, its survival and its success, to which the whole family contributes. I come from a family business background and remember how we all chipped in to answer the phones and did what was needed to make that family business a success.

The Young Achievers Early Learning Centre in Liverpool was the winner of Outstanding Early Childhood Centre. It prides itself on being the best early learning institution in south-west Sydney, and is committed to supporting children's education and development. The Australian Dance and Drama Co. in Moorebank was the winner of the Outstanding Dance Studio category. The studio has students starting from as young as 18 months old all the way through to pre-professional. It offers something for everyone. I especially mention Mobility Masters Australia, which is located in Chipping Norton. It was the winner of the Outstanding Specialised Business category. This incredible small business installs vehicle aids for members of the community who are living with a disability. The team at Mobility Masters are focused on helping those who are challenged with mobility to get them out in the community and help them to have their independence and freedom. Their speciality is vehicle modification and installation of vehicle aids, helping to bring quality of life to those who need it.

The team is passionate about what they do. They continually go above and beyond to provide a service that is uniquely tailored and equipped for each client's individual needs and transport requirements. They pride themselves on the relationship that they create with their clients, their families and their caregivers to ensure that their work is completely suited to those who need it. Small businesses such as that deserve to be recognised at these awards. Not only is it fantastic at what it does, but its work makes a real difference in our local community. It is no secret that small businesses are at the heart of our economy and community, and I am proud to be part of a party and a government that supports them. I once again congratulate all the winners, the finalists and everyone who was nominated and recognised in this year's Liverpool Local Business Awards. They should take so much pride in their achievements, and I wish them all the best for their future endeavours.

WYONG ELECTORATE COMMUNITY GROUPS

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (17:24): I take the opportunity to raise an issue that probably affects my community as well as a number of communities across the State. I am sure that Mr Assistant Speaker, like me, gets regular requests from community groups for new homes. Once upon a time we had peppercorn rents. Local community groups could find a location and on a peppercorn rent for as low as \$1. It would be a place they could call home, store all their equipment and from which they could conduct their great community service. There is a tendency these days to move to market rents. That means a lot of organisations are being pushed out of the facilities they have inhabited for a long time or they cannot find a suitable facility. Being a not-for-profit organisation and

engaging in activities that do not make money means they are unable to afford the market rent, even with considerable fundraising efforts.

Most recently I was approached by the Central Coast Woodturners. For a number of years its home has been the milk factory at Wyong. Dave Hannan, who owns the facility, has been very generous to our community over a long period. Recently, it received news that its rent would go from quite low to quite high. It is unable to meet the new commitment and is trying to find a new home, which is difficult. Many of the council buildings are quite old and already occupied. Funding for new buildings is tight, but finding land to build them on is also difficult. Governments of all persuasions should have a careful look at this problem. Those community groups are gathering places for men, women and children. They enable people to socialise, which is good for mental health, so they serve a real purpose in our community. It would be a real shame if those groups were unable to continue simply because they were literally priced out of the market.

I have visited the big leagues clubs, council and a number of different organisations trying to find a home for the wood-turners. I am reminded it took us a number of years to find another group a home. The Women's Cave, which is based on the Men's Shed model, is all about women's mental health. Its new home is now the old Wyongah Scout Hall, so they are set up and operating. But for a long time, when it could have been providing a service to people in our community, it was homeless. I am not sure what the answer is. I have spoken to council, which now has a policy that when it builds new facilities they are able to be accessed by a range of groups. That is fair, but an organisation like the wood-turners association has large lathes that need to be left in a particular place. It would be a real tragedy if that group, which is a very vibrant group at the moment, ceased to exist simply because it cannot find a new home. I will continue the search, but we need to come up with more innovative ways so that community groups do not have to pay market rent. It is a real inhibitor.

Another example I can tell members about is the Veterans Motorcycle Club Central Coast. It wants to set up a mental health cafe to support former members of the military service. That organisation does not generate money. It is run by volunteers who are providing a service that is very important in our community. The club cannot find a place to set up the cafe. There are people out there with great ideas but they are being priced out of the market. Our whole community is poorer for that. Many of our communities, especially in regional areas, were developed around community organisations that grew and then became a place where people belonged. If those community organisations and hubs do not exist so people can come together to socialise and support each other, then all of our communities will be much poorer.

NORTHERN TABLELANDS ROAD MAINTENANCE

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (17:29): I have spoken in this House time and again about the number one issue across the Northern Tablelands and more largely across regional New South Wales—that is, the standard of rural and regional health care and the services that in many parts of the State are not what they used to be, despite the improvement in the health facility infrastructure. Tonight, I report to the House there is an issue that has probably surpassed that in very recent times. The issue is similar across not only regional New South Wales but also other parts of the State—that is, the deteriorating and dangerous condition of a number of our roads. It is not only main arterial roads and highways but also local roads.

Across regional areas that is exacerbated by the fact that we do not have, unlike other parts of the State, access to plentiful resources such as public transport. We rely on road transport to get to school, work, sport and recreation, health services and, importantly, to get our produce and valuable commodities from our region out to the domestic and international markets. We also rely on road transport to bring in resources to make sure that we continue to produce the food and fibre that our State and our world relies on.

We have had more rain in the past 12 or 18 months than we have had in our part of the world for the five years that preceded it. It is an extraordinary amount of wet weather. The roads have deteriorated because whilst the weather has been bad, traffic has continued to increase, particularly in a post-pandemic world, and with production being full throttle, more heavy vehicles are on the roads. Due to the wet weather, councils have not had the ability to get on to the roads to do the heavy patching and reinstatement work that they ordinarily would, particularly as we get into the warmer months of the year.

More broadly there is a timing issue and I think the communities have been quite understanding. Council staff and Transport for NSW staff are making the roads as safe as they can, albeit they are still rough. Eventually, when the weather begins to dry up, the main work will begin. Then it will become an issue of not only weather and workforce but also financial resources. Now is a good time for us as parliamentarians, as legislators, to have a good, hard look at the way that we finance the maintenance of our road networks. We need to look at it holistically rather than just saying they are local roads, so it is the council's responsibility; or they are regional roads, so it is the State Government's responsibility; or it is a national road, so it is the Federal Government's

responsibility. We almost are the architect of our own demise in this country because of the convoluted way that we structure road hierarchy, who is responsible for those roads and who ultimately funds them.

There is an opportunity with a newish Commonwealth Government to look at the way that funds like Roads to Recovery and financial assistance grants are structured, and establish a fixed percentage of taxation revenue that is dedicated to the level of government that looks after—at least in the bush—over 80 per cent of the roads that we drive on. They are local roads, but from a freight perspective they are responsible for 100 per cent of the last mile roads. That would give councils a sustainable, long-term income stream to maintain what is, without doubt, one of the most critical pieces of infrastructure anywhere west of the Great Dividing Range—that is, our local bitumen and gravel roads.

Without a consistent income stream, councils will be forever beholden to whoever sits on the Treasury benches at a Federal and State level for going hand to mouth with various grant programs to keep pace with just standard maintenance without capital improvement. That is not sustainable. We have been lucky. Our Government has been brilliant at funding local councils with roads with the Fixing Local Roads and Fixing Country Roads programs. They have got more money than they know what to do with at the moment. Some of my councils will be continuing with that work for the next three years because they have so many projects funded. But what happens when the tap inevitably gets turned off on those capital grants? We go back to the bare bones and not having enough money for proper maintenance, which eats away at the road networks. It is corrosive. Now is a perfect time, when our communities are focused on roads, to look at the big picture and have a dedicated, long-term funding stream so that our roads never fall into disrepair again.

EAST HILLS GIRLS TECHNOLOGY HIGH SCHOOL

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (17:34): In August, East Hills Girls Technology High School had the honour and privilege of hosting former NASA astronaut Dr Mary Ellen Weber as part of the Powerhouse: Future Space program run by the Powerhouse Museum. The NSW Department of Education has teamed up with the Powerhouse Museum and Magnitude.io to improve the science, technology, engineering and mathematics [STEM] program. Students in the iSTEM course from years 8, 9 and 10 from East Hills Girls Technology, along with students from 11 other high schools who were participating online, were the lucky beneficiaries of Dr Weber's presentation. Dr Weber shared with the students her insights and experiences, including the training she went through, her career and what it was like living onboard space stations during two different missions. She gave the students the opportunity to enquire about the experiences she had while working for NASA and in space, as well as how the students could aspire to be astronauts like her. Dr Weber shared recollections from an outstanding STEM career and offered her insights into the new space era of commercial space.

Following her graduation from Purdue University, she became one of NASA's youngest ever astronauts. Weber logged 450 space hours as a veteran of two space flights. In her talk, she recounted experiences from her 1995 flight aboard *Discovery* to launch a communications satellite and her 2000 flight aboard *Atlantis* to advance construction on the *International Space Station*. Over a decade with NASA, Dr Weber also participated in critical launch, landing and test operations at Kennedy Space Center, Florida, and held senior roles in the areas of procurement and legislative affairs. She began her career as a chemical engineer and holds a PhD in physical chemistry and a Master of Business Administration. In 2012 she founded STELLAR Strategies, LLC, to provide consulting services and strategies for operations in high-stakes business ventures, technology communications and legislative strategy. She is currently a member of the Committee on Innovation and Technology for the NASA Advisory Council.

Her first mission was aboard *Discovery* in 1995, when she helped deliver a communications satellite to orbit and was responsible for checking the systems and sending it into its 22,000-mile orbit above the equator. She performed biotechnology experiments, growing colon cancer tissues, which was never possible before, and later became a leading spokesperson in the field. She also flew on *Atlantis*, the third shuttle mission devoted to *International Space Station* construction. Dr. Weber was responsible for flying the 60-foot robotic arm to manoeuvre a spacewalk crew member along the station's surface and directing the transfer of more than 3,000 pounds of equipment.

The Powerhouse: Future Space program is part of the Lang Walker Family Academy In-Schools Program, which connects participating schools with international experts to help teach about space and encourage future generations to pursue education and careers in space. In this instance, East Hills Girls Technology High School enjoyed an excellent presentation and I can report that they were utterly awestruck by her experiences and her talk. I spoke to the maths and science teachers afterwards and we all agreed it was likely that many aspiring astronauts would come out of East Hills Girls Technology High School in the future and that was it highly likely students would choose science and maths subjects for their future HSC exams.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper): I bid farewell to our guests in the public gallery, who have sat through so much of our proceedings. I thank them for taking an interest.

SHELLHARBOUR ELECTORATE INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (17:38): I call on the New South Wales Government to stop treating the residents of Dapto and the West Dapto growth area as second-class citizens. This stunningly beautiful part of New South Wales is one of the fastest-growing areas in the State, yet the tired, 12-year-old Liberal-Nationals Government continues to ignore the residents' requests for a fair share of infrastructure spending. The new greenfield subdivisions in places such as Wongawilli and Horsley are attracting hardworking families from all over New South Wales. What a shock they must get when they move from a Liberal-held or Nationals-held seat. They must feel absolutely gutted after forking out tens of thousands of dollars in stamp duty for their new homes only to find that none of it is being spent in Dapto or West Dapto. Members of the Government must be laughing at them for funding their pork-barrelling efforts in marginal Liberal-held and Nationals-held seats.

Twelve years of shameless pork-barrelling has resulted in under-funding for roads and education infrastructure in Dapto and the surrounding growth areas. New residents are being assured by developers that West Dapto has, and I quote directly from Stockland's marketing material, "excellent public schooling options". They promote the schooling options as "grade A". While the teachers and support staff at the schools are definitely "grade A", what a shock it must be when the new residents enrol their children at schools such as Dapto Primary School only to find out that it is currently around 400 students over capacity. The Government knows how many new homes are going into those areas, but it is still failing to provide the school facilities needed. Families deserve certainty from the Government on when additional school infrastructure will be delivered.

The schools are not the only infrastructure being oversold. Stockland is also assuring new home buyers that transport options for residents moving to the new area are "convenient". They certainly could be if the Government actually cared enough to build the desperately needed entry and exit ramps for the M1 motorway at Dapto. Speaking with my constituents at Horsley and Dapto on the weekend I was constantly reminded of the frustration that we all feel about those missing entry and exit points. Five thousand people have now signed my petition calling on the Government to build a piece of infrastructure that is not only needed but absolutely critical for such a fast-growing area. The half-cooked Albion Park Rail bypass, which was only approved as a pork-barrelling exercise to prop up the numbers of the member for Kiama, has made access to West Dapto a nightmare for residents.

While I am on the topic of the member for Kiama, he did offer one piece of infrastructure to the residents of West Dapto, and it was a jail. That is right. Forget about the schools and the roads. Back when the member for Kiama was allowed in the Parliament, he called me to congratulate me that the residents of West Dapto were getting a brand new jail. I told him that we would be getting a jail over my dead body. I am still kicking and I was absolutely able to fight him off on behalf of the community as the jail plans were thankfully scrapped. I am sure developers like Stockland appreciate my efforts as I cannot imagine a jail would go well with any of its marketing material.

The schools and roads are not the only infrastructure that is lacking. Dapto and West Dapto desperately need a Service NSW centre and the Dapto TAFE, which is currently a police shooting range. Imagine an educational facility being leased out to the police as a shooting range! The TAFE needs to be refurbished and reopened so that we can train the thousands of skilled workers required in the Illawarra and beyond. The Liberals and The Nationals' record on providing infrastructure for the people of Dapto and West Dapto is diabolical. It is time for a change of Government, and Labor is ready to step up for the people of West Dapto, the Illawarra and, more broadly, New South Wales.

COFFS COAST EVENTS

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (17:42): It is a well-known fact that the Coffs Coast is the number one destination in New South Wales. It is not only the perfect place to live, work and raise a family; it is also cementing its reputation as an outstanding host of major events thanks to the strong support of the New South Wales Government. The anticipation is building, with some significant events being staged on the Coffs Coast in the coming weeks. Woolgoolga will play host to some of the world's most elite beach athletes with the popular Summer of Surf World Cup series hosting a four-day event thanks to the New South Wales Government's Regional Events Acceleration Fund. A \$200,000 grant under round two of the fund will allow an expected 10,000 visitors flocking to Woolgoolga Beach to watch the ocean swim, beach events and fun run among other summer sports on 27 October to 30 October.

Woolgoolga surf club will be at the very heart of all activities, and it is where we gathered in September to make the Summer of Surf World Cup announcement. I was joined by my colleague Deputy Premier Paul Toole, elite athlete and Olympian Lachlan Tame, Woolgoolga surf club president Les Pepper, Coffs Harbour councillor Jonathan Cassell, and Summer of Surf organisers Trent Goulding and Ben Cochrane. The festival will be a terrific opportunity for locals and visitors alike to see some of the best domestic and international lifesavers do their thing, competing in multiple surf events over a four-day family-friendly festival. With so many visitors expected and the finals to be livestreamed around the world, it is also a fantastic opportunity to promote our beautiful region and our stunning beaches.

It is not just about the sand and surf, though. A free festival zone will incorporate food trucks, market stalls, art, live music and a movie night to ensure that there is truly something for everyone to enjoy over the course of the festival so they have more overnight stays. The Regional Events Acceleration Fund is supporting the growth of existing regional events and attracting major new domestic and international events to regional New South Wales. It shows that the Liberal-Nationals Government is serious about driving investment and tourism in the regions. The Regional Events Acceleration Fund is putting more heads on beds, filling restaurants and cafes, and helping drive growth in regional New South Wales. The fund has already supported more than 80 events and attracted an estimated one million visitors to the regions.

The funding secured from the fund will allow the Summer of Surf to showcase elite athletes in an event not seen since before the COVID-19 pandemic. With many sports being sidelined since COVID, I know Summer of Surf is excited to work with the New South Wales Government to create an amazing athlete and community experience, while bringing together the world's best surf lifesavers to Woolgoolga and the Coffs Coast. On 4 and 5 November the Coffs Harbour Education Campus sports field will be venue for the Big Bonanza, a massive comedy gala and music festival. The Big Bonanza, which is being held for the first time on the Coffs Coast, will be even bigger thanks to \$200,000 in funding from the New South Wales Government. Back in June I joined festival director Ben Lewis and City of Coffs Harbour Mayor, Councillor Paul Amos, at the Coffs Harbour Education Campus for the announcement under the Regional Events Acceleration Fund.

The Big Bonanza is a two-day music, comedy and food extravaganza, and the funding is helping with the staging of this live entertainment spectacular. The star-studded line-up features Wolfmother, You Am I, Draph, The Beautiful Girls, The Bamboos, The Buoys, Gabriella Cohen, comedians Dave Hughes, Judith Lucy, Geraldine Hickey and Dilruk Jayasinha. Cal Wilson will be emcee and there is a special musical performance by Phil Jamieson. To quote from the Big Bonanza website:

What do you get when you cross a stellar music festival, with the biggest outdoor comedy gala event ever held in regional Australia paired with cocktail & wine bars, a beer garden and a delectable array of street food? The funnest two days of your life.

The Big Bonanza is anticipated to be a major drawcard for Coffs Coast locals and visitors, which will help boost our local economy. It is destined to become yet another flagship event for the Coffs Coast and a welcome fixture on our impressive events calendar. After a successful inaugural NRL event last year, the C. ex Coffs International Stadium hosted another Telstra Premiership game in 2022. With the Coffs Coast firmly on the radar of elite national sports teams and competitions, local and visiting NRL fans welcomed the return of the Cronulla Sharks and the Gold Coast Titans on the 18 June. In a joint partnership the New South Wales Government, the NRL, City of Coffs Harbour and the Cronulla Sharks came together to make this happen and further cement the Coffs Coast as the Sharks' home away from home. I am proud that the New South Wales Government provided \$100,000 under the Regional Events Acceleration Fund to City of Coffs Harbour for the delivery of this year's fixture.

PUBLIC HOUSING MAINTENANCE

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (17:47): I put on record concerns that we have been seeing growing in the Newtown electorate across the public housing community when it comes to issues of maintenance. A lot of members in this place will have had the experience of seeing the dire state of public housing maintenance and the really disturbing way that the maintenance system works for public housing tenants. In many cases, it is making people who are already vulnerable and in need of support much sicker as a result of having to deal with the processes. Public housing in New South Wales is facing a maintenance crisis. In the last financial year the Land and Housing Corporation [LAHC] received 568,216 maintenance requests, 29,100 of which were urgent. My office is contacted by several local public housing tenant residents every day, dealing with outrageous lack of care and inefficiencies by LAHC.

This should not be happening. These homes are public infrastructure. If the Government took this infrastructure seriously, it would be maintaining the homes and taking care of the properties that are in public ownership before it got to the crisis point of last year receiving 29,100 urgent maintenance requests. We see all sorts of things. Tenants are provided with different job numbers each time they report the same issue, rather than being provided with updates or repairs. Other tenants spend over an hour waiting for an urgent repair call to be

answered. They are then forced to make a dozen or more other phone calls, resulting in promised attendances that then do not occur. Just today at a Redfern social housing forum—which, unfortunately, I was unable to attend in person—tenants were saying that they had finally got through to the maintenance line to report the job. The contractor went out. They were in their home and then they saw a card being slipped under the door saying that the contractor was unable to do the work.

The Government is being taken for a ride because my guess is those contractors, and the large corporations that are making money from engaging them, are making huge amounts of money meeting their so-called key performance indicators by turning up to the job on time but not fixing the actual problem. In the last budget estimates Minister Roberts said that it takes on average six days for maintenance requests to be filled. I do not know about other members in this place, but a lot of the time residents have extreme maintenance issues and my office will escalate that significantly to the team leader, the client services officer, staff in the Minister's office or senior people within the Land and Housing Corporation. Despite this, in one case a resident had leaking sewerage in her unit for over a month. We had to keep ringing up and asking for additional days of temporary accommodation because the sewage had not been cleaned. Surely that demonstrates the brokenness of this system.

Another resident had a serious mould issue that was reported to the maintenance line several times in April this year. When my office raised the issue, she had job numbers but maintenance had no record of the job ever being logged. Serious security issues such as roller doors being left unrepaired and hinged open have resulted in tenants having their property broken into and their cars and vehicles stolen. In other cases, tenants have caused themselves harm by breaking bones or hips as a result of walking on unfixed pavement in common areas. In addition, we see an endless struggle between issues around hard rubbish and illegal dumping in public housing areas and a constant stoush between the council and LAHC as to whose responsibility it is to pick it up.

Nobody should be forced to face this inconvenience and indignity, and the resulting health and safety issues and risks. Nobody should ever be forced to live in a home that floods, with a ceiling or walls that are covered in mould or have sewerage leaks, deal with inoperable locks, or be unable to access the community because the lifts are broken once again. But that is exactly what happens to people in public housing. This is what they have to contend with every day. They are required to pay rent in those consistently unacceptable living conditions. That is why we need to ensure we are funding the maintenance budget of public housing in a way that improves our public housing stock, not selling it off and privatising it but putting big money into meeting the maintenance backlog. We also need to recognise there is so much wrong with the private contractors that are delivering the work. I urge the Government to act.

NORTHERN RIVERS HOUSING

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (17:52): I want to talk about housing—or, in particular, the lack of it—not only in my electorate of Lismore, but also across the Northern Rivers and impacting the North Coast as well. I have spoken about that issue quite a few times in this place. I will continue to do so and take other action until we get an agreement on targets that are needed. The 20-year vision of the *Housing 2041 - NSW Housing Strategy* talks about what people and communities should have, which is access to housing that is secure, diverse and supported, irrespective of whether they are in metro or regional areas. It talks about choices, support and opportunity, including for people in crisis—and there are many people in crisis across the electorate of Lismore and in the Northern Rivers.

It also talks about social housing residents and private rental tenants. It says that homes need to be accessible and suitable for different stages of life and life-changing circumstances, and connected to local facilities, jobs and social networks, with infrastructure, services and spaces that people need to live sustainably. It also says that homes need to be designed to support human wellbeing, respond to the environment and maximise technology, and support local character and place. This is all in the *Housing 2041 - NSW Housing Strategy*, but there are no targets. I am still to find a target in this housing strategy. I ask the question of the Government: How can there be a housing strategy without a target attached to it? It does not make sense to me. I agree with everything in this whole document entitled *Housing 2041*. I cannot imagine that any member would disagree. It is beautiful, but there is no target. It is like a scene out of *Yes Minister* when the hospital that has no patients gets the highest accreditation. When I look at this, I think, "Beautiful document, but not a target."

I drew that to the Premier's attention in Murwillumbah during a visit with people from Housing in one of the centres immediately after the flood. I raised it directly with him and we had quite a conversation about it. There are other issues to do with housing, particularly in the Northern Rivers. In August a large organisation called Social Futures drew to my attention the absolute need for nearly 18,600 social and affordable homes. It delivered to my office 186 tiny origami homes, which are hanging up in my office, to be representative of the 18,600 houses needed in the area. When I talk about the area I mean the electorate of Lismore but also further than that, covering Richmond Tweed, some of Grafton and some of Coffs Harbour. That organisation did not just say, "We need it." These figures are from a report by University of New South Wales City Futures Research Centre and Everybody's

Home, which found that one million new social and affordable homes are needed by 2036. The report gives a whole lot of figures right across the State and I think members are familiar with that report. The figures were taken from a proper survey study.

The rental market is now the most unaffordable and tighter than any time during the pandemic, immediately before the floods. Some 10,000 social houses are needed, as are more than 5,000 affordable houses, and that is probably an underestimate. There is a lot of talk about houses, homelessness and supply, but the proper mechanisms are not in place for that to happen. If we do not have supply, we cannot house people and we cannot end homelessness. These are the issues that I am absolutely seized with in my electorate; I know a lot of members are. It is a huge need for everybody. I call upon the Government to set some targets.

SEVEN HILLS ELECTORATE HIGHER SCHOOL CERTIFICATE STUDENTS

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills) (17:57): I acknowledge the year 12 students in the electorate of Seven Hills who have recently graduated and are undertaking their Higher School Certificate final examinations over the next few weeks. The electorate of Seven Hills is home to hundreds of students. Senior students can complete their final years of education at Blacktown Boys High School, Blacktown Girls High School, Catherine McAuley Westmead, Glenwood High School, The Hills Sports High School, Model Farms High School, Northmead Creative and Performing Arts High School, Pendle Hill High School, Seven Hills High School, Toongabbie Christian College and Parramatta Marist High School, Westmead.

Those schools offer exceptional opportunities in areas for students to excel in all aspects of their learning, from the athletic emphasis seen at The Hills Sports High School to the many skills highlighted at Northmead Creative and Performing Arts High School. All senior schools in the Seven Hills electorate offer environments for students to excel academically, and teachers and staff work around the clock to facilitate learning and development for all students. Over the next few weeks year 12 students are completing the formal part of their long academic journeys. That completion was marked by a graduation ceremony which acknowledged the various academic and extracurricular endeavours undertaken by students right across the year. I was fortunate enough to attend the graduation at Seven Hills High School and participate in the ceremony.

The pinnacle of a student's career is completing the Higher School Certificate, known as the HSC. Students start the HSC in year 11 as they select subjects and begin learning preliminary content. The HSC offers a unique range of subjects that cater to all students' passions and needs. English, maths, geography, art, music, engineering, physics, biology and chemistry are only a few of the many subjects that students can select to study over year 11 and year 12. Once they have completed their preliminary year, students then proceed to the final year of education in year 12, where they begin to put their many years of learning to the test as they complete assessments, all culminating in their final examinations.

Yesterday over 75,000 year 12 students across New South Wales began sitting their final exams before embarking on the next chapter of their lives. Some 782 of those are from the Seven Hills electorate. Yesterday they sat their first English paper, followed by their second English paper today. HSC exams will finish on 4 November this year, followed by the release of results in December. I encourage local students to take advantage of the resources provided for them at this time, including those by the New South Wales Department of Education Stay healthy HSC hub. It is important for students to look after their physical and mental health by setting aside appropriate time to rest and spend time doing things they enjoy.

I extend my best wishes to all local year 12 students in the Seven Hills electorate who are currently undertaking their exams. I am confident that they have all prepared well for the task ahead and will be pleased with their results. I include a special good luck to one year 12 student by the name of Seronique Paige Taylor. Finally I thank the local teachers and support staff who work around the clock to make the year stress free for year 12 students, the teachers who make learning enjoyable and are always willing to provide valuable feedback, the year coordinators who offer support around the clock, and the administration staff who ensure that everything runs according to schedule. I thank them for their efforts throughout the year. They have not gone unnoticed.

CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (18:01): There is a colloquial statement by a famous English playwright William Shakespeare, "Something is rotten in the State of Denmark." That colloquialism refers to when things are not going as well as they should be. I highlight the time it takes to approve a development application [DA] on the Central Coast, which relates to the topic of the member for Lismore's private member's statement. There are many housing targets, which do a whole lot of things, but they cannot be met when the system is totally clogged. My research found some recent data from August 2022 which suggests that development applications through Central Coast Council in the recent financial year are averaging 122 days compared to 47 days in 2020. I spoke to Minister Anthony Roberts about it and I must admit he had a very sympathetic ear. He gave some extra

resources to Central Coast Council, which locals appreciate, and he said that there was a 65 per cent improvement. If development applications are taking 122 days now, one can only imagine what it used to be like.

The industry says that it is actually worse than that because the number of days begins from when the application is given a number after it finally enters the portal, which can take up to three months. The development application is submitted, it takes three months to get a number and then it takes another 122 days. That was brought home to me just prior to question time today when I received an email from Patrick, who is organising a local farmers' market to support local farmers and producers. He is using a defined existing carpark at Mingara Recreation Club. He is not building anything; he just wants to run the event. His application was submitted to Central Coast Council on 21 January and received approval on 21 September. That is an eight-month wait for a DA to run an event in an area that needs nothing done to it. That really brings the situation home. Patrick said:

Hallelujah! Some say 8x months is quick, but considering that there is no structure being build and no changes to the land/environment (markets are running on the assigned private parking lot of Mingara).

No wonder development in the Central Coast is held back.

I have to agree with him. The industry is very worried. We have housing targets on the Central Coast, and they are reasonably ambitious. However, according to industry, delivery is only at 30 per cent. A target is no good if only 30 per cent is delivered. The clog exists because there are not enough planners. Council says off the record that there are not enough planners because the State Government keeps creating new bodies that suck up all the planners to write glossy brochures and plans. We are going from having a regional plan to a city plan. But guess what? It is the same plan. They have just changed the name on the cover. Those people are being sucked in at a State level, leaving local government with no-one to do the work to get the houses, the events and the infrastructure on the ground. That is a real worry.

We have to look at this very carefully. The planners need to be where they will make the most difference. And that is not in offices writing plans; it is looking at DAs and making approvals so that people's hard-earned investments come to fruition. What is really scary is that developers have put in development applications and people have home loans because they have bought land and home packages. But the house and land packages are not being registered in a timely way, so they are at risk of losing their deposits and defaulting on their bank loan because they have nothing on the ground.

That problem needs to be looked at and the Government needs to put resources where they are needed. The flying squads sound like a good idea, but they come in and go out. In my electorate where a lot of development is going on, and I think Lake Macquarie would be similar—Maitland definitely is the same—there is a housing stress because people are waiting for houses. There is a whole range of other things going on, so we have to process those approvals. It is not that the land is not there. It is not that people do not have the money. It is not that the plans have not been drawn up, just that they cannot get approval to proceed. The situation is absolutely tragic and it is having a knock-on effect through the whole system. So let's do a better job. Let's get on with it and help people where they need it most.

BONNET BAY FOOTBALL CLUB

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (18:06): As I have said time and again in this place, sport is at the heart of who we are in the Sutherland shire, and today I celebrate 40 amazing years of Bonnet Bay Football Club, the mighty lime green Bombers. I was pleased to join Bonnet Bay Football Club to celebrate this important milestone, which was nothing short of an extravaganza. The festivities included the club's junior presentation, market stalls, food and beverage pop-ups, bands, entertainers and even fireworks bringing together not only the "Lime Green Army" but also the wider community, which could not be held away even by the rain. It demonstrates the importance of the club to Bonnet Bay and the entire local community. Organising such an event is no small task, and it would be remiss of me not to recognise Gary Williamson, Nick Kontogiorgis, Anthony McDonald and Andrew Collins for their amazing efforts.

Bonnet Bay Football Club was founded in 1982 by Bill De La Garde, Gary Williams, Wally Cooper and Brian Butler. It has grown to hold a special place in the hearts of many in the community. The club's crest contains the words "belong, engage, grow", reflecting the values of the club, which has reputation as a welcoming environment with an incredible ability to coach and develop quality talent. Originally comprised of seven teams, the Bombers quickly grew to include an adult men's team in 1984. Earlier this year, the Bombers celebrated 25 years of women's football at the bay, with a celebration at The Hangar. By way of background, when the Bombers' first female team was created in 1997, the W14B all-girls team featured only two players who had played football before. In their first game, the ladies took on Lilli Pilli Football Club, losing 7-0, before going on to defeat Lilli Pilli again in what I am told was a gripping 3-2 final finish to win the grand final that year. Bonnet Bay Football Club has continued to grow its women's teams, with this year marking 19 consecutive years of fielding a Premier League women's team or equivalent.

Throughout its history, Bonnet Bay Football Club has seen significant success on and off the field. In 2008 the club was awarded the Sutherland Shire Football Association club championship for the Men's All Age categories 1 to 3. In 2011 the Bombers exceeded 600 players for the first time, with 46 teams playing across all levels of the Sutherland Shire competition—that is a lot of lime green. Importantly, in recognition of its growth, strong culture, facilities and personal development programs as well as achieving community engagement with local and charitable causes, Bonnet Bay Football Club was awarded Community Club of the Year at the 2018 NSW Community Sports Awards. Today Bonnet Bay Football Club has over 700 players, 48 teams and a membership of which around 30 per cent is female.

In its fortieth year, Bonnet Bay Football Club fielded both men's and women's teams in each division, with the women's team placing third and the men's reserve grade winning their premiership. I also recognise the 035B, AL14 and W16C teams who were also awarded the most improved. It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the work of the technical team—namely, Mick McGovern and Jason Cuevas—who work tirelessly to promote and coach the club's players. The Bombers' reach extends even outside the Shire, given their partnership with Happy Football Cambodia Australia [HFCA] in Cambodia. Since 2012, the Bombers have regularly sent members to visit Cambodia to play football and support the local community. Before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, in October 2019 the Bombers sent seven talented young women to Cambodia to run football clinics and work with young female players to develop their skills. Bonnet Bay is looking to return to Cambodia in the near future to continue to support HFCA.

None of the club's success is possible without the exceptional dedication of every volunteer who makes each season possible. I take the opportunity to make special mention of Bonnet Bay Football Club's current executive committee including Andrew Symes, Carla Richardson, Mike Elliott, Ian Petrovski, Garry Williamson, Marc Orklin, Kristianne Wennberg, Kristina Bennett, Clive Riseam, Garry Barnes, John Burgess and Brett White. I again congratulate Bonnet Bay Football Club on reaching this impressive milestone and join with them all in celebration of 40 wonderful years. Go the Bay!

MAITLAND HEALTH STAFFING

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (18:10): It is with great disappointment that I speak about the health crisis in Maitland. We acknowledge that Maitland Hospital has had a huge investment in its infrastructure, but the fact remains that the staffing is just not up to standard. I have been so concerned about this that I have written to the health Minister. Recently, referrals were made to the regional health Minister about the people who have come to me with examples of being left waiting at Maitland Hospital's emergency department for hours and hours. It has gotten so bad now that even the Bureau of Health Information statistics tells us that we are the worst in the State. A couple of months ago, one in five people were walking out of Maitland Hospital before they received treatment. The most recent Bureau of Health Information statistics state it is now one in four. That is 25 per cent of people. The problem is that those people end up coming back.

When I raised the issue a couple of weeks ago in question time, members heard about someone who waited for 100 hours on a trolley in the emergency department because they could not get a bed. The throwaway line by the Government was that that person should have seen a GP. That is not appropriate because that person ended up in the intensive care unit [ICU]. That is a real concern. A person does not need a GP if they end up in ICU. It means they have a serious medical condition. I am very upset to hear so many people in my community say, "I won't go to Maitland Hospital. I'll go somewhere else." That is such a poor reflection on the hospital just because it is understaffed. People are saying, "I am so grateful to the nurses, wardspeople, cleaners, every staff member and medical officers." They are so grateful to everyone they interact with for the work that they put in, but they also understand that those staff are under enormous stress.

I have had representatives from the Hunter New England Local Health District saying, "Don't worry about it, Jenny. It's all under control. We've got new people coming in all the time." I was motivated to have a look at some of the positions that are being advertised for Maitland Hospital. I am appalled to say that at least half of those positions are temporary. We have a hospital that is massively under stress. The nurses, doctors, wardsmen, psychiatrists, midwives—everyone employed at the hospital—are struggling to get help, yet they are only getting offered temporary replacements.

I will read out the list of replacements because it is important that members hear about what they are doing: various emergency medical trainees—junior medical officer, unaccredited—temporary; various emergency medical trainees, stage one—temporary; various emergency medical trainees, advanced—temporary; resident medical officer, rotational training—medical officer, general—temporary, with a 12-month multi-site contract; trainee unaccredited OBGYN—junior medical officer unaccredited—temporary; various rehab trainees—medical officers—temporary; trainees in anaesthesia—temporary; senior resident medical officer in orthopaedics—temporary; trainee unaccredited general medical officer—temporary; senior resident medical officer, general—temporary; various psychiatry trainees, advanced—temporary; trainee unaccredited in psychiatry—temporary;

senior resident medical officer in intensive care—temporary. All of these are temporary positions, many of them junior. The concern for me is that even the senior ones are temporary. Just imagine being a nurse, a junior medical officer or other medical officer in that system and thinking help is on the way when we are not attracting or recruiting full-time people into this workforce. We are not attracting highly qualified people.

My understanding of what is going to happen is what is happening on the ground: hardworking staff who are tired, stressed and fed up are getting junior people who have just been offered a temporary contract to help them with the load. Do those hardworking staff look at that person coming onto their ward and think, "Wow! Hallelujah, I've got some help"? No, they think, "This is someone I'm going to have to help to learn what they have to do, and in 12 months they'll be out the door and I'll be left here." This is not the way to run a health system. Our hospital is struggling. I urge Government members to do more. The Government cannot keep telling us that it is increasing staffing when we only have temporary positions instead of positions that will have a positive outcome on health into the future.

PORT MACQUARIE ELECTORATE ROADS PROJECTS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (18:15): This afternoon I inform the House of a number of road projects in the Port Macquarie electorate. Motorists will soon have safer journeys on the Oxley Highway near Wauchope with vehicle-activated signs to be installed at the intersection with King Creek Road. Those new signs will alert motorists heading east or west on the Oxley Highway of vehicle movements at the King Creek Road intersection and warn speeding motorists to slow down. Work is set to start at the end of this month and should be completed by the end of November. Transport for NSW has carefully reviewed and considered the feedback received and will investigate a small roundabout and eastbound slip lane. Last week I wrote to residents in King Creek to advise them of the progress of this development.

One of the longstanding road projects that is inching ever closer to starting is the Ocean Drive duplication in Port Macquarie, with the major works contract of the \$111 million venture recently awarded to Ditchfield Contracting. A total of \$95.5 million has already been committed to this phase of the project, with \$60 million provided by the New South Wales Government and \$35.5 million by the Port Macquarie Hastings Council to ensure a better connected road network for the region. However, recent increases in the costs of construction have resulted in a revised project delivery cost of \$111 million. I have written to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads seeking an increase in the State's contribution. The upgrade will deliver a safer, smoother and faster commute for motorists who use this stretch of road every day, and I look forward to a sod-turning event in the near future.

Another project that will improve safety for motorists is the grade-separated interchange for the Pacific Highway and Cooperook-Harrington interchange. The \$60 million intersection upgrade is being funded by the Australian and New South Wales governments to deliver significant safety improvements. Last week I announced that consultation on the initial concept design is now open. Community feedback will help the project team to understand what is important and to deliver the best outcomes for the community.

An interchange that has been completed is the \$2.9 million upgrade of the intersection of Houston Mitchell Drive and the Pacific Highway. The intersection upgrade has made it safer for locals and visitors alike to access Houston Mitchell Drive. The local community told us that safety at the busy intersection was a priority for them and we have listened. Ultimately, the community wants a grade-separated interchange and I continue to advocate for just that. In fact, last Wednesday, along with members of the Bonny Hills Progress Association, I met via Zoom with the Hon. Sam Farraway, Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, to ask that planning funding be allocated for the design for this project as soon as possible.

I have just highlighted four positive road improvements. Unfortunately, my fifth example is not so positive. Plans for upgrades to several intersections on the much-used Oxley Highway appear to have stalled. Last year more than 450 submissions were received in response to consultation carried out to improve a 9.5 kilometre section of the highway into Port Macquarie. More than 23,500 vehicles use this section of the Oxley Highway every day, including about 1,500 heavy vehicles, and the local insights received during the consultation were invaluable. Three options were presented for the planned upgrades to the Wrights and Lake roads intersection. The community was largely in favour of building an overpass for the Oxley Highway westbound lane and installing traffic lights on the Oxley Highway eastbound at Wrights Road and Lake Road.

The New South Wales Government is investing millions of dollars to progress the designs for those improvements—and we are incredibly appreciative—to develop a longer term transport strategy. As someone who uses that road every day, I share the frustrations of so many local motorists and am concerned about what appears to be a protracted process leading to the next step of planning and design. As I mentioned earlier, recently I met with the Minister and the progress of the Oxley Highway stage two project was again on the agenda. I call

on the New South Wales Government to allocate funding to develop the designs so that work can progress as soon as possible on this critical road infrastructure.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (18:19): I acknowledge the contribution of the member for Port Macquarie. She spoke about five different road projects in her community involving the Pacific Highway and the Oxley Highway and the range of different consultations she has undertaken. I congratulate her on her ongoing advocacy and engagement with her local community. I recognise the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads has joined her in engaging with her local community. I congratulate her on what she has achieved so far, and I look forward to the resolution of the final problem she identified. I thank the House.

ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (18:20): Inner-city communities support the Uluru Statement from the Heart and look forward to a constitutionally recognised First Nations Voice to the Federal Parliament. Australia is fortunate to have one of the oldest living civilisations in the world. It is one rich in culture, with over 250 languages, unique traditions, magnificent art and an inspiring spiritual connection to country and nature. The Sydney electorate is within the Eora nation of the Gadigal people and we have strong communities of Aboriginal people throughout, but especially in Woolloomooloo and Pyrmont.

As Australia matures and embraces its Aboriginal culture, closing the gap of Indigenous disadvantage caused by over two centuries of dispossession and racism must be a priority. Health, mental health, education, justice, out-of-home care, housing and employment outcomes still fall short of a truly equal society. We urgently need culturally sensitive policies and strong investment, but we will only move forward if we work in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations. A shift to a more collaborative approach with self-determination at the forefront is vital to progress and is what Aboriginal people have said, through the Uluru Statement from the Heart, will eliminate disadvantage.

The May 2017 First Nations National Constitutional Convention established the Uluru Statement from the Heart. The statement affirms sovereignty and the longstanding connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have with land and sea, while calling for a representative Voice to Parliament, a treaty—or makarrata—through a makarrata commission, and recognition of Indigenous peoples in our Constitution. I welcome the Albanese Government's first step in this process to initiate a referendum for an Indigenous Voice to Parliament. A constitutionally entrenched Indigenous Voice will firmly redress the history of poor or non-existent consultation and dialogue with First Nations communities. A working group of Indigenous leaders has been set up to create a plan for the referendum, which will likely take place early in the next financial year.

We know that the Voice will be representative, accountable, transparent and operate alongside existing organisations and traditional structures. It will be independent of and provide advice to the Federal Government. I thank the Hon. Linda Burney—a former member of this place who we indeed miss but are so glad is in Canberra—for her amazing leadership throughout this process. I also acknowledge the work of Lord Mayor Clover Moore and the City of Sydney. They have indicated they will support a "yes" campaign, as they did during the marriage equality postal survey. I am confident Australia will vote yes, but supportive community campaigns and a strong result will make it a more uniting win. As someone who has led a campaign on a national vote, I know it can be difficult and challenging. However, ultimately it can unite us, which was what happened when the final legislation for marriage equality went through.

An Indigenous Voice to Parliament must be the first step in honouring the Uluru Statement from the Heart. The new assembly's work must help us achieve a makarrata to provide a process for conflict resolution, peacemaking and justice. Makarrata is a Yolngu word that describes the idea of two parties coming together after a struggle and healing the divisions of the past. It acknowledges that something wrong has been done and seeks to make things right. A makarrata embodies aspirations for an honest and fair relationship with government, self-determination and for a better future. A makarrata can empower communities, build cultural strength and unify through a healing process.

Australia is the only Commonwealth country not to have a formal treaty with its Indigenous people. Treaty processes in countries such as New Zealand, Canada and the United States have helped create unity. South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission is considered to have been crucial to transitioning to full and free democracy in South Africa. But Commonwealth action is not enough. The Uluru Statement from the Heart also provides a framework for State and Territory governments to achieve self-determination. Victoria established the First People's Assembly of Victoria in 2019. The assembly has 32 seats for traditional owners of country in Victoria. Currently 21 were elected and 10 appointed to seats reserved for traditional owner groups. The assembly is leading a treaty process for the State. Work is progressing in all other States, with working groups set up in Western Australia and Tasmania, and commitments in Queensland and South Australia.

New South Wales must work towards an Indigenous Voice to Parliament and a makarrata. The current lack of self-determination will continue to undermine any effort in this State to bridge the gaps and improve the lives of First Nations citizens. It is time to walk with, talk with and sit with First Nations people and jointly acknowledge our shared history of invasion and resistance. I call on this House to support the Federal referendum and to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and communities towards constitutional reform, recognition, a voice in Parliament and a makarrata.

Bills

CRIMES (ADMINISTRATION OF SENTENCES) AMENDMENT (NO BODY, NO PAROLE) BILL 2022

SECURITY INDUSTRY AMENDMENT BILL 2022

CRIMES AMENDMENT (MONEY LAUNDERING) BILL 2022

DEDICATED ENCRYPTED CRIMINAL COMMUNICATION DEVICE PROHIBITION ORDERS BILL 2022

LAW ENFORCEMENT (POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES) AMENDMENT (DIGITAL EVIDENCE ACCESS ORDERS) BILL 2022

Returned

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I report receipt of messages from the Legislative Council returning the bills without amendment.

Community Recognition Notices

CONDELL PARK FOOTBALL CLUB

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I take this opportunity to recognise one of our treasured local Football Clubs, Condell Park Football Club, on an outstanding football season this year. I commend all players, officials and supporters involved with Condell Park Football Club, and congratulate the Grade 16 Division 2 Boys on winning their respective competition this season as part of the BDAFA Competition. This is a well-deserved result, and one the Club should be very proud of. I acknowledge Condell Park Football Club President Maria Fruci, Vice President Bradley Peryman, Treasurer Brett Samuel, Secretary Leanne Peryman, as well as the coaches, players and volunteers, and congratulate the club on a successful season. I also commend Condell Park Football Club on their continued efforts in promoting football within our local community. I am proud to offer my support for Condell Park, and thank the club for their dedication towards supporting high participation rates in football across our region and in supporting local families.

GEORGES RIVER THISTLE FOOTBALL CLUB

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I take this opportunity to recognise one of our treasured local Football Clubs, Georges River Thistle Football Club, on an outstanding football season this year. I commend all players, officials and supporters involved with Georges River Thistle Football Club, and congratulate all the teams that competed in the All Age Ladies Division 1 and All Age Ladies Division 3 on winning their respective competitions this season as part of the BDAFA Competition. This is a well-deserved result, and one the Club should be very proud of. I acknowledge Georges River Thistle Football Club President David Lidgard, Treasurer Trevor Puckering, Secretary Martin Breuer, as well as the coaches, players and volunteers, and congratulate the club on a successful season. I also commend Georges River Thistle Football Club on their continued efforts in promoting football within our local community. I am proud to offer my support for Georges River Thistle Football Club, and thank the club for their dedication towards supporting high participation rates in football across our region and in supporting local families.

EAST BANKSTOWN FOOTBALL CLUB

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I take this opportunity to recognise one of our treasured local Football Clubs, East Bankstown Football Club, on an outstanding football season this year. I commend all players, officials and supporters involved with East Bankstown Football Club, and congratulate all the teams that competed in the Men's Over 45 Division 2 and All Age Men's Division 5 B on winning their respective competitions this season as part of the BDAFA Competition. This is a well-deserved result, and one the Club should be very proud of. I acknowledge East Bankstown Football Club President Roger Silvera, Vice President Chris Millar, Treasurer Leon Reynolds, Secretary Sue Byrn, as well as the coaches, players and volunteers, and congratulate the club on a successful season. I also commend East Bankstown Football Club on their continued efforts in promoting football within our local community. I am proud to offer my support for East Bankstown, and thank the club for

their dedication towards supporting high participation rates in football across our region and in supporting local families.

40 YEARS MILESTONE FOR KIAMA'S ORIGINAL ICE CREAMERY

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Kiama's Original Ice Creamery on Terralong Street recently celebrated 40 years of serving locals and tourists since it first began in 1982. First opened as The Great Australian Ice Creamery, Geoff and Loris Kelton took over after nine years, moved the shop away from the franchise and created the business as it stands today. Geoff and Loris handed the scoops over to Susie Kipa and Colin Child 22 years ago in 2000. Together, they formed a family business with their three daughters, passing the business over to them two years ago. When Susie took over, she says Geoff told her there were three things she must remember: never forget your identity, you are an ice cream shop; always have good lighting; and never be complacent. They are looking into refurbishing the shop but will insist on keeping some of the original pieces that hold cherished memories for many locals and visitors to the Kiama township. Keita and Susie say the celebration was to thank all customers, staff and our local community for strongly supporting them over the years.

KIAMA LOCAL MITCH SWAN TAKING ON THE WORLDS HARDEST HALF MARATHON

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—In a bid to raise awareness and funding for spinal cord injury, walking paraplegic Mitch Swan is taking on the world's hardest half marathon. Mitch, along with four friends, are trekking the 21.1km walk to contribute to the Perry Cross Spinal Research Foundation which aims to find a cure for paralysis. The Point to Pinnacle is dubbed as one of the hardest marathons due to the 1270 metres of ascending, gradients above ten per cent and extreme changes in climate and weather conditions from Hobart to Mount Wellington. It is set to see 3,000 starters in the race to the Pinnacle this year on 20th November. Hayden Bombaci, Mitch's friend of 30 years, says there is no better way for him and his friends to get around Mitch than walk alongside him. A motocross accident saw the Kiama local break his back in 2008 where he was initially a full paraplegic but later gained back 20 to 30 per cent function. Mitch and his friends have become well acquainted with Saddleback Mountain as they prepare for the elevation of the course. Support the Perry Cross Spinal Research Foundation through Mitch's team at <https://mitch-swan.raisely.com/>.

OPERA IN THE VALLEY AT THE JAMBEROO SCHOOL OF ARTS IN NOVEMBER

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—It is 25 years since the first Jamberoo CWA Opera in the Valley and hopes are very high that its return will be the best one yet on Saturday 5th November 2022 at the Jamberoo School of Arts from 8pm. I would like to acknowledge Cathy Delhaas from Jamberoo CWA. Glenn Amer will again be the musical director and pianist on the night, given his international standing and work with Opera Australia. Singers will include: Soprano Mary-Jean O'Doherty, the first prize winner in the 2013 Paris Opera Awards. She won the ABC Symphony Australia Young Vocalist Award and was the first recipient of the Australian International Opera Award. Mezzo-Soprano Johanna Knoechel, a young singer who completed BMus Studies in Classical Singing at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and was awarded an AMusA with Distinction. Italian Lyrico Spinto Tenor Lorenzo Rositano, who holds a masters in Opera and has appeared as Principal Tenor in many opera and operetta roles. Baritone Daniel Macey, who graduated from Sydney Conservatorium with an Advanced Diploma of Opera.

DR ANNE RING 'ENGAGING WITH AGEING: WHAT MATTERS AS WE GROW OLDER'

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—To celebrate this year's International Day of Older Persons theme, health sociologist, Dr Anne Ring launched her book 'Engaging with Ageing: What Matters as we Grow Older' in the NSW Parliament. This book allows each and every one of us to participate in a revolutionary conversation about ageing, and what it is really all about. As an ageing-activist, Dr Ring's mission is to challenge the default negativity around growing older that pervades our 'culture of youth'. This book covers new research and real-life stories on ageing-related topics, from staying healthy to exploring questions like 'what's wrong with looking old?', and 'why does society undervalue age when there's so much going for it?' I urge all my colleagues and everyone in our community if you haven't already done so, read this useful guide for those of us who are ageing ourselves, but also for those of us who are in a caring relationship with older people and supporting them through their ageing lives. Congratulations Dr Ring, I applaud the publication of your wonderful book. Thank you for sharing with us the gift that you have worked so hard to refine.

HORNSBY KU-RING-GAI COMMUNITY TRANSPORT 35TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy)—Today I recognise the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Community Transport. They were incorporated in June 1987, and recently took the time to celebrate a milestone. For 35 years this valuable not-for-profit community care organisation, based in Turramurra, has provided transport services to veterans, people with disabilities, chronic illness, and adults aged 65 and over. This allows these groups to take social outings together as well as attend medical and social appointments. Starting

with one driver in his own vehicle, today they have 14 vehicles with 22 drivers, supported by 11 admin staff. Their aim is to support clients living independently in the Hornsby and Ku-ring-gai local government areas who are isolated in their homes but would like to maintain their independence. Some of their clients are over 100-years of age with many taking advantage of the service for a number of years. For their voluntary support and service to the community, I sincerely thank all those involved with the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Community Transport through the hard-working General Manager, Helen Crouch. Congratulations on your milestone and may you continue for many years to come.

HORNSBY SALVOS

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy)—The Salvation Army Hornsby Gateway Corps have made a phenomenal contribution to the Hornsby District for over a century. They were first represented in the area as an outpost of the Ryde Corps in the 1890s, before they were established in the area. Hornsby's first Salvation Army Hall was built in 1921 on the corner of Burdett and Hunter Streets and was rebuilt in 1965. In 1988, a third hall was constructed, at their current site, to keep up with their growing needs. Their service to the community, supporting those in need through the Community Service Centre and mobilising its emergency services in times of crises, has always been outstanding. Recently I was pleased to be able to support their important work through a \$45,000 community grant towards a new commercial kitchen and community café. These facilities recently opened and were the result of collaboration with a number of community groups. Hornsby Salvos are now able to prepare community meals and provide valuable education through meal planning. Under the leadership of Captain Sean Li and his wife Lydia, I am certain the Hornsby Salvos will go on to serve Hornsby for many years to come.

LACHLAN CABOR – SHELLHARBOUR SUNS JUNIOR AFL

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I take this opportunity to extend my congratulations to Shellharbour Suns Junior AFL player, Lachlan Cabor, on being selected as a rising star of the AFL and playing in the 2022 AFL Futures Match. Lachlan joined an elite group of AFL stars of the future in the Team Murphy Squad against Team Houli at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on AFL Grand Final Day, 24 September 2022. Thank you to all of the hard working coaches, trainers and other volunteers at the Shellharbour Suns on guiding Lachlan throughout his Junior AFL career.

LES TOMICH - NSW JP 50 YEARS OF SERVICE

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I congratulate Mr Les Tomich, in recognition of reaching 50 years' service as a New South Wales Justice of the Peace. This is a remarkable achievement and one that deserves to be honoured. Justices of the Peace play a very important role in the legal system and in our community by helping people at key moments in their lives and serve as independent witnesses to documents people use for official or legal purposes. Mr Tomich's invaluable contributions to local government during his tenure with Albury City Council for twenty six years, include his role as General Manager from 2005 to 2012, saw him awarded the Order of Australia, for his outstanding service in local government and to the regional city of Albury. This was followed by his involvement with ATEL (Apprentices Trainees Employment Limited), where he has helped train thousands of young people and the elderly in a variety of trades, then assisted them to obtain jobs once qualified. Les - thank you for your outstanding contribution and continuous service to our community both through your work and as a volunteer.

SAVERNAKE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I acknowledge the history and proud role of Savernake Public School, situated in the south-western region of the Riverina Highway. The school was first constructed in 1884 and was used to connect and accommodate for the growing number of farming families in the area. It quickly established itself as a hub for the community and school events. During the 1950's and 1990's the school saw its highest enrolment numbers peak at an average of 50 students. Principals and teachers over the decades created a solid foundation for higher education and training for the young people of the region. With changing times and demographics, student numbers declined, and the school has now been placed in recess. Savernake P & C is planning a day this weekend to farewell and honour the many years and achievements the school has contributed over the years. Savernake Public School will live long in the memories of a grateful community.

GARDEN STALWARTS RECOGNISED

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I congratulate Lynn Fredericks and Rob Davis, members of the Corowa Community Garden, who have been recognised for their dedication and contribution in maintaining the Corowa gardens for many years. Lynn and Rob have provided a place for those in the community to socially interact and enjoy nature. Together they have looked after the infrastructure, fencing and even have assisted by providing advice to local residents so all can benefit from their knowledge and expertise on gardening in Corowa.

A morning tea was held recently by the community in honour of Lynn and Rob and a plaque was unveiled to mark the occasion and their years of community service. Lynn & Rob - I appreciate your efforts in making Corowa Community Garden a place for community to reconnect with nature.

STUDENTS SET SAIL AT KOGARAH BAY SAILING CLUB FOR SAILABILITY

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—'Freedom on the Water' was the slogan of the day on 17 August as students with disabilities showed they were more than willing and able to set sail. As part of an inclusive program run by Sailability, children with physical and mental disabilities took to their mini-boats for a watery adventure. Approximately 20 students donned life-jackets as part of the popular, international program, which gives students and their teachers the chance to let loose and network in the fresh air. The three-metre, two-person tiny, little boats used by the club are easy to sail – they are specially designed so it's impossible to tip them over. Kids feel safe going out with one other person. There were a total of 12 boats out on the bay, giving children a break from their daily school routines. The program is run completely by volunteers who give their time so willingly to help these children and give them a special day out. A very big thank you to the Kogarah Bay Sailing Club and to all the wonderful volunteers, not only for their time, but for their dedication to helping kids.

TOP HONOUR FOR GEORGES RIVER IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—Georges River Council has won the Asset and Infrastructure Award at the 2022 Local Government Excellence Awards for its Lower Poulton Park Naturalisation and Carpark Construction project. The South Hurstville project remediated an old depot site to provide connectivity to green corridors and included the repurposing of existing site objects to provide a natural habitat refuge that supports the native fauna population in the area, including bat caves, bee hotels, rock platforms and bird stands. In addition, a new car park was built to service the synthetic playing fields at the location. First Nations artist Danielle Mate designed contemporary Aboriginal artwork for the walls of the new habitat refuges. Georges River Council also received the Highly Commended award within the Community Development category for the project, Community and Culture on Wheels - COVID-19 Safe Events Program. The program aim was to support the delivery of COVID-19 safe, small community events that helped to connect the community to local town centres across the LGA, and reduce community isolation and support the local economy. Council received a total of eight nominations in several categories. Congratulations Georges River Council on an outstanding achievement.

WELL-DESERVED ACCOLADE FOR BEXLEY RESIDENT

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—Martin Spiteri has been named NSW Senior Volunteer of the Year for Sydney City-Eastern Suburbs region. Martin, 68, has been recognised for his almost 20 years of volunteering at the Benevolent Society's Greenwood Cottage at Bexley, the day centre for older people living in St George offering them social support, activities and outings. His work there has included assisting on the community bus, preparing meals and providing friendship and emotional support to clients and their families. Martin received his award, presented by the Centre for Volunteering, at the awards ceremony at Randwick Rotary on 15 August. And while he is excited to receive his award, Martin says that volunteering has given him much more in return including friendship and social connection. Martin became involved in volunteering after being a full-time carer for his father, Joe, for 12 years. When Joe passed away at the age of 85 in 2002, Martin decided to offer his services to Greenwood Cottage at Bexley. He has learned a lot of new skills such as first aid, and had fire training and dementia training. We congratulate Martin on his award and thank him for his many years of volunteering service.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD AT MIDDLE HARBOUR YACHT CLUB

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I congratulate Rob Aldis on his new role as Commodore of the Middle Harbour Yacht Club [MHYC]. Rob has been involved with the club as Chairman of the Board, so the club is in capable hands in the future. Peter Lewis, who previously held the role, has retired after five years but will remain on the Board of MHYC. The Club Board and management team will value his continued involvement in this capacity. During his time at the helm, he made an enormous contribution to the club and worked tirelessly to promote MHYC and sailing in general. I thank him for his service and wish him all the best in his future endeavours. I also commend the entire team, led by CEO Mark Maybury, for their continuing work to improve the facilities at Middle Harbour Yacht Club to maximise the enjoyment of yachting and social events. I also acknowledge their contribution to sailing training and associated education programs.

MOSMAN LOCAL ED GODDARD COMPETES IN THE LONDON MARATHON 2022

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I recognise Mosman local Ed Goddard, who recently competed in his first major marathon at the London Marathon. Ed is only 24 years old and is well on his way to establishing his professional running career, already being sponsored by Asics and gaining attention for his love of Rock 'n' Roll and his stand-out mullet. Dubbed the "Mosman Mullet", Ed runs 32km daily throughout the local

area and has been an avid runner since schooling at SHORE. He only ran the first marathon of his career last year in December, then went on to compete again in April at the Manchester Marathon, and in May at the Copenhagen Marathon. In September, he won the Sydney Half Marathon breaking the course record held for twenty years. Ed then went on to win the Sydney Running Festival Bridge Run. Congratulations, Ed, on all your success. What a fantastic achievement to represent Australia at an international level. Keep up the hard training, and I wish you all the best with your future races and endeavours. Hopefully, we will see you at the 2024 Olympic Games!

ACKNOWLEDGING LOCAL PAM BROSSMAN'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE MCGRATH FOUNDATION

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I recognise the charitable works of local constituent and businesswoman Pam Brossman. Pam has supported the well-known McGrath Foundation, which helps those who have breast cancer, for almost twenty years. Pam has designed journals as part of her business, including a range of planners, notebooks, and affirmation diaries. Each year in October, which is Breast Cancer Awareness Month or 'Pink October', she donates all net profits from these journals straight to the Foundation. Pam has a personal connection to the McGrath Foundation, with the late Jane McGrath being featured in Pam's first journal to share her story. Pam and many of us have also sadly had loved ones go through breast cancer. Pam's business aims to empower women through her products, and she even has an Amazon number-one best seller. The work that The McGrath Foundation does is critical. The McGrath Breast Care Nurses program provides personalised care and support to those who have breast cancer. I congratulate Pam again on her significant long-term contribution to supporting this great organisation.

GANESHOTSAVA 2022

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool)—The 27th Annual Ganeshotsava was held on 8 October at the Whitlam Centre in Liverpool. This is a cultural event organised by Friends of India Australia [FOIA] that honours a Hindu deity, Lord Ganesha, known as the remover of obstacles. Many thousands now attend the event each year. FOIA is a not for profit community based organisation that was formed in 1996. Whilst Ganeshotsava is the main FOIA annual event, the organisation is involved in a plethora of other activities. Their broad range of charitable activities include blood donations and Clean Up Australia Day activities. In 2021 during the pandemic their Health Professionals network organised oxygen concentrators to help the health system and they also arranged other community assistance. FOIA also fund raised for the Lismore community after the recent floods and several of their volunteers travelled to Lismore to assist the community. FOIA do good and important work and should be congratulated.

SKYLA LANGE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I congratulate Skyla Lange who is a talented young woman from Port Macquarie dominating in the Jiu-Jitsu martial arts world recently reclaiming her under-14s National Australian Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) Championship in Melbourne. In August Skyla was given the opportunity to defend her championship and defend it she did. The 14-year-old retained her trophy in a challenging Grand Final match after enduring an early triangle choke which lasted for over 2 minutes before breaking free and seizing the win and tournament, 6 points to 0. Skyla never looked like losing control the entire tournament, winning her first match 18 points to 0 and the second match 7 points to 0 in a commanding performance, neutralising her opponents in a matter of minutes. To win at this elite level, Skyla trains four days a week at Rogue MMA in adult classes coached by Daniel Scarlett and owner Alex Urbina. She is now into her 7th year of BJJ competition and holds a yellow belt with 37 wins, 23 by submission, 13 by points and one by walkover. Skyla's goal is to compete in the World Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Championship held in Las Vegas in 2023. Congratulations on your win.

BIRDON BUSINESS GROWTH IN THE UNITED STATES

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I recognise Port Macquarie owned business Birdon Group and their recent success securing as Birdon America Incorporated a major \$USD1.187 billion contract to design and build 27 waterways commerce cutters for the US Coast Guard. This contract has been based on the company's years of building an impressive track record with their production partners, the US Coast Guard. From the first request for proposal in July 2021, Birdon has invested in developing and refining a fully compliant, comprehensive, low-risk and best value for the US Coast Guard. While the production for this contract will be based in the United States, the entire delivery team will work under Birdon's integrated, standardised leadership model, which is proven across numerous multiple-site projects in Australia and abroad. The success of the organisation across Australia and the world is testament to Birdon's track record of delivering the tailored and high standard outcomes for their clients. Congratulations to CEO Jamie Bruce and his team, who continue to develop a world class and worldwide business with a home base in Port Macquarie."

2022 BRANCH OF THE YEAR

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I proudly congratulate the eight clubs that make up the Mid North Coast Branch who were honoured on 27th August at the 2022 Surf Life Saving NSW [SLSNSW] awards. It was notable that female participation and honours dominated the awards evening which emphasises the growth, passion and appreciation shown towards our women who equally deserve acknowledgement for the hours of community service dedicated year on year. Taking out the highly coveted Branch of the Year was the Mid North Coast for their all-round strength in life saving, governance, education and junior activities while patrolling 188kms of coastline in the region. Rising ahead of the Sydney metropolitan branches for the 2021-2022 season, the Mid North Coast Branch recorded 2,337 patrolling members achieve 22,733 volunteer patrol hours. Among these 65 rescues were made, 51 first aid treatments and 4,273 preventative actions undertaken. The awards continued with Mick Lang from Tacking Point Surf Life Saving Club [TPSLSC] named the Official of the Year and Kim Rayner also from TPSLSC claiming the Facilitator of the Year accolade. I thank every member for their longstanding contribution to surf life saving.

HALLIE WOLFENDEN

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—Congratulations to Miss Hallie Wolfenden who has recently been recognised as part of the Western Region Academy of Sport's presentation evening, being awarded the 2022 Netball Athlete of the Year. This is a huge honour for the young athlete who clearly has a bright future in the sport, having been part of the WRAS netball program for three years. I understand Hallie continues to strive to improve her skills at every session and seeks regular feedback on areas to improve. She trains with 100 per cent intensity at all sessions and shows excellent leadership skills amongst her peers. This recent recognition follows selection for Phase 2 of the Netball NSW under 17 State team trials. At this year's Academy Games Hallie was selected as Most Valued Player for the WRAS Division 1 and was also a member of the Bathurst representative team, champions of division 2 at the NSW state titles. Congratulations Hallie on this tremendous honour in recognition of your skill and tenacity for the game. Best wishes for your future netball career.

50 YEARS OF NARRANDERA INNER WHEEL CLUB

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—I take this opportunity to extend a huge congratulations to past and present members of the Narrandera Inner Wheel Club on their 50th anniversary. The club currently has 15 members comprising of Jenny Robertson (President), Joy Norrie (Secretary), Kaye Hall (Treasurer), Terry Andracchio, Kathleen Foster, Jan Gawne, Patricia Hayllar, Mavis Jackson, Ann Kendall, Marilyn Manning, Jan Marshall, Beth McVicker, Pat Mulholland, Mary Phillips and Kathy Taylor. The Narrandera Inner Wheel Club was founded by a group of 24 Rotarian women later to be known as the Inner Wheel Club. The club recently presented 3 current foundation members: Ann Kendall, Mary Phillips and Pat Mulholland with their 50-year Inner Wheel Broach. The club meets on a monthly basis and are very proud that over the last 50 years they have been able to raise a substantial amount of money for local charities, projects and natural disaster-impacted areas. Fundraising efforts have been varied and include fashion parades, cocktail parties, progressive dinners, guest speaker events and many street stalls. Congratulations once again to all members on this incredible milestone and I look forward to celebrating with you all soon.

41 YEARS OF ARMSTRONG TOYOTA

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—I take this opportunity to extend a huge congratulations to Nigel and Cate Armstrong and their team at Armstrong Toyota in West Wyalong on celebrating 41 years in Business. Armstrong Toyota has been servicing the local community since 1981 and are specialised in New Toyota Vehicle Sales, Pre-Owned Vehicle Sales, Finance and Insurance, Vehicle Servicing and Genuine Toyota Parts and Accessories. Nigel is the Dealer Principal of the Business and Cate the General Manager. Their ongoing service to their community for the past 41 years would not have been possible without their team of excellent employees. In the sales department; Christopher Johnson, Melinda Collins, Brian Hesselman and Mark Stone. Tanya Schultz in the Parts Department. Rachel Trehearn, Michael Blanco, Arnel Fortunado, Vicar Agosto, Dennis Bien, Rowan Kitto and Jedd Lemon are all in the Service Department and Susan Redman and Shelley Van Duuren are the ladies in the Administration Department. All 16 staff members work to ensure that all their customers have a fantastic experience whilst using their business. This is something that the Armstrong Toyota Team pride themselves on. Congratulations once again to you all, what an incredible achievement.

STUART DUNCAN

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I recognise and congratulate Stuart Duncan of Dunedin Park, Wentworth. Stuart has been a valued member of the Wentworth Show Society team for more than 36 years and his volunteer role as a Sheep Steward is a testament to his knowledge of the wool and sheep industry. Being dedicated to this role, his strong commitment has made him a major contributor to the highly successful 'True Country Show' team. Stuart was recognised with an Honorary Life Membership at the 2022 Wentworth Show for his long standing and valued service. On behalf of the electorate of Murray I wish to congratulate and thank Stuart for his tireless commitment and contributions to the Wentworth Show. Congratulations on the Honorary Life membership.

BIANCA ARMYTAGE

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I recognise and congratulate Bianca Armytage of Deniliquin for her extraordinary work supporting and assisting local cancer sufferers. Bianca is a co-founder of Deniliquin's CanAssist, a support network for people diagnosed with cancer. Bianca, who herself battled breast cancer 9 years ago, volunteers as the patient liaison officer, supporting people with a cancer diagnosis. Bianca goes above and beyond and is a true hero for her local community. Bianca arranges accommodation and financial assistance, and other practical and emotional support for those who find themselves in need. On behalf of the people of the Murray electorate I wish to congratulate and thank Bianca for her dedication, compassion and support for her community.

AUNTY JODIE STEWART

Mrs SHELLEY HANCOCK (South Coast)—I acknowledge and congratulate Aunty Jodie Stewart for recently being named Elder of the Year. Jodie is an Artist, Mentor, Youth worker, Mother, Volunteer and plays many more important roles in the community. Jodie is a very deserving recipient of this honouring role, her hard work and dedication to our community does not go unnoticed and is extremely appreciated by the wider community. Her work with Southern Youth and Family Services [SYFS] and her efforts fixed around Youth reconciliation, support, education, and training is what earned her the Elder of the Year. I am delighted to congratulate Aunty Jodie and to acknowledge her for her hard work in and around our community, Jodie plays a vital role assisting and guiding the youth with the drive to uplift the next generation.

ST JOHN MAITLAND DIVISION

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—Recently I had great delight in presenting the Maitland Division of St John Ambulance NSW with a new operational vehicle and stretcher that will enhance their capacity to provide first aid and medical services throughout Maitland and surrounding areas. St John Ambulance have a long history in our region and the volunteers are always there to lend a hand when needed. The recent flood event has highlighted just how important our local emergency services are. Volunteers were heavily involved, worked around the clock and camped out at the Gillieston Heights Community Hub when the community became isolated. The members offered everything from dressing wounds to helping those in retirement homes, newborn babies, even shipping people out of dangerous areas – the whole works. The dedicated team ably led by Superintendent Jim Klumpp, continue to do an incredible job looking after our local community. I am so pleased that the new equipment will allow them to continue to do a fantastic job, helping individuals and the community through some of our toughest times.

EVELYN BOWEN RECOGNISED AT JEAN ARNOT LUNCHEON

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—Congratulations to Evelyn Bowen who was among 15 nonagenarians who were recognised for their years of community service at the 2022 Jean Arnot Memorial Luncheon held at Parliament House on 15 August 2022. Although Evelyn is described as a woman of small stature, she certainly has a great heart and passion for her community. Evelyn was born in 1931 in Millers Forest and attended St Patrick's Primary School. In 1953 Evelyn married Archie and they made their home in East Maitland. Evelyn is responsible for so much in our local community. She initiated the 'Mass for the Sick and Elderly' where people received regular spiritual blessings and anointing and also the 'Craft Group' that provides an opportunity for women to meet and share their craft skills. In October 2013 Evelyn was awarded life membership of Catholic Women's League Australia-New South Wales Inc for her wonderful support and commitment to the League, her Church and Community. Evelyn is a tireless worker in our community and an inspiration to all who know her.

THE SMITH FAMILY LUNCHEON

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—I offer my heartfelt congratulations to The Smith Family on its 100th anniversary. The Hunter/Central Coast hosted a special function, Hats Off To All, at the East Maitland Bowling Club to not only acknowledge the fantastic milestone but also to celebrate 60 years of VIEW Clubs of Australia. While I was unable to attend the luncheon, the event welcomed a number of excellent guest speakers

including Joy Poole OAM, Federal Member for Paterson Meryl Swanson MP, VIEW National Manager Maryanne Maher, VIEW National Vice-President Elizabeth Birch and family partnership coordinator Jessica Marceau. Lucky door prizes, raffles and entertainment from Michael Montgomery added to the festive atmosphere. Money raised from the event going towards supporting Learning for Life students Sam and James. Well done to Maitland Local Woman of the Year nominee and Past National President, Anne-Louise O'Connor and her team for organising such a great occasion. I know a lot of clubs in the area looked forward to getting together again, especially after the past few years of COVID restrictions.

INNER WEST POP-UP MUSIC MARATHON

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—October marks the last month of the wonderful Pop-up Music Marathon run by the Inner West Council. I can confidently say that this celebration of live music and local artists has brought so much joy to our Inner West community. These pop-ups have taken place in different locations around the Inner West every weekend since July. What is most exciting is that these performances have run completely free of charge for our local music lovers. They have also given so many young and aspiring artists and musical groups around the Inner West the opportunity to show the people what they're made of! Featuring a huge range of Inner West talent, the Music Marathon has defied limits of genre and style. I thank all the talented artists and groups who have performed for us so far. I also would like to wish good luck to Hoola 100 and Taya Chani as two of the last featured acts for this year. What a fantastic last few months of free live music for our community!

FAIRVALE PUBLIC SCHOOL – PARENT CAFÉ

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—I commend the efforts of Fairvale Public School Principal Mr Anthony Pitt, Miss Samira and Miss Michelle for the wonderful work done by the Parent Café. This is a fantastic actual and virtual space which assists parents of various cultural backgrounds to interact with each other, building a strong sense of school community and belonging. Parents and carers can get to know each other and share experiences via meetings and get-togethers, allowing them to connect and make friends with other parents, sharing experiences along their children's learning journey. The Parent Café also runs various workshops to assist parents with things such as cyber safety, healthy lunchbox tips and much more. In a community as culturally diverse as Fairfield, it is wonderful to see a school that also has an awareness of the different needs of migrant parents and the need to create a safe haven of belonging in the school community. I congratulate Miss Samira and Miss Michelle on their fantastic work and look forward to seeing all the amazing Parent Café projects in store for the parents of Fairvale Public School students.

CANLEY VALE HIGH SCHOOL – TOM STATE FINALS

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—On Saturday 11 September, Canley Vale High School's Tournament of Minds STEM team competed in the Tournament of Minds State Finals. Congratulations to the students in the team – John A, Jack K, Andy D, Thomas N, Arianna N, Ryan N, and Albert T - on their Honours award. A special thank you goes out to all the teachers, carers and friends who have shown support to these students in their endeavours.

VERONA SCHOOL – BOOK WEEK

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—Verona School celebrated Book Week in grand fashion this year with students and staff dressing up to celebrate learning through books. I commend Verona Principal Ms Carla Scott and her team of teachers for engaging students in this activity and for fostering in them a love of reading. Through looking at different genres of books, students were able to explore and become drawn into the many wonderful characters and environments that books can offer. Various activities were organised including the POD V POD Book Week Kahoot!.. These activities provided many opportunities for engagement and competition. I commend the efforts of Miss Cekic and Kylie B for organising these activities. Well done to the staff and students of Verona for recognising and celebrating Book Week.

NSW JP 50 YEARS OF SERVICE CEREMONY – BRIAN KEANE

Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee)—As many of us in this place know members of the community who volunteer their time to act as a Justice of the Peace, or JP as they're more commonly known, are an invaluable resource in doing the work of government. From helping people by giving authority to their testimonies to ensuring they can claim assistance they're legally entitled to – the work of a JP encompasses a range of important responsibilities. Today I'd like to pay my thanks to, and celebrate an important JP in my community – Brian Keane has just celebrated and been recognised for 50 years of service as a JP. I cannot begin to think of how many people Brian would have helped in our community over that time but I'm sure each one of them is as thankful as I am for his dedication and service. Thank you Brian and congratulations.

CAITLIN JOHNSTON

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—I acknowledge Caitlin Johnston from the Newcastle Knights NRLW on being named in the NRLW 2022 Team of the Year. At just 21 years of age, Caitlin is an exceptional young sports woman from Belmont who has excelled in rugby league from a young age. Caitlin has consistently demonstrated her athletic skill since making her professional debut for the Women's Indigenous All Stars side in 2019. This season, Caitlin was outstanding in her position of prop, scoring 2 tries, making 12 tackle breaks and having an impressive tackle efficiency of 88.7 per cent. These impressive stats prove that Caitlin was well and truly deserving of being named in this year's NRLW Team of the Year. She is an impressive young athlete, and I cannot wait to see her career flourish. I congratulate Caitlin on being named in the NRLW 2022 Team of the Year.

CENTRAL COAST LIFEGUARDS

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—I acknowledge Central Coast lifeguards on commencing the 2022-23 beach season on 22 September. The lifeguards work tirelessly to patrol our shorelines, in order to ensure the safety of local and visiting beach goers across the region. In fact, this year lifeguards started earlier to make sure that those who wished to go to the beach on the National Day of Mourning were safe. The Central Coast is home to some of the greatest beaches in the state, with more and more people travelling to visit them each year. I know that the lifeguards are expecting record breaking visitors to our beaches this season, so there is no doubt that they will be busy ensuring that each beach goer is safe. Central Coast lifeguards play an important role in the local community. I thank them for their efforts and wish them all the best for the 2022-23 season.

BELMONT-SWANSEA UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea)—I acknowledge Belmont-Swansea United Football Club's First Grade and Reserve Grade teams on winning their grand finals last month. I would also like to acknowledge the Club's Under 18s squad that finished the season as runners up. The players of these teams wear their yellow and green jerseys with great pride, always giving 110 per cent on the field. Each of the players have trained especially hard and worked well as a team unit this year in order to achieve this wonderful result. These outstanding results makes the 2022 Season one of the Belswans most successful seasons on record. This is a fantastic result, and the players should be very proud of themselves for it. I congratulate Belswans' First Grade, Reserve Grade and Under 18s teams on their success this season and wish them all the best for future seasons.

PCYC 85TH ANNIVERSARY

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)—With a long and proud history empowering young people to reach their potential, Police Citizens Youth Clubs [PCYC] are celebrating their 85th anniversary this year. I'm grateful that Ku-ring-gai is home to 1 of the 66 clubs across NSW, the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai PCYC. The Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Club has done much for young people in the community, running programs that provide real life skills and developing good character through mentoring and training. Programs include Rise Up, working with the NSW Police Force youth command to counter the impact of juvenile offending which reduces reoffending rates by 70 per cent, to other initiatives such as driving and leadership programs. They also pride themselves on encouraging physical health, offering new and exciting sports and recreational facilities year round. I am proud to have supported Hornsby Ku-ring-gai PCYC over the years and attended many of their events, including the launch of a 12-seater bus, partly funded by the NSW Government, and the Rise Up graduation ceremony more recently. Congratulations to the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Club, its members and partners, as well as PCYC's across NSW on 85 years of service.

MARCO FRANSE

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)—I recently recognised St John Ambulance in the House, and now I am privileged to recognise a St John Ambulance volunteer, Marco Franse from Wahroonga. Marco represents the best in our community. In 2012 he joined the Manly-Warringah Division, holding several positions before being promoted to Superintendent in 2017. His Division continues to be instrumental in local major events and managing first aid posts. In 2019, Marco was appointed the Hub Leader for Sydney North West where he provides peer support, clinical education and develops St John policies. On 20 May at the St John Ambulance Australia Investiture Ceremony, 16 members in NSW were awarded The Order of St John in recognition for going above and beyond to help others. I am proud to say that Marco was one of the 16 award recipients. Congratulations to Marco on this well-deserved honour and I thank him for his long-standing service to the people of NSW.

TRIBUTE TO THE HON. BARRIE CLIVE HUNGERFORD QC

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)—I regretfully inform the House of the recent passing of The Hon. Barrie Clive Hungerford QC from Wahroonga. Barrie was the former deputy president and judicial member of the Industrial Relations Commission of NSW. He began practising at the New South Wales Bar in 1976 and took silk in 1988. Subsequently, he was appointed judge of the Industrial Commission of NSW in 1989 and served with that court, followed by the Industrial Relations Commission. During his life he undertook a substantial and distinguished role in the development of law and its practical application to employment relationships, the resolution of collective disputes, occupational health and safety laws, and unfair work contracts. While he may be gone, Barrie's legacy lives on through his enormous contribution to NSW law and through his family. I extend my deepest condolences to Barrie's wife, Mrs Judith Anne Hungerford, his children, extended family, friends and colleagues. Vale Barrie Clive Hungerford.

JEAN HAMMOND

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence)—I offer my congratulations to Jean Hammond of the Iluka Women's Bowls Club who was recently recognised for her 50 years of membership of Bowls NSW. Jean first started her bowling career in Casino in 1972 before moving to live in Iluka where, along with playing bowls, she also took on a number of different roles within the Club. What a wonderful achievement Jean and I congratulate you on your dedication to your chosen sport.

JONATHON O'CONNOR

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence)—I congratulate Jonathon O'Connor who has been recognised for his achievements within his chosen career as a chef. In July Jonathon, an apprentice chef at Sassafras Yamba was named the Apprentice of the Year at the North Coast and Mid-North Coast 2022 Training Awards and then in September he was awarded the Encouragement Award at the NSW Training Awards. Jonathon is a passionate and dedicated young man who has engaged in every opportunity to challenge and grow his skills both in and out of the classroom while undertaking a Certificate III in Commercial Cookery with TAFE NSW. These latest awards follow on from Johnathon's silver medal at the 2019 World Skills Championships. I wish Johnathon continued success into the future.

MACARTHUR BULLS FC WINNING AUSTRALIA CUP

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—It is with great happiness and pride that I extend my congratulations and felicitations to the mighty Macarthur Bulls FC on their championship win, winning the Australia Cup. It was an exhilarating game to say the least. The Macarthur Bulls had 32 shots on goal to 8 of the opposing team, Sydney United. The final score was 2 nil, achieve with sheer hard work and skill. This Australia Cup win is the first in club history for the Macarthur Bulls, and it is truly fantastic. It is a testament to the hard work and dedication they have exerted all year. They have made the entire community proud, well done and congratulations to the entire team and the Coach, Dwight Eversley Yorke. We are the Bulls!

ORAN PARK HIGH SCHOOL DEBATING TEAM

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—I extend my congratulations to the year 7 and year 8 debating team from Oran Park High School. The team have won round 3 of the Premier's Debating Challenge against Mount Annan High School. The team debated a sport topic, that 'we should ban all fighting sports like martial arts and boxing.' A topic that is quite intriguing. Debating is almost an essential skill and not just a favoured extra-curricular activity. To be able to think and reason with arguments is proving more and more important in today's world. Once again congratulations to all students part of the debating team, well done and keep it up.

HSC WELL WISHES

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—I take this opportunity to extend my well wishes to all students undertaking their HSC exams. I know that these are stressful times and I would echo the message they have likely heard, that is to try your best and to not worry. Whilst some things may go to plan and others not, you should not forget that we are blessed to live in a country where opportunity abounds. Success and prosperity is within reach for all who persist with hard work and determination. Everyone can achieve what they set out to do so long as they are tenacious and hardworking, so in saying that have big goals and ambitions. That is because, over time, you will likely achieve them. Good luck to all the students, and to all the teachers, families and guardians who support them.

LEONIE MCPARLAND 102ND BIRTHDAY

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—It is with great pleasure that today I acknowledge Mrs Leonie McParland as she will celebrate her 102nd birthday on Tuesday 25th October 2022. I trust Leonie will celebrate this special occasion accompanied by her closest family and friends. I take this opportunity to again extend my sincere congratulations to Leonie and wish her good health and happiness for the future.

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL IMAMS COUNCIL

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—I am grateful to the Australian National Imams Council [ANIC] for hosting my NSW Labor colleagues and I for dinner in Chullora. Leadership is about giving voice to the community but more importantly it is about listening directly to the community. ANIC achieves both and this event gave a community I am proud to be a part of a greater voice in decision making. ANIC is a central Islamic body that holds key representation from Australian based clerics. The NSW Shadow Cabinet heard from Dr Ibrahim Abu Mohammed and Sheikh Shadi Alsuleiman who all spoke about the importance of how government can benefit the community if we work together with religious and community organisations. I am grateful for my ongoing relationship with ANIC and particularly Sheikh Shadi who generously provides his counsel. The Australian Muslim community can be proud of the quality of Imams and community leaders that ANIC supports and represents. May Allah reward ANIC for their tireless efforts and contributions towards Islam and the Muslim community.

KMART ROSELANDS

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—I am proud to acknowledge Kmart Roselands for their efforts in supporting the Prostate and Breast Cancer Foundation to mark National Breast Cancer Awareness Month this October. Over 20,000 Australians will be diagnosed with breast cancer this year alone and it is important that those experiencing the disease do not experience it alone. In July 2020, Rita Fahd, who works at Kmart Roselands, learnt her neighbour had been diagnosed with breast cancer. According to Rita, her neighbour Maureen would not let cancer beat her and was determined to fight it. She told the media "[Maureen's] journey through cancer treatment inspired us to raise funds for breast cancer and so we organised a high tea and raised \$1,086, which we have presented to the foundation." The foundation's mission is to improve the quality of life for cancer patients with priority to those socially or geographically isolated, economically disadvantaged or from a culturally or linguistically diverse group. Breast cancer is one of the most common invasive cancers but also one of the most survivable with early detection through regular mammograms. I congratulate Kmart Roselands and Rita for their generosity and representing the best of the community.

PAKISTAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba)—On 14 August I was privileged to attend the Pakistan Independence Day function hosted by the Pakistan Association of Australia [PAA]. As a multicultural nation we should be proud to host people from diverse backgrounds giving them the opportunity to celebrate their heritage and ancestry. I want to particularly pay tribute to the many Pakistani Australians who celebrated Pakistan's 75th year of independence this year. There are more than 34,000 people who were born in Pakistan that live in Australia today. I recognise the many people of Pakistani ancestry that live in my electorate of Lakemba. I was honoured to have been joined by the Consul General of Pakistan to Australia Mr Mohammad Ashraf, who expressed his gratitude for the phenomenal work of President Farhat Jaffri and General Secretary Hamid Saroha in organising the celebrations on behalf of the PAA. Amid a tumultuous monsoon season and devastating floods affecting one-third of Pakistan, wreaking havoc on homes and claiming the lives of 1,136 people, the PAA has been unyielding in its charitable support for their country folk back home. I admire and thank them for their work.

ELIZABETH OVENS - ST ALOYSIUS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—Elizabeth Ovens retires as school principal of St Aloysius Catholic Primary School Cronulla this year. Elizabeth has been an important figure in the Catholic primary schools for the past 44 years. In the last seven years, Elizabeth has been the school principal of St Aloysius for seven years. Prior to this she taught at St Catherine's Laboure Gympie, St Joseph's Como, and at Catholic schools in Miranda and Oatley. Under her leadership at St Aloysius this year, students won two awards for their skills in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics at the national STEM MAD competition. Year 5 and 6 students won the STEM MAD (Making a Difference) competition for their environmental project which saw them collaborate with experts around the world. Elizabeth said that the success of her students was a final 'proud school moment' before retirement. Despite a great passion for teaching, Elizabeth says that she is looking forward to having more time for herself and with her six grandchildren. I thank Elizabeth for her extensive contribution to Catholic education and the Sutherland Shire community and extend my best wishes to her for retirement.

NORTH CRONULLA SLSC BOATIES - GOTCHA 4LIFE

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I commend the North Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club Boaties for their 'Gotcha 4Life 24 Hour Row' event, held in September. The event, now in its fifth year, saw the Boaties raise over \$6500 for suicide prevention and mental health. Every year, surf clubs and surf lifesavers across Australia are invited to join the challenge of rowing nonstop for 24 hours to raise money for Gotcha4Life, a not-for-profit foundation that delivers mental health fitness programs. The success of the event could not have been done without all those who volunteered and donated. I acknowledge Karen Chapman and her team for their organisation of the event and Grant "Bomber" Baker and his team at The Bomb Shelter Gym who generously donated their space for the Row.

FIREFIGHTERS YASS FIRE STATION 511 NATIONAL EMERGENCY MEDALS IN AUGUST

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government)—Today I recognise the firefighters from Yass Fire Station 511 who received National Emergency Medals in August. The 2019 – 2020 fire season saw one of the States most devastating fire seasons ever and the firefighters who served our community are to be truly commended for their efforts. The following nine firefighters from the Yass Station were presented with National Emergency Medals to recognise their service and commitment. Captain Scott Lang, Deputy Captain Nicholas Whiting and firefighters Phillip Marshall, Benjamin Bowman, Christopher Inglis, Cameron Madden, Xain Pike, Noelle Harper and Daniel O'Connor. I find it difficult to find the words that can truly and sincerely express my gratitude to these firefighters. I recognise their fortitude as individuals and their altruistic commitment to protect the community, property, and essential and major assets. I also take this time to recognise the anguish that their families and friends must have felt as they undertook their roles with true dedication and passion to serve others under these truly extra-ordinary circumstances. Thank you.

BERINBA AND YASS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government)—Today I recognise Yass Public School and Berinba Public School students selected to participate in the choir at the Schools Spectacular. I would also like to acknowledge the teachers who will be accompanying the students as choir leaders. The eight students selected to represent Berinba Public School range in ages nine to twelve years and will be accompanied by Miss Grace Armour and Mrs Sharman Dawes. To assist with costs, the school will be undertaking a range of fundraising activities, which will see cakes stalls and a wood raffle. Ten students ranging in ages ten to twelve years will represent Yass Public School and will be accompanied by Ms Beth Bird. The school will also be undertaking fund raising activities to assist with costs. The Choirs will travel to Sydney in November for a five-day stay. The days will see the representatives busy with rehearsals, meeting peers, and the excitement of the entirety of the School Spectacular. I congratulate all the students and choir leaders who undoubtedly will be proudly representing their schools. I wish them every success with their performances and hope that they enjoy the experience.

BEN GILLARD

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government)—Today I recognise Yass High School student Ben Gillard. Ben appeared at Pulse Alive as a featured performer as a Guitar Soloist in March at Sydney Olympic Park, which saw audiences of over 5,000 people on both evenings. Ben has also played to audiences at the Alive in the Park Music and Arts Festival in Yass in May. Ben has recently been selected to perform as a "feature instrumentalist" at the Schools Spectacular, which will be held in Sydney in November. I am thrilled that Ben has been able to follow his passion, whilst also being able to entertain and mesmerise audiences with his skilful art of guitar playing. I commend and congratulate Ben on his already many achievements and undoubtedly the future will bring bountiful opportunities and I encourage Ben to continue to follow his passion and wish him all the very best into the future.

HUGH HARROLD

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—A massive congratulations to Hugh Harrold for winning a medal at the Australian Rowing Championships in Victoria earlier this year. Hugh is just 18 years old, studying a Bachelor of Science degree at Western Sydney University whilst having the best season of his career in rowing. Hugh has demonstrated an immeasurable amount of hard work, spirit, passion and dedication to have already reached such heights. This is an enormous achievement that you and your family should be immensely proud of. Congratulations Hugh on your success and your amazing talent.

BRONWEN SMITH AND GAVIN CHATFIELD

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Two talented artists have taken centre stage at the Water front Whale Tales exhibition. St Clair locals Bronwen Smith, a Walbunja woman and Gavin Chatfield, a Wiradjuri man, make

up Gwiyaala Aboriginal Art, painting murals and commissioned artworks. At the exhibition, 30 two metre high whale tails were set over 6km, from Sydney's fish markets to Barangaroo and Bronwen and Gavin were asked to participate in the designing of the whale tails. Inspired by their upbringings in Bateman's Bay, Bronwen and Gavin created an amazing artwork full of Australian indigenous culture. The exhibition also engaged in fundraising efforts which saw whale tail sculptures auctioned off for the Kids Cancer Project. This was a significant deal for Gavin as a close family member passed away from brain cancer at the very young age of 14 years old. I want to congratulate Bronwen and Gavin on their participation in the Whale Tail exhibition and I look forward to seeing more of the art on display so that others may be able to enjoy their talent in expressing Australian Aboriginal culture in art.

ETHAN MACKIE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Congratulations to Ethan Mackie on being recognised by the Penrith Valley Sports Foundation with the Junior Sports Star Award. Glenmore Park local, Ethan is a triathlon super star, who competed in his first triathlon five years ago and since then has joined the Western Sydney Academy of Sport. Ethan competed in the 2022 'Your Local Club' Academy Games in Wagga Wagga and finished first overall. He had to compete with kids aged up to 16 years of age. Ethan is more than deserving of this recognition for his fantastic sporting achievement. At just 13 years of age, Ethan has shown that he is a cut above the rest. He has competed with passion and spirit to accomplish what he has achieved. Congratulations Ethan and I look forward to seeing you successfully competing in future triathlons.

NICHOLAS NEWTON

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to Nicholas Newton, who has been named the Hunter's Senior Volunteer of the Year in recognition of his service to Merewether Surf Life Saving Club. Nick has given more than quarter of a century to the club, contributing thousands of hours to patrols, nippers, bronze medallion and surf rescue courses. During this time he has also served in numerous administrative roles including club captain, patrol captain and club president. Nick's service has earned him the nod of Club Member of the Year twice, in 2016 and 2021. I doubt it would be possible to quantify the total amount of time Nick have given to Merewether SLSC, but I do know that the club and Newcastle are richer for his contributions.

DESIGN + INDUSTRY NEWCASTLE

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to Design + Industry Newcastle, who have been recognised with the top honour at the 2022 Australian Good Design Awards. The team worked on a benchtop isotope generator, being tasked with turning the medical technology into a functional product that is expected to significantly improve cancer treatment by facilitating on-site isotope production. D + I had the additional difficulty of dealing with radiation, which poses a risk to people who are required to use the machine, which D + I overcame through the development of remote control. D + I's contribution will no doubt have far-reaching impacts and revolutionise cancer treatments. This award is well-earned.

ORANA REGIONAL VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—I take this opportunity to recognise some of the winners of the 2022 NSW Centre for Volunteering Orana Region Awards. Ten-year-old Isabelle Kelly was named the 2022 Young Volunteer for the Orana region. Isabelle has led several projects to help the local community and beyond, including sending 75 pencil cases filled with stationery to Lismore students impacted by the north-coast floods. Claire Jenkins was named Adult Volunteer of the Year for her efforts raising funds for the NSW Cancer Council. Claire started the Crops for Cancer initiative, where farmers around Trangie, Warren and Narromine were encouraged to give part of their grain harvest, resulting in more than \$30,000 being raised! The Senior Volunteer of the Year went to St Vincent de Paul volunteer Ian Wray, who gives his time in so many ways to help people in need right across the Dubbo community. Finally, Volunteer Team of the Year went to the U3A Dubbo Chapter Committee for their work ensuring their 400 members can access classes and activities. Congratulations Isabelle, Claire, Ian and the U3A committee and thank you for your contribution to the community.

DOLLY FESTIVAL

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—I congratulate the committee and Narromine Shire Council on the success of the inaugural Narromine Dolly Festival held over the October long weekend. Postponed for the last couple of years because of COVID, the festival kicked off on Friday 30 September, and although the weather was not favourable, the planned free screening of "Gnomeo and Juliet" went ahead with a venue change. Saturday was jam packed with entertainment headlined by Timberlina, Kirsty Lee Akers supported by 13-year-old Amy Ryan from Queensland, the Kenny and Dolly Tribute show and local songstress Tanya Andrew. Narromine's main street was packed for the street party

Saturday morning and a sell-out crowd gathered at the Narromine Golf course Saturday night for the over 18's event, with plenty of Dolly and Kenny look-a-likes in attendance. The atmosphere was electric, and the town was abuzz with visitors and locals. Congratulations again to the Committee – Susie Rae, Skye Rush, Julie Wilson, Roz Reynolds, Laura Hogan, Jen Ballhausen, Amanda Hamilton, Kate Wilson, Leanne Baker, Sam Wheeler, Tim Cooper and Narromine Shire Council. I look forward to next year's even bigger and better Dolly Festival!

HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL SOLAR ACTIVATION CELEBRATION

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—The Holy Family Catholic Primary School in Lindfield will be celebrating the installation of solar panels capable of producing almost 40kw at the school. I look forward to attending the event with the school Principal Lou Dogao and the students at the school assembly on Friday, 21 October. The project was recently completed with financial assistance of \$15,072 from the Community Building Partnership program of the NSW Government. The School plans to promote the project, highlighting the environmental impact and acknowledging the support received. I commend all involved.

CWA KYOGLE BRANCH AGM

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I congratulate the Country Women's Association Kyogle Evening branch for the successful holding of its Annual General Meeting on Wednesday night. I further congratulate President Lyn Croft re-elected unopposed. Lyn has held the position for two years, and has also taken on the role of Handicraft officer. Branch Secretary Jean Kutchen also returns, as does Treasurer Jo Sutton and I congratulate them both. Far North Coast Group Treasurer and Ballina branch President Gai Mason attended and presided over the election of the office bearers. Wendy Bolden is International officer and Odette Nettleton is Cultural officer and Publicity officer. A big congratulations to all office bearers and the entire membership of the Kyogle CWA. I was honoured to attend their ball earlier this year which was a great night celebrating country women and the contributions they make to Kyogle and villages. I am of course the proud patron of the Tabulam branch of the mighty CWA and a Co-Chair of the Parliamentary CWA branch. I love working with the CWA branches right across the Lismore Electorate.

RAINBOW POWER COMPANY CELEBRATING 35 YEARS

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I congratulate the Rainbow Power Company on 35 brilliant years as a local business and for being at the forefront of renewable energy for a long time. When Rainbow Power Company started there were only 8 renewable energy companies in Australia. They are truly a pioneer of renewables in our country. It is not surprising this is the case given that the Northern Rivers is consistently one of the top regions for solar take up in Australia. Founders and owners Peter van der Wik (alias Peter Pedals), Dave Christmas and Jack Von Hest had a vision way back in the 80's to create locally sourced renewable energy for our region. Since then they have been a catalyst for change, for green energy and an iconic business known and loved across the Northern Rivers and internationally. The Rainbow Power Company now employs 42 locals, many highly skilled trades and apprentices. They are the largest single private employer in Nimbin contributing to the local economy. I wish them well for the next 35 years and beyond. We will certainly be needing them as we transition to renewable energy and act on climate change.

PCYC CHARITY FIGHT TWEED BYRON POLICE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I congratulate Superintendent David Roptell of the Tweed/Byron Police District for participating in the Police Citizens Youth Club's [PCYC] Charity boxing match. It will be a city vs country match with Superintendent Roptell pitched against another superintendent from Sydney. He says he has been training hard for the fight and has left no stone unturned. Superintendent Roptell has been boxing since his early 40's and has been using boxing to build relationships across the Tweed/Byron police district. The charity match has raised \$35,000 for the PCYC with a goal of \$40,000 which is just a fantastic support for the PCYC who do incredible work with our local young people. I wish Superintendent Roptell well for the weekend.

DEMOCRATIC KURDISH COMMUNITY CENTRE

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—It was great to meet with representatives of the Democratic Kurdish Community Centre NSW including its Co-Chair, Ismet Tastan, and Seher Atik Mete, Women's Spokesperson for the Community Centre on 29th July 2022. Our Kurdish community have suffered for centuries as victims of persecution. Many of them have had to flee their homeland as refugees. The Kurdish refugees deserve our support after suffering such persecution for so long. The Democratic Kurdish Community Centre NSW is doing fantastic work supporting these refugees, and providing them with the support to live a prosperous life as part of our Western Sydney community. The Kurdish community's presence in the Electorate of Prospect strengthens the multicultural cohesion that our community has, and they will be valued residents, giving back to our community. I had a very productive discussion with Ismet and Seher about advocacy for human rights and

ways in which we can support the Kurdish community in the Electorate of Prospect. Thank you for meeting with me. I look forward to working with you to support the Kurdish community in the Electorate of Prospect.

COMMUNITY HOUSING INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION – MEETING

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—It was great to meet with Caitlin McDowell, Head of Policy, Community Housing Industry Association NSW on Monday 19th September 2022, as well as affiliates within the community housing industry, including Jitender Balani, General Manager, Community and Business Growth, Evolve Housing and Andrew McNulty, CEO, Link Wentworth. We had a very productive discussion about the community housing sector's solutions to addressing housing affordability in our Electorate of Prospect. With the cost of living crisis affecting our Western Sydney community, affordable housing for our residents is so important. The community housing sector is working to make housing more affordable for those struggling with the cost of living. Families in Prospect struggling with these cost of living burdens do not need additional stresses, with this shortage of affordable housing. Thank you for meeting with me. I look forward to working with you in the future to coordinate strategies for addressing community housing affordability during this cost of living crisis, and beyond, in the Electorate of Prospect.

2022 WESTFIELD PARRAMATTA LOCAL HERO AWARD – JASON SOTIRIS

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—For the past five years, Westfield AU shining a light on individuals who have made a positive contribution to our community through their 'Local Heroes' Program. These Local Heroes are awarded a \$20,000 grant to the organisation they represent, to continue their important work for our community. I am pleased to acknowledge the 2022 Westfield Parramatta Local Hero, Jason Sotiris, Founder of the charity Supertee. Jason is a devoted father who has made life easier for seriously sick children, through the products manufactured by Supertee. Life dealt Jason a great challenge in 2016 when his baby daughter Angela was diagnosed with cancer. Jason came up with a fantastic idea to create an easily changeable garment for sick children like his daughter. These garments are MRI compatible and have capes that transform into a bib, with openings for medical tubes. Since 2018, more than 8000 Supertee garments have been distributed to sick children across Australia, with over 200 volunteers supporting the charity. Congratulations Jason on being named 2022 Westfield Parramatta Local Hero. Thank you for your wonderful contribution to families in our community.

BEGA-LITTLETON SISTER CITY EXCHANGE

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega)—Next weekend I will have the honour of attending the Bega-Littleton Citizen Exchange dinner, a belated celebration commemorating 60 years of friendship between Bega and the city of Littleton in Colorado, USA. The relationship began back in 1954 when the editor of the Bega District News, W. B 'Curly' Annabel began corresponding with Houston Waring, the editor of the Littleton Independent, following the release of the motion picture "Small Town Editors". Depicting the story of the rural press and the people it served, Curly was fascinated by the similarities between the two newspapers. In 1960, after President Eisenhower encouraged the formation of sister-city relationships, Bega and Littleton officially became the first in Australian-American history, with the following year being their inaugural trip. Now a long-standing tradition, delegates will visit every few years to be hosted by local member families to share in community activities and help foster the connection between our two countries, often resulting in long-lasting friendships. I wish to offer my congratulations to the those who continue to uphold and nurture this relationship of the oldest running sister city organisation between Australia and the United States. I look forward to celebrating with you.

CHEVALIER COLLEGE 2023 LEADERS

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—Chevalier College has recently introduced a new student leadership model that will recognise and give a voice to students to participate in different facets of school life. My congratulations are given to the following leaders elected for 2023: College Captains- Annabel Brennan and Oliver Kesby, College Vice Captains- Matthew Kain and Annie White, Academia Captains- Larry Doyle and Tilda Payne, Hospitality Captains- Amelie Addison and Sienna Krebs, Liturgy Captains- Declan Englefield and Juliette Pion, Performing Arts Captains- Holly Merritt and Rory Peterson, Social Justice Captains- William Cleary and Anna Huntrods, Sports Captains- Sam McMahon and Bella Wilshaw, House Captains- Kurtis Ambrose and Vera Di Bella (Burford Captains); Olivia Farrell and Noah Ford (Clancy Captains); Moses Rewais and Sienna Rossi (Giles Captains); Angus de Nooy and Mackenzie South (Osborne Captains); Ella Lillyman and Mitchell Sparkes (Reid Captains) and Adam Bermingham and Leah Gillespie (Riversdale Captains). I wish you will in your leadership duties for 2023.

OZHARVEST SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—The Southern Highlands branch of OzHarvest have been doing incredible work in the fight to reduce food wastage and provide food to those in need. OzHarvest Southern Highlands and its dedicated volunteers run a smooth operation, partnering with local cafés, community groups

and supermarkets to donate fresh produce and ready meals to charities in the region. It certainly is a team effort, with many people working behind the scenes to ensure food is not wasted. Thank you to the people who cook the meals, Stefano Marvello and the volunteers from Your Angel Charity Community Cooking School, and to the volunteers who source the produce. Additionally, my appreciation is given to the local businesses and groups who donate to OzHarvest. OzHarvest's hard work has certainly paid off. Even in the toughest times, including COVID, the branch is responsible for distributing 158,578 meals in the Southern Highlands and collecting 47,000 kilograms of food in 2021. A big thank you to Oz Harvest Southern Highlands, its executive members Jenny and Phil O'Regan, Julie Flinn, Annabel Michie, Jill Dyson and all those involved.

NATALIE TRAYNOR

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—Natalie Traynor is a member the Wollondilly community who is worthy of recognition for her hard work as an audiologist. Natalie has been working as an audiologist in the Southern Highlands for 22 years and during that time has worked for numerous organisations, and is currently running Mittagong Audiology that she and her husband opened in late 2021. Natalie has certainly dedicated her life to empowering and helping those who suffer hearing loss, an invisible disability that affects one in six Australians. Natalie holds a Certificate II in Auslan, ensuring that she can communicate with the Auslan community. At the clinic, Natalie provides not only physical care for her patients but also emotional support as hearing loss can be an extremely isolating experience. Thank you, Natalie, for your support of the hearing-impaired community in my electorate.

ARTARMON PUBLIC SCHOOL CELEBRATION OF THE ARTS

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I congratulate Artarmon Public School for its recent 'Celebration of the Arts' featuring dance, choir, and musical ensembles. On Thursday 15 September, I had the pleasure of attending this evening performance at the Concourse Concert Hall in Chatswood. The concert featured the school's Year Two and Kameraigal Choirs, its Junior and Senior Dance Groups and a selection of bands, strings, guitar, and musical ensemble groups. Artarmon Public School is committed to fostering the musical talent of its pupils and it offers excellent programs in band, strings and guitar. Supported by a large committee of parent volunteers, the music program features 180 participants across 5 bands and an orchestra, in cooperation with the strings program. The skill of these young musicians was on full display at the Celebration of the Arts concert which was a great success. I was immensely proud of the young talent exhibited that evening and it was a credit to not only the school pupils, but also their dedicated teachers and parents.

MERCY CATHOLIC COLLEGE, CHATSWOOD

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—On Thursday 8 September, I had the privilege to address the Mercy Catholic College, Chatswood school assembly and then join some students and staff for morning tea. Founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1890, Mercy College is the oldest school in my electorate and continues a long tradition of providing a Catholic education for girls from Years 7-12. Located in the heart of Chatswood on its present site since 1905, Mercy College offers a rich and varied curriculum designed to make a difference in the lives of its students. Providing a caring environment, the College assists students to become independent, confident and resilient young women through a range of exciting curricular and extra-curricular opportunities. On my recent visit, I was impressed with the college campus and delighted to be able to chat with many of the staff and students over morning tea. I believe the future at Mercy College is very bright and I look forward to returning for many more visits.

OMNIA INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—Maximising employment opportunities for all is critical to promoting both a productive workforce and an inclusive society. Accordingly, I would like to commend Omnia Inclusive Employment Solutions for their invaluable work in helping people living with a disability to secure long-term, meaningful employment. It should go without saying that such people also have tremendous abilities that would be a prized asset to any workplace. They represent a huge source of untapped potential which can and must be harnessed to enrich our workforce. To this end, Omnia inspires youth and school leavers living with a disability to achieve independence by growing their social and employment skills. In September, I had the pleasure of meeting the wonderful people of Omnia for the special Lettuce Eat lunch at Chatswood Dougherty Centre. A group of 16 young NDIS participants with disabilities undertook an educational cooking and nutrition program which saw them launch a one-day pop up restaurant. It was immensely gratifying to see so much talent, enthusiasm, and teamwork on display. For me, it highlighted the invaluable work Omnia does in nurturing the potential of employees who can contribute so much.

JOEL SMEATON

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I acknowledge Joel Smeaton who was recently awarded with 'The Pride of Workmanship Award' by the Entrance and Erina Rotary Clubs at their annual awards evening. Joel was recognised for his work to establish Health on the Streets which is a mobile health clinic providing services for homeless and rough sleepers on the Central Coast. The Clinic is administered through Coast & Country Primary Care who are a local health care service. Thank you to Alison who is a Chronic Disease Clinical Nurse Consultant for nominating Joel and Kathy Beverley who is CEO of CCPC for making this project possible. This is an example of an innovative project based on local needs and has been greatly beneficial to the community. Thank you Joel and congratulations on this well-deserved recognition.

UPDATE ON WYONG PALLIATIVE CARE PETITION

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—There could be no more important investment than in quality of life, especially in ensuring dignity and care for those approaching the end of their life. The hardworking Elsie's Retreat committee, Judy Maudsley, Margaret Pearce, Oana McBride, Peter Hurley, and the Orange Army have spent more than a decade working tirelessly to improve palliative care options for the Central Coast community. In April 2021, their dream became a reality when the Coast's first fully-funded, dedicated, 10 bed palliative care unit opened at Gosford Hospital. They are not stopping there. Since, the Orange Army have lobbied for a dedicated Palliative Care Unit for Wyong Hospital. Together in June, we launched a new petition, calling on our community's support. To date, we have over 3,000 signatures. Thank you to fantastic local businesses who have shown their support by placing petition details in their shop window or front counter. I look forward to continuing working with Margaret, Judy, Oana, Peter and the rest of the Orange Army to hopefully deliver a positive outcome. This is an investment in quality of life, in dignity - the dignity of our loved ones, and everyone in our region.

REGIONAL VOLUNTEERS RECOGNISED

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro)—Last week I had the pleasure of meeting many Monaro volunteers during the Southern Inland Volunteer of the Year Regional Ceremony. This year's ceremony celebrated 16 years of acknowledging the great work of our volunteers through the awards. The value of volunteering to our local communities is immeasurable and cannot be underestimated. This year the awards recognised a record number of more than 128,000 volunteers right across the State. In uncertain times, like we have experienced over the last few years with drought, fires, floods and Covid, community support for those in need has never been more important. A critical component of that support comes from people within our communities who have selflessly volunteered their time and effort. I'd like to take the opportunity to make special mention of our Monaro volunteers with the State Emergency Service units, frontline health workers, Lifeline, Rural Fire Service Brigades, Red Cross, the Country Women's Association branches, St John Ambulance and all of the community groups which have helped us through these extraordinary times. Thank you for all that you do.

KASSANDRA PACKWOOD AND STAFF FROM QUEANBEYAN HOSPITAL

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro)—The heart of any regional community is the local hospital and the people behind it. Queanbeyan hospital has faced it all in recent years, from covid to staffing challenges. Queanbeyan Hospital has served the community since 1847 and prior to the establishment of Royal Canberra Hospital in 1914, Queanbeyan Hospital was the hub for medical services in the Monaro region. The hard work of Cassandra Packwood, site manager of Queanbeyan Hospital and her team have set the benchmark for maternity care in NSW. The maternity ward at the Queanbeyan Hospital was ranked as one of the best in New South Wales according to a state-wide survey of patients. The scores received for the overall experience from families who had had their child at the hospital was rated significantly higher in relation to the rest of the state. Queanbeyan midwife Jenny Flaherty was also recognised as a finalist for NSW midwife of the year. I want to thank Cassandra Packwood and her team for all the work they do.

WILDCARE QUEANBEYAN IS TURNING 30

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro)—The Monaro has an abundance of beautiful waterways, which are home to a diverse range of native wildlife including water birds, frogs, turtles, platypus, rakali, fish and other aquatic creatures. Many land-dwelling creatures also rely on our waterways for drinking water and food, but sadly, the human impact on these environments is often detrimental. There is some hope for our injured fauna, in the form of Wildcare Queanbeyan – a 300-member strong volunteer organisation, celebrating its 30th year of rescuing and caring for our native wildlife. Wildcare Queanbeyan was founded by a dedicated group of likeminded native-wildlife rescue and care volunteers in September 1992. It is one of the oldest, continuously operating, native-wildlife rescue and rehabilitation groups in NSW. This group's area is vast. Stretching from Bredbo in the south to Collector in the north, Warri in the east, to Young in the west. This is not only a huge area for its dedicated volunteers to cover, but also showcases the wide variety of wildlife they care for. I wish to congratulate all those

who've volunteered with Wildcare Queanbeyan over the decades, and thank them for their service to our environment and local communities.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE NETBALL ASSOCIATION

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I congratulate the Sutherland Shire Netball Association [SSNA] for being named the Volunteer Team of the Year at The Centre for Volunteering's Volunteer of the Year Awards for Southern Sydney. Since its establishment in 1960, the SSNA has supported thousands of women and girls from our local community through winter and summer competitions. The SSNA promote fair play, fitness, and fun, and take immense pride in their significant success at a representative level. To organise such a large competition is a huge undertaking and this award is recognition of the countless hours and dedicated the many SSNA volunteers put into promoting the sport and developing the skills of netballers across the Sutherland Shire. Of course, none of this is possible without the dedicated volunteers who facilitate the netball competition each season. I particularly acknowledge the SSNA's executive committee members, namely Karen Salter, Lisa Woodham, Jenny Rees, Sue Woods, Shirley Way, Prue Haberecht, Kerry Phillips, Nerida Noble, Vicki Kerr and Aynsley Dryden and commend them on this achievement. I thank the Executive members of the Sutherland Shire Netball Association for their ongoing contribution to our local sporting community.

WATKINS TAPSELL SOLICITORS

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I congratulate the incredible team at Watkins Tapsell Solicitors in Kirrawee on winning the Professional Services of the Year category at the 2022 Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards. For over 50 years, the team at Watkins Tapsell Solicitors have sought to offer their clients more than just legal support and exceed their expectations by anticipating changes in the law and listening to their needs. The firm also invests in our community by supporting charities the team is passionate about including Kookaburra Kids, 3 Bridges, the Cerebral Palsy Alliance, Red Nose, Toys 'N' Tucker, Beyond Blue, Learning Links and Ostomy NSW. I was pleased to present the team from Watkins Tapsell Solicitors with this award on 28 September 2022. I recognise the leadership of the firm's Partners namely Sonja Daly, Tiana Daly, Peter Rusborne, James Roche, Adam Ratcliffe and Devanand Sarawati, and the efforts of their outstanding team including Stephanie Martyn, Mitchell Worthy, Ryan Roberts, Samantha Thatcher, Amanda Cabrera, Denise Robinson, Chloe Pack, Ethan Henniker, Hannah Fraser, Janelle Vaughan and Lauren Eldridge. I congratulate the team at Watkins Tapsell Solicitors on their success at the Sutherland Shire Local Business Awards and extend my best wishes for the future.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 18:28 until
Tuesday 18 October at 12:00.**