



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Seventh Parliament
First Session**

Thursday 17 November 2022

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday 17 November 2022

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

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Bills

PRIVACY AND PERSONAL INFORMATION PROTECTION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

POINT TO POINT TRANSPORT (TAXIS AND HIRE VEHICLES) AMENDMENT BILL 2022

DISTRICT COURT AMENDMENT BILL 2022

CRIMES AMENDMENT (PROTECTION OF CRIMINAL DEFENCE LAWYERS) BILL 2022

GOVERNMENT SECTOR AUDIT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Returned

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

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT (ENFORCEMENT POWERS) BILL 2022

Returned

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

Announcements

CHRISTMAS FELICITATIONS

The SPEAKER: I remind members that according to the resolution of the House on 16 November 2022 members can provide written Christmas felicitations of up to 800 words for inclusion in *Hansard*. The content rules for community recognition statements under Standing Order 108A apply. Any interested members should submit their written Christmas felicitations electronically to dps.hansard@parliament.nsw.gov.au by 12.00 noon today. Please get them in by 12 o'clock, unless you are delivering them yourself this afternoon.

Dr Geoff Lee: Well done yesterday on your valedictory.

The SPEAKER: I acknowledge the interjection. I put the member for Parramatta on a commendation.

[Notices of motions given.]

Motions

CALIFORNIAN SISTER STATE RELATIONSHIP TWENTY-FIFTH 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) (09:47): I move:

That the Legislative Assembly resolves that:

Whereas:

- (1) The year 2022 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the State of New South Wales Sister State relationship with the State of California, and upon this occasion both States are rewarding of special commendation for the resounding success of their relationship based on goodwill and the goal of peace.
- (2) On 14 November 1996, both Houses of the Parliament of New South Wales passed a resolution to enter into a Sister State relationship with California and on 30 May 1997 the Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 19, authored by Senator Jim Brulte, was chaptered, officially inviting New South Wales to enter a Sister State relationship.
- (3) The resolutions of both Legislatures noted the leading roles that New South Wales and California play as commercial, industrial and financial centres of their respective countries, as well as leading centres for the production of high-technology goods, wine, films, gold, sports and leisure activities, in addition to which they highlighted that New South Wales and California are the most populous States in their respective countries and

share a common language, similar early history dominated by mining and agriculture, diverse and multicultural populations, and a Pacific Rim orientation.

- (4) On 9 June 1997, the relationship was formalised through the signing of a cooperation agreement between the State of California and the State of New South Wales by President pro tempore of the Californian State Senate Bill Lockyer; Senate Rules Committee Member Jim Brulte; President of the New South Wales Legislative Council Max Willis; and Speaker of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly John Murray.
 - (5) Leaders of both States committed to make efforts to engage in social, economic, educational, scientific and cultural exchanges, and in the ensuing years many exchanges have taken place in a variety of critical public policy areas, including in 1999 when a California-Australia Biotechnology Conference was held in San Diego to connect the biotechnology industries in the respective regions and promote sound practices.
 - (6) The California State Senate and New South Wales Parliament have a robust relationship, conducting several reciprocal legislative exchanges over the past 25 years and maintaining close contact between leaders of the respective bodies on issues of mutual importance, as exemplified by New South Wales maintaining a trade and investment office in California for over 10 years, and Investment NSW's regular engagement with its counterpart, the California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development, to support mutual trade and investment.
 - (7) Both States continue to build a pathway towards a net carbon-free future, with the State of California committing to 100 per cent renewables by 2045, while the State of New South Wales has laid the framework to become a world leader in green hydrogen power generation and renewable energy.
 - (8) The two States also have a shared history of being enriched by thousands of years of First Nations' civilisations, as well as our vibrant diverse and multicultural communities.
 - (9) The States of California and New South Wales also share a deep understanding of the dire challenges faced in situations of drought and extreme fire conditions, causing the firefighting agencies in both jurisdictions to share best practices and resources in fighting and preventing bushfires, including when the United States of America deployed 362 firefighters to provide vital assistance in the 2019-20 bushfires in New South Wales.
 - (10) From 13 to 17 August 2022, the President of the New South Wales Legislative Council, the Hon. Matthew Mason-Cox, and the Speaker of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly, the Hon. Jonathan O'Dea, travelled to California and on 15 August 2022 visited the California State Senate Chamber to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of this long-lasting friendship between the States.
 - (11) From 8 to 12 December 2022, a delegation from the California State Senate will visit New South Wales to also acknowledge and celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of this important relationship between the two States, which will further cement the relationship and lay the pathway for ongoing and mutually beneficial reciprocal visits into the future.
- (1) This House commends all those responsible for establishing, maintaining and deepening the Sister State relationship between the States of California and New South Wales over the last 25 years and into the future.
 - (2) This House notes the adoption of a similar resolution in the Legislative Council on 10 November 2022.
 - (3) That a message be sent to inform the Legislative Council that the Legislative Assembly has agreed to this resolution.

Motion agreed to.

Documents

PRINTING OF PAPERS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I move:

That the following papers be printed:

Report of the New South Wales Law Reform Commission for the year ended 30 June 2020.

Report No. 148 of the New South Wales Law Reform Commission entitled *Consent in relation to sexual offences*, dated September 2020.

Report of the Mental Health Commission of New South Wales entitled *Living Well in Focus: 2020 - 2024*.

Report of Transport for NSW entitled *NSW Road Safety Progress Report 2018*, dated November 2020.

Report of the NSW Department of Education entitled *Progress Report: Improving outcomes for students with disability 2020*.

The NSW Bush Fire Season Outlook 2020-21, dated 18 November 2020.

Annual report on progress of Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, dated December 2020.

Report on the public inquiry into Blue Mountains City Council established under section 438U of the Local Government Act 1993 entitled *Final Report (Asbestos Term of Reference)*, dated 18 March 2021.

Report of the Public Service Commission—State of the NSW Public Sector Report 2020.

Report of Transport for NSW entitled *NSW Road Safety Progress Report 2020*, dated July 2019 to December 2020.

Report and determinations of the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal under sections 239 and 241 of the Local Government Act 1993, dated 23 April 2021.

Report of the Wine Grapes Marketing Board for 2020.

Government Response to Report No. 1/57 of the Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety entitled *Assaults on members of the NSW Police Force*.

Constitution of Australian Education Research Organisation Limited.

Report of Multicultural NSW entitled *Community Relations Report 2019-2020*.

Report of the NSW Rural Fire Service entitled *NSW Bush Fire Season Outlook 2021-22*.

Chair's report of the Board of the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission for the year ended 30 June 2020.

Report of the Department of Customer Service entitled Review of the Data Sharing (Government Sector) Act 2015, dated August 2021.

Report of the Statutory Review of the Inspector of Custodial Services Act 2012, dated May 2021.

State Owned Corporations Act 1989—Direction to the Board of the Forestry Corporation of New South Wales to divert selected softwood log exports to domestic markets and to transport those logs primarily using rail pursuant to section 20P of the Act, dated 20 August 2021.

State Owned Corporations Act 1989—Notice of reasons for giving a direction to the Board of the Forestry Corporation of New South Wales to divert selected softwood log exports to domestic markets and to transport those logs primarily using rail pursuant to section 20P of the Act.

Reports for the year ended 30 June 2021 of:

Department of Regional NSW; Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation; Coal Innovation NSW Fund; Aboriginal Land Council (Volumes One and Two); New South Wales Electoral Commission; Art Gallery of New South Wales; Australian Museum Trust; Historic Houses Trust of New South Wales; Library Council of New South Wales; Trustees of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences; Sydney Opera House Trust; State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales; Public Service Commission Animal Research Review Panel; Administration of Agricultural Statutory Authorities; Veterinary Practitioners Board of New South Wales; New South Wales Rural Assistance Authority; Rice Marketing Board; NSW Food Authority; Local Land Services; Trustees of the ANZAC Memorial Building; Venues NSW; Office of Sport; NSW Institute of Sport; State Sporting Venues Authority; Multicultural NSW; Anti-Discrimination Board of New South Wales; Judicial Commission of New South Wales; Law Society of New South Wales, together with financial reports of the Public Purpose Fund and the Legal Practitioners Fidelity Fund; Legal Aid New South Wales; Legal Services Council (incorporating the report of the Commissioner for Uniform Legal Services Regulation); New South Wales Bar Association; NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal; NSW Crown Solicitor's Office; NSW Trustee and Guardian; Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions; Office of the Legal Services Commissioner; Department of Customer Service; Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal; Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority; State Insurance Regulatory Authority; New South Wales Government Telecommunications Authority; Service NSW; Board of Surveying and Spatial Information; Office of the Independent Review Officer; Personal Injury Commission; Property NSW; Waste Assets Management Corporation; Cemeteries and Crematoria NSW; Teacher Housing Authority; Valuer-General NSW; New South Wales Aboriginal Housing Office; Dams Safety Committee; Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission; Cobar Water Board; Report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled *Licence compliance under the Water Industry Competition Act 2006 (NSW)*; Report to the Minister, Water – Annual Compliance Report, dated October 2021; Professional Standards Councils; Greyhound Racing NSW; Harness Racing New South Wales; Racing NSW; Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission; NSW Architects Registration Board; Long Service Corporation; Rental Bond Board; TAFE NSW; NSW Skills Board; Sydney Water Corporation; Water NSW; Hunter Water Corporation; Essential Energy; Forestry Corporation of New South Wales; Landcom; Port Authority of New South Wales; New South Wales Treasury Corporation; SAS Trustee Corporation (containing a separate report for the SAS Trustee Corporation Pooled Fund); Trustees of the Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Fund; Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust; Zoological Parks Board of New South Wales (trading as Taronga Conservation Society Australia); New South Wales Environmental Trust; Biodiversity Conservation Trust; Department of Premier and Cabinet; Greater Sydney Commission; Infrastructure NSW; Parliamentary Counsel's Office; Resilience NSW; Ministry of Health (incorporating the Financial Statements of Public Health Organisations under its control) Volumes One to Four; New South Wales Health Foundation; Health Care Complaints Commission; Combined New South Wales Health Professional Councils (Volumes One and Two); Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency; National Health Practitioner Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner; Administrator of the National Health Funding Pool; Mental Health Review Tribunal; Mental Health Commission of New South Wales; Department of Planning, Industry and Environment; Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust; Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation; Independent Planning Commission; Place Management NSW (including the report for Luna Park Reserve Trust); Natural Resources Commission; Parramatta Park Trust; Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust; Sydney Olympic Park Authority; Wentworth Park Sporting Complex Trust; Western Sydney Parklands Trust; Department of Transport (Volumes One and Two); Sydney Trains (Volumes One and Two); NSW Trains (Volumes One and Two); Sydney Metro; State Transit Authority of New South Wales (Volumes One and Two); New South Wales State Emergency Service; New South Wales Rural Fire Service; NSW Police Force; New South Wales Crime Commission; Fire and Rescue NSW; NSW Education Standards Authority; Report of Murray-Darling Basin Authority; Western Parkland City Authority; and Music Festival Roundtable.

Statements of Corporate Intent for the year ending 30 June 2022 of:

Essential Energy; Forestry Corporation of NSW; Hunter Water Corporation; Landcom; Port Authority of New South Wales; Sydney Water; Transport Asset Holding Entity of New South Wales; and Water NSW.

Report of the Department of Communities and Justice entitled *Child Deaths 2020 Annual Report*.

Reports for 2020 of:

Serious Offenders Review Council; and NSW State Parole Authority.

New South Wales State of the Environment Report 2021.

Annual report on progress of Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, dated December 2021.

Report of the Office of Transport Safety Investigations entitled *Rail Safety Investigation Report – Incorrect placement of worksite protection and near hit with worker*, Otford, 29 June 2021, dated February 2022.

Report of Multicultural NSW entitled *Community Relations Report 2020-2021*.

Report of Transport for NSW entitled *NSW Road Safety Progress Report 2021*.

Report of the NSW Department of Primary Industries entitled *State of Biosecurity Report 2018-2021*.

Annual report and determination of the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal on salary and additional entitlements for members of the Parliament of New South Wales, dated 24 May 2022.

Report of the review of the Coastal Management Act 2016.

Reports of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled:

Review of Central Coast Council water prices—Final Report: Summary, dated May 2022; Review of Central Coast Council water prices—Information Paper: Prices and Bills Impact, dated May 2022; Review of Central Coast Council water prices—Information Paper: Improving Performance, dated May 2022; Review of Central Coast Council water prices—Information Paper: Operating and Capital, dated May 2022; Review of Central Coast Council water prices—Information Paper: Funding Stormwater Services, dated May 2022; Review of Central Coast Council water prices—Technical Paper: Regulatory Background, dated May 2022; Review of Central Coast Council water prices—Technical Paper: How We Set the Revenue Level, dated May 2022; Review of Central Coast Council water prices—Technical Paper: Demand for Water Services, dated May 2022; Review of Central Coast Council water prices—Technical Paper: Trade Waste and Other Prices, dated May 2022; and Review of Central Coast Council water prices—Final Determination, dated May 2022.

Report pursuant to section 35 of the Law Enforcement and National Security (Assumed Identities) Act 2010 of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) for the year ended 30 June 2021.

Report of the NSW Government entitled *2021-22 NSW Closing the Gap Annual Report*, dated September 2022.

Report of SafeWork NSW entitled *NSW Dust Disease Register Annual Report 2021-22*, dated September 2022.

Report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled *NSW Energy Savings Scheme—Compliance and Operation in 2021, Report to the Minister*, dated July 2022.

Review of the Social and Affordable Housing NSW Fund Act 2016, dated October 2022.

Review of the Personal Injury Commission for the year ended 30 June 2022.

Report of the NSW Recreational Fishing Trusts for year ended 30 June 2022.

Motion agreed to.

Bills

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT (ENFORCEMENT POWERS) BILL 2022

Consideration in Detail

Consideration of Legislative Council's amendment.

Schedule of amendments referred to in message of 17 November 2022

No. 1 GRNS No. 3 [c2022-189G]

Page 3, Schedule 1[2], proposed section 255A. Insert after line 37—

- (7) A fisheries officer must not exercise a function under this section in relation to a suspected fisheries offence committed by an Aboriginal person unless the fisheries officer has taken reasonable steps to determine—
- (a) whether the fishing concerned was the carrying out of Aboriginal cultural fishing, and
- Note—Aboriginal cultural fishing** is defined in section 4(1).
- (b) whether the fishing concerned was the exercise of native title rights and interests within the meaning of the *Native Title Act 1993* of the Commonwealth.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales) (09:54): I move:

That the Legislative Council amendment be agreed to.

As I said in my second reading speech, the bill is absolutely critical to ensuring that our fisheries officers have the powers they need to protect our fisheries resources. The amendments in the bill come in response to a District Court judgment that has significantly compromised the ability of fisheries officers to perform their search functions under the Fisheries Management Act 1994. The issues affect compliance powers under the Marine Estate Management Act 2014, as authorised officers derive their power under the Fisheries Management Act. Both Acts are critical pieces of legislation. It is important that the powers under the Acts are available to compliance officers and that they are fit for purpose and enable effective and proportionate compliance operations.

This bill protects our fisheries resources for current and future generations. I am sure everyone can get behind that outcome—and I recognise the member for Wyong, who is in the Chamber. The bill ensures that there is simply no ambiguity about the available powers. The intent of the bill is to update the Fisheries Management

Act to give effect to the longstanding powers that were operating prior to the recent District Court judgment that highlighted concerns with their current construction and to ensure that fisheries officers have the powers they need to investigate, monitor and enforce compliance within the Act. It does not affect or otherwise change how fisheries officers undertake compliance. The existing risk-based approach to the enforcement of the Fisheries Management Act and the Marine Estate Management Act will not change as a result of the bill.

The New South Wales fisheries sector is vitally important to our State and full of people who care about the sector, which is critical. Our shared resources must be managed to ensure a strong and sustainable recreational, commercial and cultural fishing sector for future generations. Our fisheries resources and the ecosystems they rely on are owned by the community and managed by the Government. We have a responsibility to protect and safeguard this natural asset for present and future generations. The Government recognises the importance of quality recreational fishing opportunities, viable commercial fisheries industries and fisheries resources to Aboriginal communities practising their culture. The Government is committed to responsible fishing practices. The coast, rivers and oceans are shared by everyone, and it is important to ensure that continues.

New South Wales has a population of over eight million people, 85 per cent of whom live on or near the coast, and there are an estimated one million recreational fishers. Over 1,000 commercial fishers and many Aboriginal communities practice cultural fishing across the State. That in itself is a reflection of how vital the fishing sector is to the people of New South Wales, and we take that seriously. The Government recognises the importance of ensuring the harvest of our fish stocks remains sustainable and carefully managing the competing interests and pressures on our fisheries and aquatic environment.

Fishing regulations such as freshwater and saltwater bag and size limits ensure healthy and sustainable fisheries for future generations. Size limits allow fish to reach maturity and complete their breeding cycle, while bag limits ensure that everyone gets a fair share of the resources without overfishing certain species. Without the ability to undertake compliance and enforcement activities, there is a real risk that the regulatory framework will not deliver the outcomes it is designed to achieve. Much of the debate on the bill, both here and in the other place, related to the recent parliamentary inquiry into the commencement of the Fisheries Legislation Amendment Act 2019. The amendment moved in the other place reflects the focus of that debate. The Government takes that critical issue incredibly seriously and commends those who worked cooperatively to develop and pass the bill. The amendment agreed to in the other place was put forward in that context, and I make clear that the Government supports it.

The amendment moved in the other place provides further clarity about how those powers can be in situations where Aboriginal people may be exercising their cultural fishing rights. It is a sensible amendment that provides absolute clarity and certainty about how and when those powers are to be used. The powers are about protecting our fisheries resources, and the amendment is entirely consistent with that purpose. Fisheries officers already operate under work instructions and compliance policies to support the identification of cultural fishing or fishing subject to native title rights in the field, and this amendment ensures that reasonable steps are always taken by compliance officers when using their search powers.

The New South Wales Government is committed to supporting increased access to cultural fishing rights within a sustainable natural resource management framework and continues to progress a range of activities to increase participation of Aboriginal people in the fishing sector. The Government also continues to incorporate Aboriginal traditional knowledge and community involvement in fisheries management decision-making, particularly through representation on key fisheries advisory bodies to government.

I now address local management plans and the discussions that took place in this place and in the other place around the switching on of new section 21AA. It was always intended that a cultural fishing regulation would be made to enhance access arrangements for Aboriginal cultural fishing overtime. The intention has been—in fact, it is a recommendation from the parliamentary fishing inquiry—that new section 21AA would not be commenced without an accompanying regulation setting out take-and-possession limits to sustainably manage the fisheries resource. The Government has developed local management plans with Aboriginal communities to facilitate their cultural fishing at the Hastings, which is already underway, and a new pilot is to be rolled out shortly at the Tweed.

The Hastings local management plan commenced with the support of members of the interim steering committee on 17 June. The Tweed local management plan is in final stages of legal review, with commencement planned shortly, with strong community support. The local management plan's approach recognises the need and desire for Aboriginal communities to have greater involvement in fisheries management at a local level. Development of a one-size-fits-all statewide approach to cultural fishing and the management of it does not reflect variance in inland and coastal cultural fishing practices and the aspirations and needs of each community—hence the idea of the local management. A local management plan is a collective of arrangements that provide access to fisheries resources for a local, place-based Aboriginal community in pursuit of their cultural practices.

It also presents an opportunity for involvement in fisheries management, including aspects of self-regulation. It covers things like areas of fishing and fishing equipment to be used; species of fish, including those of particular significance to that particular area; take-and-possession limits; and direct involvement in management of the trial and community-based management of cultural fishing. Within DPI Fisheries, there are 14 identified or targeted positions that aim to increase Aboriginal representation in fisheries management, outside of the engagement with communities and inclusion of Aboriginal people on advisory bodies. A total of six Aboriginal Fisheries Officer roles have been specifically designed and created to assist the department engage with local Aboriginal communities. I have met several of those officers, who are loving the opportunity.

The New South Wales Government has also recently launched an expression of interest process to develop the Aboriginal Fisheries Business Development Program. The program is about supporting the establishment of new Aboriginal-owned fisheries businesses that help generate benefits for Aboriginal communities across New South Wales. Furthermore, since the first funding round in 2017-18, 28 projects worth almost \$1 million have been approved and supported by the Aboriginal Fishing Trust Fund across inland and coastal locations. The New South Wales Government is absolutely behind the idea that we need to keep supporting that, and we absolutely will.

We also need to recognise that the New South Wales recreational fishing industry is extremely valuable to our coastal and inland communities. Recreational fishing continues to be one of New South Wales' most popular pastimes and is enjoyed by around a million anglers each and every year. I think most people who fish remember the first time they fished—perhaps it was with a grandparent; maybe their grandfather, like me—and those first feelings of having something on the end of the line. It is a special feeling, and it is one that we want to encourage families and communities to be involved with well into the future. It has economic, social and environmental benefits for everyone. It is good for everyone involved in the industry, so we will keep supporting that.

The recreational fishing, boating and tackle sector is estimated to be worth about \$3 billion to the New South Wales economy, including through regional tourism and charter fishing. Interestingly, around 14,000 full-time jobs are linked to the industry. The New South Wales charter fishing boat industry is recognised as one of the State's most dynamic and successful fishing sectors, catering for tens of thousands of recreational fishers annually and providing significant contributions to many regional economies. This Government is a strong advocate for recreational fishing, with its responsibility to safeguard fish stocks and protect the places we love to fish. We are committed to the long-term viability and sustainability of the New South Wales commercial fishing industry.

The seafood-consuming public relies on the sustainable management of our fish stocks to be able to source fresh locally caught seafood. In fact, on Monday we will be celebrating World Fisheries Day. Members who are part of the Parliamentary Friends of the Australian Seafood Industry had a fantastic outing at the Sydney Fish Market yesterday, celebrating the vibrant fish stocks that we fish for in our waters in sustainable ways, supporting our professional fishers and also recognising the role that organisations like the Sydney Fish Market play in economically underpinning the viability and the sustainability of our seafood industries.

The New South Wales wild harvest commercial fishing industry is also a dynamic network of skilled businesses. Commercial fishers, wholesalers, processors and retailers all work together with the restaurant and catering industry to supply fresh seafood to communities across the State as well as to interstate and overseas markets. Interestingly, we are in the middle of a series of Taste of Seafood Festivals that we funded this year, and one of those festivals is being held inland for the first time at Dubbo. People wonder about that link between the freshwater and the seawater. It works particularly well. People all over inland New South Wales love fresh seafood, and we need to keep finding ways to get it to our regional areas.

Our fish stocks underpin regional employment, including thousands of livelihoods, as I have mentioned. In 2020-21 it was estimated that the value of the New South Wales commercial fisheries sector was \$202.5 million—\$104.5 million for the wild harvest sector and \$98 million for the aquaculture sector. That aquaculture sector is growing rapidly. Some amazing people are doing work in a range of fields, including with Murray cod down at Griffith where Aquana is having extremely great success in capturing a market, including high-end restaurants, around sustainably farmed aquaculture and bringing Murray cod to people's plates.

Communities across New South Wales rely on having a well-managed and sustainable fisheries resource base. That requires effective compliance and enforcement powers. That is why this bill is so important. It is an absolute necessity for preserving the health of our marine and freshwater ecosystems. Members might have noticed that I am wearing a National Ag Day badge in the Chamber today. This morning in the Speaker's Garden we have been celebrating all things agriculture, recognising the importance of agriculture across our State. People tend to forget that fisheries is part of agriculture. Agriculture is a broad spectrum of things from traditional agriculture—where people might think of sheep and wheat or cattle and dairy—cropping of all kinds, many horticulture products, forestry and, significantly, fisheries.

Fisheries have also been impacted by the recent flooding. Yesterday, as I said, I caught up with some of our seafood providers and provedores, and it is hitting seafood providers as much as anyone. The constant flooding means that there are disturbed ecosystems within our normally beautiful resource areas along the coastline and in estuaries. Flooding is impacting significantly on agriculture right now, not just on the land, and has been since it started in Lismore earlier on this year. Recognising that at this time we are talking about sustainable fishing and managing fish stocks, we need to support our fishers on whom this industry relies and who are out there every day when the going is okay to try to catch amazing fish of every kind. Our thoughts are with all of those people who are trying to make a living and support their families when the floods have had an impact along our coastline, including in estuaries.

I thank all members in this place and in the other place who have contributed to delivering this critically important bill. Quite a bit of action happened late last night in the other place to make sure that we could have a sensible, well-thought-out and basically globally agreed-to position on this. Such matters take time and effort, but I thank everyone who has been part of the process in good faith to get to where we are now. It is essential that we understand we are dealing with a bill that is proportionate and provides for necessary action to be taken to deter people from illegally fishing while providing certainty to the community and our fisheries compliance officers. This bill provides all of that certainty to ensure that fisheries officers can effectively perform their critical duties of ensuring compliance with fisheries laws in New South Wales. I support the amendment agreed to in the other place. I commend the bill to the House.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (10:11): On behalf of the New South Wales Opposition, I indicate support for the amending bill and I endorse the comments of the Minister. The Minister is 100 per cent correct in saying the bill is absolutely essential to combat illegal fishing. That is what this bill has been about from the start and the Opposition fully understands that. But, when it comes to First Nations affairs, often complicated arguments are advanced and that makes legislating in this space fraught with complexity. Having had the shadow ministerial responsibility of Aboriginal Affairs for seven years, I know there are always competing interests and views and that that can sometimes complicate matters. I appreciate the work of the Minister in reaching this position. I will refer to that in more detail later.

Being an MP for an electorate that extends to the coastline, all the time I see people engaging in illegal fishing. It is essential that fisheries officers have the powers to combat those practices. If we are to have a sustainable commercial and recreational fishing industry, we must make sure that it is administered properly and appropriately. I note the presence of the member for Terrigal in the Chamber. He would appreciate that over the summer we welcome many visitors to our area. We encourage them to enjoy themselves and have a good time, but at the same time we must ensure that the activities they engage in are lawful. Sometimes visitors to coastal areas engage in activities that flout the rules. I am reminded by my colleagues of the practice of fish mincing. People have their fish mincer with them to immediately mince undersize fish so that fisheries officers cannot catch them doing the wrong thing. That is one of the practices that make it important for the provisions of the bill to be in place. It will ensure that fisheries officers have the capacity to do their job, which is to protect our fish species from exploitation. The Opposition supports that 100 per cent.

I recognise the work of Minister Saunders and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs in the other place, the Hon. Ben Franklin. The report on cultural fishing was released on Monday and the Ministers have tried to include some of the report's recommendations in the bill. Often it is the case that the matters we are dealing with are not as simple as they appear to be. The easy path to take would have been to suggest that this legislation is about turning on the provisions of section 21AA, but the bill should reflect the advice of stakeholder groups. I have no doubt that Minister Franklin understands that this bill should reflect increased Aboriginal self-determination rights in the Aboriginal Land Rights Amendment Bill that was passed earlier this week. The message that the Opposition received was that the stakeholders wanted section 21AA turned on, but Aboriginals and Aboriginal land councils also wanted to be in control and to be consulted on the implementation. They think the bill has been formulated with best intentions—even I thought the earlier drafts of the bill were reasonable—but it was later pointed out to me that the bill was not adequate and required further consultation, which continued up until last night.

Basically, Aboriginal people thought they were being left out of the conversation. They felt they were not empowered to exercise self-determination on matters they believe to be important and they, therefore, would not sign up to simply turning on the provisions of section 21AA without the inclusion of a set of conditions they wanted. I received at least two dozen phone calls and had face-to-face meetings to discuss the various iterations of the bill. The consultation included legal advice and a whole range of views. In the end, matters were drawn to a good conclusion, which set up an opportunity to renegotiate some parts of the bill. The Minister rightly referred to local management plans, which certainly is a matter we should pursue. In conclusion, I thank Danny Chapman, Natalie Rotumah and Mishka Holt from NTSCorp; Stephen Lawrence; Kathryn Ridge; Natalie Kwok; Ms Sue Higginson for her amendment, and my friend and colleague the Hon. Mick Veitch. I also give a special shout-out

to Minister Saunders and his staff for their cooperation in dealing with a very difficult subject. The Opposition supports the bill.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Lee Evans): The question is that the Legislative Council amendment be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ROCK FISHING SAFETY AMENDMENT BILL 2021

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from 10 November 2022.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (10:18): I am pleased to speak in debate on the Rock Fishing Safety Amendment Bill 2021. Last week I expressed grave concerns with regard to this appalling bill—all one page of it. I am pleased to note the presence in the Chamber of the member for Wyong. I note from comments he made publicly that he will support the Government's opposition to this appalling bill. As a surf lifesaver, he knows exactly how dangerous the provisions of the bill are. I was gobsmacked that every single member of the Labor Party in the Legislative Council and The Greens voted in favour of this bill. What amazed me—the Minister will probably be shocked as well—it was literally one page. There were not hundreds of pages of documents that needed to be filtered through, it was one page—one very dangerous page of legislation that would take away the safety net that is vital to ensure that rock fishers are able to participate in their sport safely.

As I said earlier, rock fishing is the world's most dangerous sport. Ironically, last week the Parliamentary Friends of Surf Life Saving were meeting in the Speaker's Garden at the same time as the bill was being debated. I note that the member for Wyong is smiling. Last week I made the suggestion to the Hon. Mark Banasiak—who is the author of this appalling legislation—that he might want to take a walk into the Speaker's Garden and have a chat with Steve Pearce and George Shales and all the other volunteer surf lifesavers who were there to seek their advice about the Rock Fishing Safety Amendment Bill 2022.

The minute that the bill was made public, I received multiple phone calls from surf lifesavers up and down the Central Coast who were appalled at what was being put forward. I am not sure what happens in the dark recesses of Labor caucus but obviously no-one was paying attention to the bill. If the bill did not go to caucus, that is even more of a worry. It should have, given the outcome. If that were the case, I would have thought that the member for Wyong and other Labor members from the Central Coast would have been screaming from the rafters.

Mr David Harris: We did, we did.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: The member for Wyong is interjecting and saying, "We did, we did." Sadly, nobody in the rarefied air of the Legislative Council was paying any attention to those smart words.

Dr Geoff Lee: They were having a dinner break.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: They were having a tea break.

Mr Jihad Dib: It's a lovely place up there, Adam.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I note the interjection of the member for Lakemba. It is disappointing in the extreme that those who aspire to be an alternative government would allow a one-page piece of legislation like this. That is the bit that gets me; it was not complicated. The bill will take away the mandatory safety net requirement for rock fishers to wear life jackets. I am proud that the Central Coast led the way on this. I mentioned it last week to Stuart Harvey and Chris Parker, the Surf Life Saving Central Coast CEO at the time. They jumped on this because they know—unlike the Hon. Mark Banasiak—how dangerous rock fishing is. It is fine to have fun and to enjoy sport, but the amazing surf lifesavers of the Central Coast—more than 8,000 of them—are the ones who have to jump in to save a rock fisher. Some people are saying, "Let's take away the life jackets and pop you in a wetsuit." The only thing that would do is retain the body temperature of the corpse and keep all the body parts in one place. That is all that a wetsuit would do. It certainly will not save someone's life if they are swept off the rocks. I am pretty sure that Snapper Point is in the electorate of the member for Wyong.

Mr David Harris: Swansea.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: It is in the electorate of the member for Swansea. Hopefully the member for Swansea will vote against this legislation. I am surprised that she allowed her Labor colleagues to vote in favour of the bill, given the fact that—

Mr David Harris: She's outraged.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: She was not outraged enough to stop her Labor colleagues from drafting this legislation. It is frustrating that the legislation puts potentially hundreds of rock fishers in danger as well as hundreds of surf lifesavers who will risk their lives retrieving these people. I say to the Hon. Mark Banasiak in the other place that it would have been nice if he had consulted with any member of Parliament who has a beach in their electorate, as he obviously does not live anywhere near one. The members of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party in this Chamber obviously do not represent anybody who lives near a beach. All they had to do was speak to any of us at any time and we would have said that this was a biblically bad idea and should not be supported in any way. While I am talking about the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party, let me give them a big hint. The guy who ran for them at the Federal election still has his corflutes up in my electorate. He might want to get his skates on and take them down.

Dr Geoff Lee: Three-and-a-half years later?

Mr ADAM CROUCH: No, from May. That irritates people because it shows that some candidates are lazy and do not pay attention. Getting back to the bill, it is an appalling piece of legislation. It puts thousands of people at risk, including our volunteer surf lifesavers, who do a wonderful job. This morning I was in the Jubilee Room talking to Emily Rose. Emily is here as part of the task force for the Environment Protection Agency. She is also a member of the Copacabana Surf Life Saving Club. I mentioned to her what I would be speaking about. She is a year 9 student at Gosford High School. When I explained to her what the bill did, she said to me, "Are you kidding me?" A year 9 student knows more about safety issues than the Hon. Mark Banasiak. I suggest that he might want to give his spot to her because she knows more about the dangers of rock fishing than he ever will.

Emily Rose, I will definitely be opposing the bill. I thank Emily for her insight into the discussions we had about rock fishing and its dangers for people on the Central Coast. It is not just the Central Coast; it is the entire New South Wales coastline. No-one denies that fishing is the most popular recreational pastime in the nation and nowhere more so than on the Central Coast of New South Wales. As I said last week, approximately 10,000 people have fishing licences in my electorate alone. I suspect the member for Wyong would have similar numbers, as would the member for The Entrance and the member for Gosford. We will not stand by and let the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party introduce an appallingly drafted, ill-conceived piece of legislation.

Dr Geoff Lee: Thought bubble.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: It was not even a thought bubble. That is giving credit to someone who does not deserve it. This piece of legislation should be unilaterally condemned by everybody. Sadly, that was not the case in the Legislative Council where it was supported by the Labor Party and The Greens. I say to people like Ms Abigail Boyd, who also lives on the Central Coast, "What were you thinking?"

Dr Geoff Lee: Not much.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: Thank you, Minister; that is a good point. Not much. I say to Ms Abigail Boyd and to others, "Here is a good idea. Give the surf lifesavers a call and tell them that you supported the bill and see what they think of that." It was clear from the get-go that the bill would be opposed and condemned by those who have to look after swimmers and rock fishers. I congratulate Stuart Harvey and Chris Parker from Surf Life Saving Central Coast. In 2016 when the Government introduced the Rock Fishing Safety Bill, they were the first people in the State to get on board. They lobbied the Central Coast Council, the first council in New South Wales to adopt the option of making it mandatory for rock fishers to wear life jackets, and quite rightly so. I am proud that our region led the way, as it does with so many things, to ensure that people are kept safe when enjoying sport. This is not about taking away the enjoyment of sport. It is total garbage when we hear those sorts of comments from the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party. It is not invading people's civil liberties or rights; it is keeping people safe. It is keeping safe not only the fishers but also those patrolling—

Dr Geoff Lee: The rescuers.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: The rescuers, who are all volunteers. I thank the more than 8,000 volunteer surf lifesavers who will put in around 100,000 hours of their time on the Central Coast keeping locals and visitors safe. The numbers last year were staggering. Around a million people visited Central Coast beaches to enjoy what they have to offer. Last season there was not one death on a patrolled beach, as has been the case every season since I have been lucky enough to be the member for Terrigal. That did not happen by accident; it happened as a result of good management, good education and a good understanding of the environment. That is what Surf Life Saving NSW does so well. I would have thought that the Hon. Mark Banasiak in the other place might have taken the time to have a few moments of discussion with Surf Life Saving NSW—

Dr Geoff Lee: I would have.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: The Minister would have.

Dr Geoff Lee: Great organisation.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: It is an excellent organisation which has literally thousands of volunteers.

Dr Geoff Lee: I have seen them rescue people.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: The Minister has seen them rescue people. That is what they do.

Dr Geoff Lee: As a fisherman. I am a big fisherman.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: You know the dangers.

Dr Geoff Lee: I do not rock fish because it is so dangerous.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I note the Minister's interjections.

Dr Geoff Lee: I am just trying to help you out.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I appreciate the help from the Minister and member for Parramatta. As a keen fisherman he also understands how dangerous rock fishing is. In almost all incidents where rock fishing occasioned death in 2020, the victims were not wearing life jackets. That is very telling.

Dr Geoff Lee: It is very difficult for multicultural communities, and they're swimming in these areas.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: It is interesting that the member brings up multiculturalism because part of the opt-in program is that signs at dangerous rock fishing locations are multilingual. I did a bit of research into fishing. My dad is a keen fisho. I was having a chat with him about the cost of a rod and reel set. The average rod and reel set—a good one—costs between \$380 and \$600.

Dr Geoff Lee: Not at Kmart.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: That is for a decent one, unlike the cheap and cheerful one the member for Parramatta might get. In contrast, personal floatation devices, including life jackets, are often priced between \$99 and \$130. Putting that into perspective, a rod and reel combo could cost \$380 to \$600 but a life jacket, which will save your life, will cost \$99 to \$130. That is cheap insurance for anyone who wants to rock fish. That is a very interesting contrast. The rod and reel costs twice as much as the cost of the life jacket that will keep people alive should a rogue wave unfortunately hit a rock fisher. They are called rogue waves for a reason. They are unpredictable, a bit like the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party. Maybe the party needs to take "fishers" out of its name because this bill takes safety away from fishers and puts them at risk. All the data shows that the bill is irrefutably bad legislation.

Drowning deaths of rock fishers have increased significantly, as have deaths of bystanders who attempt to rescue them, sadly. Five bystanders have lost their lives trying to rescue someone who was swept off a rock. It is not just dangerous for the rock fisher without a life jacket; it puts the person next to them, who feels duty bound to save them, at risk. Rock fishing deaths account for about 12 per cent of drowning deaths. That is an 83 per cent increase in a 10-year average of people drowning through rock fishing. Those numbers are completely unacceptable to everybody. One death is one too many. The list of the dangers of rock fishing goes on and on. The excellent newspaper *Central Coast Community News* highlighted how many rock fishers have had to be saved and transported to hospital. Those who are lucky enough to survive the incident are faced with ongoing medical care.

The newspaper has stories from earlier this year about the increased funding. The Recreational Fishing Trust Fund received another \$205,000 for a new rock fishing safety skills program run by Surf Life Saving NSW. The Minister for Agriculture was in the Chamber earlier. That money will fund and deploy 1,000 life jackets to at-risk coastal communities. As the Minister said in his press release, life jackets are a no-brainer. They save lives. I say again to the Hon. Mark Banasiak that life jackets are a no-brainer. They save lives—unlike this bill, which could potentially be putting people at risk.

I am disappointed in the extreme that Labor and The Greens thought it was acceptable to vote unanimously in support of the bill despite the good case put forward by the Government in the Legislative Council. They were not listening. The exchanges during debate on the bill in the Legislative Council were appalling. The Hon. Mark Banasiak criticised the Coroner, saying they were not a rock fisher. The Coroner is the Coroner, and they have a much better understanding about the dangers than the Hon. Mark Banasiak does. Maybe he should pay attention to the Coroner, who is well experienced. Given that so many people fish, I suspect the Coroner might drown a worm or two occasionally. Those condescending remarks about the Coroner show the ignorance of the honourable

member in drafting the bill. Our way or no way seems to be their opinion. I highlight that the bill was ill-conceived: No consultation occurred with the peak body responsible for delivering safety to thousands.

Dr Geoff Lee: I don't think he supported the peak body in the parole legislation either.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: That wouldn't surprise me.

The SPEAKER: The member for Parramatta will cease interjecting.

Dr Geoff Lee: I'm trying to help him.

The SPEAKER: I know you are, but you are not.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: A recent survey conducted by the Central Coast Council showed that 94.5 per cent of people in our community agreed that waterways were a significant reason for living in the area. The dangers of rock fishing take fishing to a whole new level of extreme danger. The Government is not against people enjoying fishing. We know it is a popular sport and that everybody likes to fish, but if people are going to take the risk of fishing on rocks, especially at places like Snapper Point and others, they need to take every safety precaution. The number one safety precaution is to wear a life jacket. I could talk for hours on the subject.

Dr Geoff Lee: Please do.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I would like to because it worries me that a party like the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers could introduce a piece of legislation like this to the Parliament without the forethought and foresight of its potential consequences. It worries me even more that the Opposition and The Greens supported this appalling bill and voted against the Government.

Mr Ray Williams: Shame!

Mr ADAM CROUCH: It was a shame. The member for Castle Hill visits the Central Coast regularly and knows how dangerous rock fishing is. The fact that the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party did not even get any advice from Surf Life Saving NSW goes to show it was not prepared to listen to anyone else. Those members come into the Parliament with half-baked ideas and try to dog whistle.

Mr David Harris: They were not going to run in Terrigal, but they are now.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I hope the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party runs a candidate in the electorate of Terrigal because I will have great pleasure reminding every single person in Terrigal that the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party thought it was a great idea to get rid of life jackets. Let us see how that floats for them. It will sink like this bill should. As I said, it is bad legislation. It goes to show that they are dog whistling. They did no consultation. There was no thought or research involved in the bill. Anybody who passed high school would realise with a bit of research that the bill is bad. Year 9 Gosford High School student Emily from Copacabana, who I spoke to 20 minutes ago, knew within a second how stupid the bill is. There is no other way to describe it. It is disappointing that the Labor caucus did not debate the bill more. The member for Heffron, who I have a huge amount of respect for, must not have been present when the Labor caucus debated the bill because I am sure he would have said "This is a dumb idea. Don't do it". Yet it sailed through the upper House with unanimous support.

Mr Jihad Dib: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 59. The Speaker has the discretion to direct a member to discontinue a speech. The member has been talking for well over 20 minutes. He knows that Opposition and crossbench members wish to contribute to debate on the bill. He is being repetitive. If the Speaker is genuine about the spirit of having a proper debate—

The SPEAKER: Thank you. I have heard enough.

Mr Jihad Dib: The Speaker has that discretion. The Speaker would agree that, as entertaining as the member for Terrigal has been, he has repeated the same point over and over again.

The SPEAKER: In leading for the Government in debate on the bill the member has unlimited time. I do not uphold the point of order. I ask the member to come more directly to the bill.

Mr Ray Williams: To the point of order—

The SPEAKER: I have ruled on the point of order.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I remember being in the Chamber when the former Labor member for Bankstown debated with unlimited reply for more than three hours. We all remember that particular day. For over three hours she repeated the same issues over and over again to get the point across. I note the member for Barwon has entered the Chamber. I have the utmost respect for the member of Barwon, but I have no respect for this bill. He has been sold a pup on this big time. That was a bad piece of legislation and he should never have gone anywhere near it.

Last Thursday I was with Surf Life Saving Central Coast and Surf Life Saving NSW eagerly awaiting the arrival of the Hon. Mark Banasiak. Needless to say, he never turned up.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 129. The member is not being relevant.

The SPEAKER: Standing Order 129 applies to question time.

Mr Greg Warren: My point of order is on relevance.

Mr Ray Williams: Try Standing Order 73. I am happy to help you out.

The SPEAKER: The member for Castle Hill is also incorrect.

Mr Greg Warren: I do not think that there is a standing order about silliness, unless you can provide me with some advice and counsel, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: The correct standing order is Standing Order 76. I will not take that point of order myself. The member for Terrigal will not unduly continue for the sake of it.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I will take your advice, Mr Speaker. Obviously, recreational rock fishing is fraught with danger, especially given the nature of the rocky coastlines and often relentless lashing waves in regions like mine on the Central Coast. The member for South Coast may talk about that too. The Government's message to those involved with this potentially risky activity is very simple: Wear a life jacket and do the right thing. The Centre for Maritime Safety outlines that the use of a life jacket should extend from rock fishing to include when riding a personal watercraft, such as a canoe.

The Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016 already mandates that rock fishers as well as any person assisting someone rock fishing in a declared area must wear an appropriate life jacket. That is important. The member for Wyong knows what an appropriate life jacket is. The 2016 legislation also places emphasis on protection, especially of children. All adults are required to ensure that a child in their care or under their supervision is also wearing a life jacket. In many cases, rock fishing is a family affair, with families often partaking in the sport together. Not only will the bill reduce the safety of rock fishers, it also will reduce the safety of their families. So the existing bill is absolutely appropriate. Surf lifesavers with firsthand knowledge of managing safety on our coasts reaffirm the importance of wearing life jackets.

Mr Roy Butler: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing order 59. I will not go so far as saying that the member for Terrigal should no longer be heard—I have great respect for the member, who had my office before me—but it is pretty clear that he is covering the same ground over and over again. He has a great voice; it is lovely and melodious and I love hearing from him. But on this matter, I do not think it is a good use of Parliament's time.

The SPEAKER: That point of order was taken earlier and it was not upheld.

Mr Alister Henskens: To the point of order: I have been concerned by the Opposition's repeated and unjustified attacks during this second reading debate. Government members have never tried to shut down a second reading debate during my time as a member of the House. I am outraged by the Opposition's attempt to try to shut down democracy. The member for Terrigal is from a coastal electorate, so he is well apprised of the issues relating to the bill. It is regrettable that members opposite are making these time-wasting interjections.

Mr Roy Butler: Further to the point of order: The coastline of New South Wales is owned equally by everyone in New South Wales, not just by people on the coast. The contribution of the member for Terrigal is not a good use of Parliament's time.

The SPEAKER: The irony of this interlude is not lost on me. There is no point of order. The member for Terrigal has the call. He has unlimited time but he will come back to the leave of the bill.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I affirm that I was not speaking for the sake of speaking. I mentioned the member for South Coast and, like magic, she has just entered the Chamber. The member for South Coast knows how dangerous rock fishing is, as does the member for Oxley, who has also just entered the Chamber and who is the chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Surf Life Saving group. I know that she will have a few choice words about this legislation.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: And 2SM.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I acknowledge the interjection of the member for Oxley. As coastal MPs, the member for Tweed and I know exactly how dangerous rock fishing is. As I said before, obviously the Hon. Mark Banasiak does not. It is incumbent on the Government to oppose the bill because it will remove existing safety

mechanisms. In almost all the instances in 2020 where rock fishing occasioned death, the victims were not wearing a life jacket. It could not be any clearer than that. Sadly, the bill will remove those safety mechanisms. The Rock Fishing Safety Bill 2016 was introduced following a coronial inquest into the deaths of nine rock fishers between 1 November 2012 and 1 February 2015. The Deputy State Coroner recommended mandating life jackets that comply with the Australian standards for rock fishers. Following the evidence presented at the inquest, it was clear that the Government's Rock Fishing Safety Bill was a sensible reform that would keep people of all ages and all genders safe when taking part in rock fishing.

While I do not disagree with the member for Barwon that our beaches are the property of the entire population of New South Wales, if not the nation, it is incumbent on the Government to keep people safe when they venture to the coast. Surf Life Saving NSW, Surf Life Saving Central Coast and many other regional surf lifesaving organisations run excellent programs that explain the dangers of rock fishing and provide people with life jackets. As I outlined earlier, the cost of a life jacket to keep people safe is effectively half the cost of a rod-and-reel combo. As I said at the start of my contribution last week—

Mr Roy Butler: You've been going for a week.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I could keep going all day because this is a bad bill. The member for Ku-ring-gai, who grew up in Newcastle, also knows how dangerous rock fishing is, as do all Government members, which is why the Government introduced the opt-in legislation for life jackets. It is a pity that Opposition members in the Legislative Council saw fit to vote unanimously against it.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: Imagine Borsak in a wetsuit.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: I would prefer not to. The bill is not complicated, but it is one page of some of the most dangerous legislation that I have ever seen pass the upper House in my eight years as a member. The lack of thought that went into it is gobsmacking. I am sorry that the member for Barwon was given carriage of the bill in the Legislative Assembly. He should have either run a mile from it or spoken to members who have beaches in their electorate. We could have given him the phone numbers of the presidents of our surf lifesaving clubs, who were outraged when the bill was introduced. The electorate of the member for Keira, who is present in the Chamber, also has beaches. He knows how dangerous rock fishing is, so I am amazed that he did not howl down his counterparts in the Legislative Council. The bill is a poorly conceived and bad piece of legislation that should never have reached this House in the first place.

Improving the safety of rock fishing is also about the messaging involved around the potentially risky activity in and around our oceans, which is why there is multilingual signage in all rock fishing danger zones, not just on the Central Coast but up and down the coastline. As I have said, the existing Rock Fishing Safety Act requires that not just the person rock fishing but also any accompanying family members, especially children, must wear a life jacket. Wetsuits that are not up to compliance standards in the Act are not the answer. There is a range of life jackets that comply with the Act that are small, unobtrusive and inexpensive. The cheapest form of protection when rock fishing is to wear a life jacket.

I know that the member for Wollondilly is deeply engrossed in this because he knows that a life jacket can save a life and that they are important. I reaffirm the Government's strenuous opposition to this appalling piece of legislation. Next time a one-page piece of legislation comes before members opposite, they might want to pay more attention to it rather than just rubber-stamping it through the Legislative Council. Again, all the bill achieved was making a dangerous sport more dangerous. The Government absolutely opposes the appalling bill.

Debate interrupted.

Rulings

STANDING ORDER 73

The SPEAKER (10:49): I inform the House that yesterday during question time I ruled on a point of order under Standing Order 73 taken by the member for Campbelltown about remarks made by the Premier during an answer. I ruled that there was no point of order because no current member of either House had been mentioned. I have reviewed the recording and now realise that a current member of the other place was mentioned as part of a list of people in the Premier's remarks. I did not hear that name because of the noise in the Chamber at the time. I understand others did not hear it either. Accordingly, I advise the House that my ruling under Standing Order 73 would have been different if I had heard that name.

*Bills***ROCK FISHING SAFETY AMENDMENT BILL 2021****Second Reading Debate****Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (10:50): I lead for Labor in debate on the Rock Fishing Safety Amendment Bill 2021. I thank the member for Terrigal for his contribution, but he spoke for a long time. I appreciate and respect his concerns. However, I was concerned that he would potentially attempt to stifle debate. I am glad that common sense prevailed and he gave other members an opportunity to contribute, given that there are issues to be discussed. At the outset, I indicate that Labor opposes the bill in the Legislative Assembly. I appreciate that this reflects a change since the bill was before the other place. It is appropriate to front up and explain when there is a change in position, and I intend to do that in my contribution. Those who know me know that I am pretty much straight up and down. I will accept if something is right or wrong, but I will not shy away from it and I certainly will not blame others.

Mr Geoff Provest: You've got a good sense of humour, too.

Mr JIHAD DIB: I will try and crack a few funnies, but I do not know that I have any at the moment. I thank the member for Tweed. A private member's bill was moved by the Hon. Mark Banasiak, MLC, which sought to address some of the issues associated with rock fishing, including by extending the application of the bill to all rock fishing locations and requiring appropriate footwear. While some of the amendments moved by Labor in the other place were intended to improve the status quo, I see now that the bill has created unnecessary confusion, which is a potential safety risk and ultimately goes against the spirit and intent of the principles of the bill.

The greatest confusion has been around the interchangeability of buoyancy wetsuits and life jackets. The member for Terrigal continually argued that Labor wanted to remove life jackets, which is not true; the issue was about the interchangeability of buoyancy wetsuits. But it has created some unwanted and unnecessary confusion. All members would agree that the principle of the bill is about safety. It is not about allowing rock fishers to go without a life jacket. We would never agree to that. There was confusion about a buoyancy life vest or a life jacket in all places where rock fishing occurs—not none but one or the other. Whilst in theory special buoyancy wetsuits have an in-built life vest, I cannot in good faith assume that fishers will not inadvertently put themselves at risk by wearing a regular wetsuit and expecting it to be safer than a life vest.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: Perfectly put.

Mr JIHAD DIB: I thank the member for Oxley. Furthermore, it became clear after the upper House vote that a number of important stakeholders were not included in discussion and consultation on the bill. I have subsequently met with and received feedback from additional stakeholder groups that include some of the emergency services, local government and Surf Life Saving NSW. I met with Steve Pearce and visited the Surf Life Saving headquarters. I thank Surf Life Saving NSW for its incredible work, particularly during the floods. Many people do not realise that Surf Life Saving also performs rescues and supports the community. I thank it for that.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: Especially throughout the floods at the moment.

Mr JIHAD DIB: Yes, that is what I said. I became aware that there had been no consultation and I wanted to consult with those groups. I thank them for their suggestions, based on their lived experiences. When we receive more information, we must update our thinking. The agencies tasked with providing public safety have reservations about the bill and so we must reconsider our decision and ensure that we are across all the information. NSW Labor will always prioritise public safety. When new information is provided, we should always be open to revisiting our positions. If you make a mistake, you should own it and fix it. That is what I am doing now. Politics demands that commonsense approach, but too often it is lacking and members are dragged into mudslinging and taking cheap shots.

It is clear that there must be improvements in the safety regulatory regime for rock fishing. Regrettably, the bill does not accomplish that in its current form. A number of amendments could be made to rework the bill. However, that path risks further confusion and getting it wrong. Rock fishing on New South Wales coasts is a dangerous sport, with safety measures being an ongoing issue for government over many years. Regrettably and tragically, there are, on average, eight deaths across New South Wales annually. That number was reached in 2021, with five deaths in a single week during January. Rock fishing is the second most common cause of drowning in New South Wales. I acknowledge that many members of the community know the tragedy of losing a loved one to rock fishing-related drowning. The existing rock fishing legislation has been inadequate at saving

all lives possible. It allows local government areas to opt in to life jacket mandates for high-risk areas and is flawed in design and enforcement.

Only eight out of the 27 local government areas on the coast had opted in, and many rock fishers do not end up wearing the protective wear. Since the bill was introduced in the upper House, Wollongong City Council has opted in. I am glad to hear that because that area is a major concern after lives were lost at Hill 60 in that single week in January. I congratulate the council, as well as the member for Wollongong and the member for Keira, who encouraged the council to do that. The original principle of the bill was about good safety mandates. In addition, Surf Life Saving NSW has distributed a number of free life jackets. That is pleasing to hear and I thank it for that. The current regime also does not provide details on appropriate footwear, which presents an additional safety hazard. The original bill sought to remove fines, which we did not and do not support. It is important that all rock fishers in high-risk areas are incentivised to comply with all safety requirements.

All stakeholders in this discussion have legitimate points of view. We must revisit the underpinning legislation after bringing together those stakeholders and finding common ground and commonsense reform that enhances public safety. If elected to government, I commit to revisiting the Rock Fishing Safety Act to bring together all stakeholders to find common ground on improving public safety, to hear and address all concerns, and to try to get it right without having to move amendments. Those stakeholders include the emergency services, Surf Life Saving, the Australian National Sportsfishing Association, the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW and local government, as well as other important groups. Again I say that if we want the best outcome, then we need to try to bring the best people to the table: those who have an interest, lived experiences, an understanding and expertise. Nobody in this place or in the community wants to see the tragedy of a life lost due to rock fishing. For so many people, it is one of their only recreational opportunities. Let us get this right. Let us put the politics aside and make sure that if there is a problem, we can fix it. I will commit to that.

The legislation needs to be accompanied by a strong community safety education campaign that is rolled out in a number of languages. It is clear that the Government did not put enough funding into researching best practice in this space. Both the research and a community safety campaign could be funded by the Recreational Fishing (Saltwater) Trust Fund, which the current Act does little to resource. I also request that the Government rebuild its working relationship with the Australian National Sportsfishing Association and the Recreational Fishing Alliance of NSW. Those organisations represent the many fishers who partake in this pastime and they should have more of a say in measures to improve safety. They want to improve safety, but they feel that they have been left on the outside. That is how we got to this point. We need to do it right. After all, everybody wants improved safety measures. It is clear that something needs to be done.

I will accept criticism but I will not cop criticism that is unfounded or a member telling only part of the story and not the whole lot, as is the case here. I have been frank and open. I said at the outset that we would change our position. I have accepted that there were unintended consequences in the bill that we had not foreseen. I urge other MPs to do the same. This is not the time to play politics. This is the time to say, "We didn't get it right. We can fix it, but we need to commit to fixing it together." I say to members who wish to be critical in this debate to come up with a solution. What is the alternative? We know that there needs to be an improvement. Where is it?

If the bill before us today offered an improvement that built upon all of these points and brought everyone together, we would say, "Good on you". We would back it in, as we do with good legislation. As I have said so many times, ultimately good legislation is about people and communities. Members are not here for any other reason than to make our communities better. There are times that we need to come together and say, "Yes, this is good", or, "We thought it was good, but it wasn't. We can fix it and come back." I will not have a go at somebody for trying to fix a problem about safety, who has the right principles but did it the wrong way. I have learnt a lot about this issue. I have learnt a lot about processes. Certainly I have learnt a lot about rock fishing. The irony is that it has changed portfolios about three times, yet here we are.

I have made a commitment that my colleagues and I would look at this issue if we are lucky enough to win government. But I encourage that the legislation is done properly. I would welcome that. That is not a criticism of anybody, but members have seen the unintended consequences here, which became more evident afterwards. Public safety must always come before politics. The paramount concern about the potential of negative unintended consequences explains why NSW Labor will oppose the bill in this place. I also put on record that a number of my colleagues, particularly those in coastal electorates, could potentially be unfairly characterised. Every single one of them spoke to me about this bill on behalf of their communities. They were instrumental in making sure I communicated with a range of people, who have helped us get to this point. I do not think those members should be unfairly characterised. I have made our position clear. For anybody who knows the way I operate, I will accept criticism but the truth of the matter is we have discovered unintended consequences in the bill. For that reason, we will oppose the bill in the Legislative Assembly. I thank the House.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (11:04): I contribute to debate on the Rock Fishing Safety Amendment Bill 2022. The Government and I do not support the bill. The changes that the bill proposes to make to the Rock Fishing Safety Act 2016 would reduce the effectiveness of the Act's safety measures and could very well lead to an increase in injuries and even deaths. Particularly, I draw the attention of the House to the bill's proposal to permit rock fishers to wear wetsuits instead of life jackets in declared areas. This would send a message to rock fishers that wearing a wetsuit that is not standards approved and does not meet the minimum buoyancy requirements will keep them as safe as wearing an Standards Australia-approved life jacket. The Government does not support such a dangerous proposal, when rock fishers who are not wearing life jackets are dying.

The Government and other bodies provide a range of safety advice for rock fishers. Never has wearing a wetsuit been recommended as a safety measure. What safety measure is the right advice? In addition to wearing standards-approved life jackets, widely promoted safety measures include staying alert to weather conditions. It is vitally important that people check weather conditions before going out rock fishing and do not rock fish in poor weather or when there are large seas or large swells. Another safety measure is to learn how to swim. This helps a rock fisher get out of the water and away from the rocks if they are washed in. Rock fishers should choose the safest possible location. This means finding a spot with safety gear, such as angel rings, and having an escape route if they are washed in. Rock fishers should wear the right gear, such as lightweight clothing and nonslip shoes or those with cleats. Fishers should never fish alone, and if they are washed in, someone should help by throwing the fisher a rope or floatation device, such as an angel ring.

This bill is very personal to me in some ways. I have done rock fishing for many, many years—not so much lately—with my older brother Tony Provest and his wife, Tracy. I saw Tony washed in at Little Marley in the Royal National Park. Luckily, we had a flotation device on a long piece of rope. Tony was severely lacerated on his arms and legs; it was touch and go. I add that Tracy Provest volunteers for the SES and recently won a national volunteer of the year award. She lives down at Ulladulla and is a good friend of the member for South Coast.

On another occasion we were down at Currarong, which is on the South Coast near Nowra. There is a big rock platform near Point Perpendicular and a fishing spot called Old Man's Hat. To get out to that spot, you have to run the gauntlet in between waves across the shallows. It was a successful day, but then the weather turned foul so we decided to leave. Coming back, Tracy got washed in. Once again, it was lucky we had a rope and there was a lull in the sea. In those days we did not wear life jackets. We did have them in the boat. As with many boat fishermen, the jackets were shoved under a seat in the front of the boat in an old plastic bag, probably with flares that were dissolving and things like that. I realise firsthand the safety aspect of rock fishing.

In my area up in the Tweed electorate—beautiful Fingal Head and Dreamtime Beach to the south—we have lost two people in recent times to rock fishing accidents. One of them was a lifesaver attempting a rescue. After a lot of consultation with Surf Life Saving NSW, we installed angel rings. We also have an emergency beacon with a camera, one of the first in the State. Since those installations, we have lost no more lives. Safety measures are very important. The Government is serious about improving rock fishing and water safety. That is why we are partnering with non-government and community organisations to improve water safety using a broad range of strategies.

We are investing in technology and CPR training of our volunteers so that people across the State can enjoy our beaches, rivers and lakes. I am sure many members of Parliament in coastal electorates have seen the significant advances in drones operated by Surf Life Saving NSW. They seem to get better and better at what they are doing. Probably as I speak, they are out west assisting in flood recovery. I am firm believer of talking to all experts to get their views. As the member for Terrigal indicated, there was a fair amount of concern about our surf lifesaving groups. Over the years I have heard many members from both sides of the Chamber praise their efforts and wisdom about the best way to do rock fishing.

I remember as a young fella my brother and I were fishing at Kurnell, which is a fairly notorious spot, when he tapped me on the shoulder. He said, "We should go now because I've tried to tell those other guys and they're not doing the right thing. They're putting their own lives at risk. Really, Geoff, if we stay here any longer, we're going to have to risk our lives to save them." If rock fishers fishing inappropriately are washed in and they do not have a life jacket on, some other poor bugger—a first responder, a surf lifesaver, a police rescuer or a Joe Citizen out there—will have to risk their own life to try to rescue them.

The Liberal-Nationals Government provided new funding of \$16 million to Surf Life Saving NSW, bringing up the support to \$21 million over four years from 2019. The funding is delivering new community engagement officers, 10 emergency response beacons—my lovely area of the Tweed has two now—at coastal black spots and major operational support with 129 clubs, including jet skis, equipment and so on. The Government is doing all it can to keep people safe. I also say that people have to take ownership of their own

decisions. I could walk out from Parliament House and cross Macquarie Street with my eyes shut five times before I am run over. I often see people taking unnecessary risks.

I know that Surf Life Saving produces a lot of safety warnings in many different languages. The Tweed, like Port Macquarie, has an influx of visitors over the Christmas period. A lot of people have not been educated in water safety. They want to enjoy the great outdoors, whether it's fishing on a boat, rock fishing or fishing at the lovely Nobbys Beach, Lighthouse Beach or North Beach. Fishers, especially those who are rock fishing with young children nearby, have to be aware that they are putting the children's lives at risk. Too often those of us on the coast have had to get involved when somebody has lost their life. It is heartbreaking when a life is lost, and even more so when it is that of a child, as it could have been prevented.

That is why I applaud the Government for its opt-in, opt-out policy on life jackets, a policy that I would like to be extended. If I go over the bar, I have to have life jackets and flares, but it is not mandatory to register with Marine Rescue. I would like to see that standardised to be put into law that it is mandatory. Too often the boat does not return. The people at home ring up and we find a trailer at the boat ramp. We have got a very large tract of water out there called the Pacific Ocean and we have to start there. I reckon it should be mandatory that people who cross the bar have to register with Marine Rescue. It could be done via an app on a phone or by radio to tell Marine Rescue where you are going, the name of your vessel, how many people are on board and the estimated time of return.

That is a very small thing. Otherwise it will put somebody at risk to try to find you. I do not think this is a fair regulation. It leads to a lot of confusion. Wetsuits are really good. A lot of spearies use wetsuits, but unlike a lifejacket, they do not hold your head out of the water. A rock fisher can have an accident and crack their head on a rock when going into the water. A lot of deaths occur because people try to get back on to the rock. You have to swim out to sea and wait until someone comes to the rescue. I strongly oppose the bill.

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang) (11:14): I contribute to debate on the Rock Fishing Safety Amendment Bill 2022. Since 2010 there have been 21 drowning deaths in the two-kilometre coastal stretch of Lake Munmorah National Park, which has unfortunately resulted in that area becoming one of the most dangerous spots for rock fishing—a drowning black spot—in Australia. This is a deadly serious subject. The member for Terrigal and I get on fairly well and joke around on many issues but I take offence at the way he has tried to portray in the media other members representing electorates on the Central Coast as somehow being against safety. That is outrageous, because it was actually Labor members in 2016 who pushed for life jackets to be made mandatory in the first place.

The member for Swansea has been a very strong advocate for them because the drowning deaths I mentioned occurred in her electorate. Any suggestion that she would take a backward step on the issue is outrageous, so I had to go to the media and totally reject the implication. On these issues it is extremely important that the public has a clear message and that members do not play politics. The Government did conduct a trial in Sydney. The member for Swansea actually went a step further and said in Parliament that the Government has evidence of one of the worst places in the State for drowning, yet that place was not considered for a trial. She said she was not saying that there should not be a trial in the Sydney area, but that there should be one in a regional area as well because it is different. When people travel to regional areas there are implications because those language barriers are different from the city to the regions.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: How did you and your party let it pass through the Legislative Council?

Mr DAVID HARRIS: I'll tell you why in a minute.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Wyong has the call.

Mr DAVID HARRIS: As the member for Lakemba said, this became a definitional debate. I stand to be corrected by the member for Barwon if I am incorrect, but there is a difference between a buoyancy wetsuit and a wetsuit. That was the implication, but Labor never said that a safety device should not be worn. Any such implication is absolutely outrageous. Originally the bill sought to increase the requirements to make it safer. For Government members to imply that the bill sought to remove safety requirements is absolutely outrageous and not true, and that needs to be placed squarely on the record. In this place, we do play politics, but we should never play it with safety. The bill was originally supported in the upper House because it included proper footwear, signage and a whole range of things that the Government should support. It should not pick a small definitional issue, blow it up and say that members of the Opposition and the crossbench are against safety because that is not true.

As I said, in our area there have been 21 deaths, but Government members have the audacity to talk in circles and almost make a joke out of it. It is not a joke; it is deadly serious. I put squarely on the record that the Opposition not only fought for those requirements in the first place but also wants to improve the situation. We

want to move things forward and make it safer for people. Government members can play silly games by all means if they want but they should not misrepresent the Opposition's actual intent.

I am a surf lifesaver, which is why I am very passionate. My colleagues have fished people off the rocks at Frazer Beach. They had to dive beneath the rocks to get the bodies out, which is not nice. Those people were mentally damaged after finding the bodies, particularly when it took two or three days to find them because they were wedged under the rocks. Members should not make fun of that. Let us debate the facts and not make ridiculous assertions about such important issues. We should not play games with matters such as road safety and water safety. We should be serious and ensure the best outcomes for the public. As the member for Lakemba said, there is a definitional problem that members did not understand. That is why Labor has changed its position. We do not want to create a misunderstanding that could lead to safety issues.

The Hon. Mark Banasiak in the other place lives on the coast. There is no way he would push to reduce safety in an area that he is passionate about. People across New South Wales can be clear that the original intent of the bill was to improve safety and increase the ways in which that can happen, not to reduce safety. I apologise for mispronouncing the Hon. Mark Banasiak's name. I mix up my words when I get passionate. Those 21 deaths constitute 21 people who did not get home because the safety requirements for recreational fishers were not in place in the past. Let us get the clear message out there that fishers should wear a life jacket. While they can enjoy fishing, they should do so safely and in such a way that they get home to their families.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (11:22): I oppose the Rock Fishing Safety Amendment Bill 2022 that has come from the other place because Labor Party members supported it. I 100 per cent agree with the member for Wyong that we should never politicise safety. My own family of surf lifesavers is traumatised and scarred—and, as usual, when there is trauma and drama in my family I am stuck in this place. I pulled out two young Indian men from the sea off North Wall Beach while on a training day. They had not been submerged beneath a rock for two days; they had been in the water for an hour, and that was horrific enough. I did not have time to put this in my valedictory speech, but I was in this place when my son found a family from Gulgong swimming in a rip at Diggers Beach. He single-handedly pulled out each one of them, for which the Royal Life Saving Society awarded him a medal. But instead of going to Government House to be presented with that medal by Governor Marie Bashir, he stayed for the school presentation day—which I could not attend either, because I was in this place.

While I understand the matter should not be politicised, my point is that members should have done their homework to ensure that the bill did not need to be introduced. My other point is that I would not like to see anyone try to survive being pummelled into rocks by a wave with only a wetsuit for protection and a mouthful of water. Even a great swimmer would not survive being swept onto the rocks. They would receive cuts to their hands and feet and knocks to their head. The Government opposes the bill because rock fishing is not safe and the bill does not make it safer. I acknowledge that the member for Lakemba has done great work in his community. I have been to Vietnam. I have seen the fisherpeople on the beach with their nets. There are no waves there, so there is no danger. But it is part of their soul. It is their life and love. They adore great-quality seafood. So I understand why they want to be out there on the rocks. It is beautiful. But those waves can wash them away before they even realise what is happening.

As the member for Wyong said, 21 people are dead and 21 families are traumatised. We must keep people 100 per cent safe. I understand personal liberties and personal rights, but imagine what the road toll would be today without seat belts. Imagine if we did not have those safety protections. Sometimes it can be annoying—I get it. When I was maritime Minister it was put to me that life jackets must be worn while using paddleboards. That is probably a step too far, as I said at the time. But it is important to remember that life jackets are not what they once were. As a young child, I remember being in tinnies or speedboats and waterskiing on the Murray River. Back then we had big, bulky, horrible yellow life jackets with rope on them. They were impossible to wear. Life jackets are not like that now. They are safe and slim. I acknowledge the water Minister, who would know more about life jackets than anyone in the Chamber, having grown up on a fishing vessel, catching seafood in northern parts of Australia.

Mr Kevin Anderson: Yes, ma'am.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: Life jackets have evolved and their importance to ensuring safety is paramount. The Government opposes the bill. It is a cute attempt from the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party to tap into the anti-Government, anti-people, anti-everything sentiment that it thrives on. It is an unhealthy obsession and it is not nice. It sets one part of the community against another, while we are trying to bring the community together and keep them safe. Currently, the Act mandates that rock fishers wear appropriate life jackets in designated regions. Adults are required to ensure that children under their care or supervision wear life jackets while rock fishing in designated areas. Appropriate adult life jackets must meet or exceed Australian Standard 4758 – level 50S and appropriate life jackets for children under 12 years of age must meet or exceed Australian

Standard 4758 – level 100. Life jackets that meet the standards of the Act will assist to keep rock anglers safe, should they be swept into the ocean.

As I said earlier, the bill proposes that wetsuits must be worn. But wetsuits lack buoyancy and do not comply with Australian standards. They cannot guarantee that a rock fisher who is swept into the water will remain afloat until assistance comes. The last thing rock fishers need is to be misled into believing wearing a wetsuit is equivalent to wearing a life jacket that meets the safety regulations. The bill does that. As the Government has made clear, the Minister will declare the local government areas [LGA] that have accorded with the Act and collaborate with local councils that opt in to the Act. It is about consultation; it is not always about pointing the finger and telling people what to do. That is on par with local councils' water safety responsibilities. When a council identifies a danger to residents in its LGA, it has the authority and responsibility to take steps to mitigate that risk. As such, a council may implement water safety measures including but not limited to lifesaving services, beach patrols, the installation of signs and regulatory operations in public areas.

It would be remiss of me not to refer to the Office of Local Government's *Practice Note 15 – Water Safety*, which describes the tasks and responsibilities of local government regarding water safety and advises on equipment, facilities and risk management. The bill undermines the efforts of the Government to empower local councils and will extinguish the capability of local government to opt in to the Act. What were Labor members thinking last night in debate on the bill in the other place? Perhaps they were emotional after the valedictory speech of the Hon. Walt Secord, or perhaps they were emotional about not being able to be emotional. I do not know what they were thinking when they allowed the bill to come to this Chamber. Opposition members should hang their heads in shame. Councils will no longer be allowed to determine whether the Rock Fishing Safety Act is the most effective strategy to enhance the safety of rock fishers in their LGAs. To the member's point, it undermines the great work of the member for Swansea, the member for Wyong and others. We would be slapped for making a mistake like this, and we are pointing out it was a mistake allowing the bill to pass last night. That is the reason for the strong words we are exchanging today, even though we agree that it is a stupid bill. Our question is: Why let such a stupid bill come down?

Coastal councils in the State will all be required to devote resources to enforcing and promoting awareness of the Act, irrespective of whether or not they assessed rock fishing safety as a high risk in their local government area. With proposed amendments in the bill around issuing penalty notices, the Act will only become more onerous for councils and other authorised officers to enforce. As the bill currently stands, persons who are rock fishing without a life jacket, not wearing a life jacket while assisting someone rock fishing, or rock fishing with a child who is not wearing a life jacket in their care or supervision can be charged only in a local court. It is obvious to see the bill will significantly increase the time and cost required to enforce the law.

At present, the penalty is a nominal amount of \$100. The Act's current penalties provide an incentive to comply and are clearly not a revenue-raising measure. The Act's only purpose is to make rock fishing safer and reduce injuries and deaths. Eliminating the ability to issue penalty notices would simply make the Act more difficult to enforce. That is an important point. A lot of the wives and mothers know there is a fine. That is a great way to explain to their partners, to their sons or their daughters, "There's a danger to this, and there is a fine. Comply." Take that threat away, it takes away the ability to change behaviour. It is not saying we will be going out and fining people, but if that threat is there when the right thing is not done, it will achieve better compliance.

To reiterate, by applying the Act to the whole coastline of New South Wales, it will apply in regions where it is not necessary and place extra unwarranted red tape on councils—red tape that will do nothing to improve the safety of rock fishers and will only exacerbate the ability of authorised officers to issue penalty notices. Ultimately, the bill weakens the safety measures appropriately established by this Government through the Rock Fishing Safety Act, and it will lead to an increase in injuries and possibly even death. It is an unfortunate dilemma that we are discussing today. However, for those reasons, and with great thought and great clarity, the Government opposes the bill.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (11:32): I make a brief contribution to debate on the Rock Fishing Safety Amendment Bill 2021. Over the past little over 12 months, perhaps closer to two years, six anglers lost their lives across our coastline while rock fishing. I acknowledge the member for Wollongong for his advocacy on behalf of his community, particularly around the Hill 60 area in Port Kembla, where a number of tragedies occurred. I also acknowledge the member for Lakemba. Whilst obviously Labor opposes the bill, I acknowledge the way in which the member for Lakemba has been up-front around those changes. Legislation is not a perfect process. It would be ill of all of us to believe that there is no ability to adapt, change and adjust to information, particularly information from emergency services personnel. Making that clear from the outset, I acknowledge the work of the member for Lakemba.

I acknowledge the work of my colleagues up and down the coastline. I emphasise the comments of the member for Wyong, who said that in this place the issue of safety should not be politicised. When it comes to

public safety, our aim should always be about making sure that the legislation we produce is the best possible. I know what the intent of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party was. It was an honest attempt to try to make it as safe as possible. I know the intent of the member for Lakemba was to improve safety. It may not have been a perfect legislative process, but I would not want the Government to believe that it is reflective of a view that we were not hell-bent on ensuring that safety was paramount.

I acknowledge Wollongong council for taking up on the advocacy by the member for Wollongong to be a part of the compulsory life jacket program, ensuring that we play a proactive role in that space. As members, particularly those from coastal electorates, we all have a clear focus and objective. We want to ensure that people coming from inland and western Sydney and others to our beautiful electorates are kept as safe as possible. I again acknowledge the work of the member for Lakemba in this space. I also acknowledge the emergency services personnel, who have been a good source of accurate and informative advice on this issue.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea) (11:35): I contribute to debate on the Rock Fishing Safety Amendment Bill 2021. From the outset, I thank the member for Barwon for his interest in rock fishing and, most importantly, his interest in safety. However, as a member representing an electorate that experiences some of the largest numbers of deaths from rock fishing in this State, I cannot support this particular bill. I have seen firsthand the devastation of those in the recovery process and our emergency service workers, not to mention the tragic outcome on families after having experienced a death of one of their loved ones—a death that I believe could be absolutely preventable.

It has been known in this House that I am in big favour of mandating life jackets across this State. I have said it in this House on many occasions. Whilst the bill of the member for Barwon is well intentioned, it is not my belief that it goes far enough, and we have to get it right. Sadly, this year alone we saw three deaths off Catherine Hill Bay from the rock platform. While those people were not fishing, they were on an equally dangerous platform. Whilst I will continue to prosecute mandating life jackets in this place, it is also my strong view that we need digital signage. We should be using technology to advise people of the dangers of the environment that they are entering and to tell them they should not be entering the platform if those dangers are occurring at that particular time. In fact, just this week I met with some people to speak to them specifically about the type of signage that we need to alert people to the dangers of rock fishing.

I am a great supporter of rock fishing safety. As members would know, I am a surf lifesaver. I represent those members at Catherine Hill Bay, Lakes and Caves Beach who have to go out for recovery—not rescue, unfortunately; recovery. It is traumatic for those lifesavers, and I know firsthand what that is like. I am not saying say that I do not believe that the member for Barwon has exactly the same intention. He would go to every length, just like the shadow Minister. We have a genuine belief that we need to keep our rock platforms safe. We see too many deaths, unfortunately, on this coast. I will continue to work with the member for Barwon and the shadow Minister so that we deliver safe outcomes for our rock fishing platforms and prevent what I believe are senseless deaths that need not occur.

We do not want to stop rock fishing. I love rock fishing myself; I have been rock fishing off Snapper Point since I was not as tall as I am now, which is exactly where those deaths occur. I was out recently, and I am sharing photos. In Lake Macquarie and Central Coast council areas, there are mandated local government areas. Eight people were rock fishing; only two had a life jacket on. Even though it is not mandated, we do not have the enforcement and compliance in place. I get that too because that requires a large resource of labour. I understand. That is why we should mandate life jackets across the State, just like we did seatbelts. That is my view. I hold that view very strongly as a surf lifesaver and as a local member who experiences these deaths too often in my electorate. But, unfortunately, I do not think this bill goes far enough. I am eager to work with the member for Barwon, the shadow Minister and anyone else who wants to be involved so that we can achieve a positive outcome and keep rock fishing safe.

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (11:39): I indicate at the outset that the Government does not support the Rock Fishing Safety Amendment Bill 2021 because it would reduce safety for rock fishers and turn the Rock Fishing Safety Act into a toothless tiger. The bill seeks to implement the Act along the entire New South Wales coastline but at the same time it will make it more difficult and more costly to enforce by removing the capacity to issue penalty notices. Currently the Act requires that rock fishers must wear a life jacket in declared areas. Areas are declared by local government areas [LGAs] and the declaration of areas is made by the Minister. The Government has made clear its policy that the Minister will declare local government areas under the Act in consultation with local councils. Councils must effectively opt in to the Act. This is consistent with the other water safety responsibilities of local councils.

Where council identifies a risk to people within its local government area, it is empowered and responsible to take measures to reduce that risk. Water safety measures that councils may take include, for example, lifesaving services, beach patrols, erecting signage and regulatory activities in public places. The Government supports local

councils by providing measures like the Rock Fishing Safety Act, which gives councils a tool that they may use to improve safety for rock fishers. The Office of Local Government publishes *Practice Note 15 Water Safety*, which outlines the water safety functions and responsibilities of local councils while also providing advice on risk management, equipment, facilities, signage, legislation and policy.

This bill would take the power out of the hands of local councils and make life jackets mandatory for rock fishing statewide. This would remove the capacity for councils to consider the data and determine the rock fishing safety risk in their area. Councils would no longer be able to make a determination about whether the Rock Fishing Safety Act is the best way to improve safety for rock fishers in their area. This would require all coastal councils across the State to dedicate resources to enforce and raise awareness about the Act, regardless of whether they had identified rock fishing safety as a high risk in their local government area. With the changes this bill also proposes to make to the issuing of penalty notices, the Act would become more difficult for councils and other agencies to enforce.

The bill would remove section 8, which allows authorised officers to issue penalty notices for offences under the Act. This means that persons who are found rock fishing without a life jacket, or not wearing a life jacket while assisting someone who is rock fishing, or rock fishing with a child in their care or supervision who is not wearing a life jacket could only be prosecuted by a Local Court, which would greatly increase the time and expense associated with enforcing the Act. The penalty for persons who commit an offence under the Act also would potentially be much greater—up to \$5,500. At present, the penalty is a nominal amount of \$100. This provides an incentive to comply, and having that penalty shows that the Government is serious about rock fishers needing to wear life jackets in high-risk areas, but it also makes clear to rock fishers that this is not a revenue-raising measure. It is purely about making rock fishing safer and reducing injuries and death.

Removing the capacity to issue penalty notices will only make the Act more difficult to enforce. Making the Act apply across the entire New South Wales coastline means it will apply in areas where it is not needed and place additional unnecessary burdens on local councils—burdens that will do little to increase rock fishing safety and which will be compounded by removing the capacity for authorised officers to issue penalty notices. This bill will reduce safety for rock fishers and will make the Act harder to enforce. The Government opposes the bill. I also state for the record that in the past my electorate of Coffs Harbour has had numerous incidences of people who were rock fishing being swept off the rocks and into the water. Obviously, some of those events have resulted in people drowning.

Last week I was very excited to receive a helicopter aerial asset in Coffs Harbour. This is a Rural Fire Service asset—a \$6 million helicopter that will be based in Coffs Harbour. Obviously, that type of asset can be used for firefighting and flood rescues, but one of the main reasons I fought so hard to have that helicopter in Coffs Harbour was for surf rescues and the capabilities of the helicopter. I think it is very important we acknowledge and recognise that rock fishing can be a very dangerous activity in so many different places. Many people undertake this risky activity and we should do everything we can to make sure that rock fishing is as safe as possible. When some of the parts of the bill are examined—

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN: I move:

That the question be now put.

Motion agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The question proposed is that this bill be now read a second time.

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (11:46): In reply: My speech will be very brief. The Rock Fishing Safety Amendment Bill 2021 before the House is all about improving a 2016 Act by providing education, targeting people from non-English speaking backgrounds, and prescribing footwear and suitable wetsuits to be worn. The bill was never about decreasing safety; rather, it is about increasing safety. I thank members representing the electorates of Terrigal, Lakemba, Tweed, Wyong, Oxley, Keira, Swansea and Coffs Harbour for their contributions to debate. This is obviously a very popular bill. Perhaps I am a bit of a risk taker. I am a blue-water sailor and a scuba diver. I like taking a few risks, and rock fishing is one of them.

Frankly, this bill is an attempt to try to improve the choices that people can make. The bill is about freedoms and balancing safety and freedom. By all means, demonstrate that it is more effective to use one flotation device over another. Let's get the right gear and use it. Certainly we should have safety gear that gives choices. I suggest that the Government consult with other groups, not just Surf Life Saving. Finally, it seems that this bill will not be supported by members on both sides of the House, and that is fine. But if it is the catalyst that brings about change, then the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party has done its job. We have motivated the Government to consider something it had not considered and make the change. That seems to be our job.

Motion negatived.

Motions

WALLSEND STORMWATER DRAINS

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (11:48): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes the Wallsend CBD experiences flooding every 12 years as a result of the narrow stormwater drains along Ironbark Creek owned and operated by Hunter Water.
- (2) Notes Hunter Water's Operating Licence states that it is to provide, construct, operate, manage and maintain a drainage service within the Area of Operations.
- (3) Calls on the Minister for Lands and Water to direct Hunter Water to expand our stormwater drains around Wallsend to an appropriate level to minimise flood risk.

I ask the House to note those three paragraphs, particularly that part of the motion relating to the operating licence. Why have I repeatedly raised in the House the desperate need for Wallsend flood management? Wallsend town, which is built on the Hunter and Ironbark Creek wetlands, has a history of flooding. True to form, after searching the archives and records, I have learnt that Wallsend floods about every 12 years. In 2007 a storm and tempest caused enormous damage to Wallsend. I have written to successive Ministers in the Liberal Government, I have sought meetings with them, I have invited Ministers to see the canals for themselves, because our Wallsend community deserves a solution to the flooding. Yet all we receive are continued knockbacks from Government Ministers. In the past, some Ministers have not even bothered to respond to my invitation or have quickly knocked it back or ignored it.

I thank the Leader of the Opposition, who as shadow Minister for Water took the time to visit and look at our canals. I thank the current shadow Minister, the Hon. Rose Jackson in the upper House, for her willingness to visit the town and hear about the problems. All of the business owners who were flooded in 2007 are no longer in Wallsend. Insurance premiums along the strip are too high for them and they cannot risk the potential of inundation in the future. I applaud our small businesses in the Wallsend CBD who have fought to bring the centre back to its current level, despite the risk—and it is a big risk.

Following the horrific flooding earlier this year in the Upper Hunter, Maitland and Raymond Terrace, as well as in Lismore, which is continuing, and elsewhere in New South Wales, the Government committed \$71 million to repair critical flood mitigation in the Maitland area. In Lismore \$800 million was committed by the New South Wales and Federal governments for a flood resilience package. I applaud the funding and congratulate the member for Maitland, the member for Port Stephens, the member for Cessnock and the member for Lismore on their advocacy. In Wallsend, the Government has had a 12-year opportunity to fund flood mitigation efforts. We must pre-empt the next disaster. We must act now to ensure the damage done in 2007 is not repeated. Next time we may not be so lucky.

I wish I could tell members how much Hunter Water flood mitigation would cost. I wish I could go into intricate detail about what needs to be done to expand the stormwater infrastructure, but sadly I cannot. Hunter Water and engineering firm Jacobs have completed a review of the stormwater assets in Wallsend—a review that I am led to believe identifies the crucial work that needs to be done in order to mitigate the worst effects of flooding throughout the Ironbark Creek system. The review also estimates the likely costs. Despite asking Hunter Water for a copy of the review, I still have not seen it. I have appealed to Hunter Water numerous times, yet I am still in the dark, and the Wallsend community is still in the dark about one of the most crucial pieces of infrastructure in the Wallsend electorate, in fact in our history—the canal is over 100 years old.

The Wallsend community feels dismissed and ignored and that no attention has been paid to this traumatic, well-known, tremendous problem. The community asks why Hunter Water senior management has turned its back on and a blind eye to potential stormwater and tempest damage. The business community asks the Hunter Water board of directors why it has ignored their concerns. Why is the Hunter Water board so dismissive of local Wallsend residents and our business community's needs for future safety and protection against storm and tempest that lie ahead? Why has Hunter Water senior management turned its back on Wallsend? Why has Hunter Water's board of directors turned their back on our community? Why have successive Government Ministers ignored the needs of Wallsend?

I go back to the three paragraphs in the motion, in particular paragraph (2), which states that Hunter Water has an operating licence that it is yet to undertake. It keeps dismissing and ignoring that licence, saying it is not its problem, that it is council's problem or somebody else's problem. The Minister must get Hunter Water on board to do its job. I ask once again that the water Minister take notice of the dangerous nature of this situation. Wallsend

has narrowly avoided disaster many times since 2007. The Minister needs to do something because we will not be so lucky again.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (11:55): I thank the member for Wallsend for moving the motion and for her interest in and advocacy on flood management in the Wallsend area. I also acknowledge the Government's efforts to minimise the risk of flooding in Wallsend and across all of New South Wales. I seek to clarify the issue raised by the member for Wallsend. I believe that some of her anger on the issue may be misdirected and I seek to clarify how the issue should be addressed. I ask the member for Wallsend in reply to confirm whether Labor would commit to allocate \$40 million to deliver channel widening or does it support directing Hunter Water to fund the project, requiring an additional cost of approximately \$140 per year per Wallsend stormwater customer? That is a significant cost, and it is important that we discuss that.

As members are aware, urban stormwater management and flood mitigation planning is primarily the responsibility of local government across New South Wales. In urban areas, such as Wallsend, this particularly recognises the key role that local councils play in planning and management of development across urban stormwater catchments, including through zoning controls in the local environmental plans and development controls within their development control plans. This approach has been consistent from both Coalition and Labor governments. In the case of Wallsend, the responsibility for stormwater management and flood mitigation is held by the City of Newcastle council.

Prior to her service in this place, I understand that the member for Wallsend served as a City of Newcastle councillor and would be familiar with the role of councils in managing stormwater within their communities. In recognising the role of local government in managing stormwater and flooding risk, New South Wales councils can collect a levy from their ratepayers for the stormwater management services under the Local Government Act 1993. The City of Newcastle's financial statements show that in 2021-22 it levied \$2.1 million from its residents under the stormwater charge. In levying this charge, I am advised that the City of Newcastle notified its ratepayers that it would be spent on both capital projects and recurrent expenditure, including the planning, construction and maintenance of drainage systems, including pipes, channels, retarding basins and waterways receiving urban stormwater.

While it is primarily the responsibility of local government to provide stormwater services, the New South Wales Government does provide financial support to local councils to assist in managing flood risk. This support includes grants made under the annual Floodplain Management Program. That program supports applications for flood, floodplain risk management and feasibility studies, as well as implementation during structural works, warning systems, evacuation management and voluntary purchase. Projects are eligible for funding across four project stages: flood study, floodplain risk management, feasibility and implementation. Support provided under those programs usually involves \$2 from the New South Wales Government for every \$1 provided by the applicant, council or local authority.

In the 2021-22 funding round, \$10,036,980 was awarded to local councils and other authorities to undertake 50 projects to assess the risks and reduce the impacts of flooding in New South Wales. I am advised that the City of Newcastle has previously sought and received funding from this program, including in 2016 when funding was awarded for the Wallsend commercial area flood risk management plan's detailed design. As I have outlined, the responsibility for flooding risk and stormwater planning remains with the City of Newcastle. However, responsibility for the ownership of stormwater assets within Wallsend is shared by both the City of Newcastle and Hunter Water Corporation, with a number of existing concrete stormwater channels owned and maintained by Hunter Water Corporation. Hunter Water Corporation's enabling legislation confirms that the City of Newcastle remains the responsible authority for flooding management within the Newcastle local government area. Section 62 (2) of the Hunter Water Act recognises that:

The Corporation—

Hunter Water—

has no duty to upgrade or improve [its] drainage system[s] ...

That is also reflected in Hunter Water's operating licence. In the motion, the member for Wallsend has partially quoted from Hunter Water's operating licence. In full it reads:

- (3) This Licence authorises and requires Hunter Water to provide, operate, manage and maintain a drainage service as described in section 13(1)(b) of the Act.
- (4) This Licence authorises (but does not require) Hunter Water to provide, construct, operate, manage and maintain a drainage service within the Area of Operations in excess of the drainage service it is required to provide, operate, manage and maintain under clause 10(3). For the avoidance of any doubt, this clause authorises (but does not require) Hunter Water to enhance, expand and add capacity to the drainage service described in section 13(1)(b) of the Act.

Recognising the lead role played by the city, I understand that Hunter Water has committed on multiple occasions to work with the council to progress the city's plans to manage flooding risk to the Wallsend community. Most recently, Hunter Water funded a peer review by engineering consultancy Jacobs, which has reviewed the proposal presented by the City of Newcastle. The engineering review included a review of the opportunities for refinement in design and construction methodology, and an update on the project costings. Hunter Water has shared the review in full with the City of Newcastle, and has arranged meetings between Jacobs and the City of Newcastle's engineering consultants. Both the Minister and Hunter Water have committed to sharing a copy of the review with the member for Wallsend at a joint briefing with the City of Newcastle. I believe that offer has been made. Mr Temporary Speaker, I seek a short extension of time.

Leave not granted.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (12:03): I contribute to debate on the motion brought by the member for Wallsend. I back her in and, importantly, highlight the dire situation with drains across the electorate of Lismore. Before the flood, the issue was raised with me a lot and, after the flood, it has absolutely intensified. The issue mainly concerns Lismore, Murwillumbah and Tweed Valley residents, and also the Tweed drainage council. They have written to me and to the member for Tweed. First, I turn to Sherwood Drive. Delma Rigby, on behalf of residents of Sherwood Drive in Lismore and of Ballina Road, contacted me last year expressing concern that the drains have been overflowing since 2017. Water has been running into houses, causing structural damage. I have inspected that damage and can confirm it. Those residents have been grappling with the problem and trying to work with council to get it fixed.

I raised it with council and got it active on and interested in the issue. Changes were made. Then there was a big flood, and we are now back on the issue. I took the council's general manager to visit the neighbourhood. He inspected it and met with residents. I also wrote to the Minister for Transport because it involves Ballina Road. The water comes down in a torrent. Every time it rains, water gushes down. The General Manager of Lismore City Council told me that council has allocated another \$800,000 for drains. We need a lot more money, but that is a good allocation this year. He has also asked his engineer to look at installing an additional drainage pit. They are waiting on the design review to look at some better options. They are also looking to restore a driveway on Ballina Road to its original configuration because it is now damaged from the drainage overflow.

In desperation, the residents created a petition and sent it to Lismore City Council and to me. I think it also went to Minister Faraway. I have raised the issue with him and received a reply. I understand the residents' sheer frustration and absolute desperation. The drains are overflowing. We must, and will, get them fixed. I have been trying to pull everybody together. One person or several people might have responsibility, but who takes action? Lismore City Council is onto it. We will get there. The Lismore Drains Community Action Group was set up after the floods and now has 350 members. It created a petition that gathered over 1,000 signatures. It has two short-term goals and one long-term goal. The long-term goal is to work with council to ensure that the New South Wales and Federal governments provide appropriate funds for much-needed infrastructural repair and development of the stormwater drain system in Lismore.

We have taken up the issue with the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation. Murwillumbah has the same problem with drains, as does the Tweed drainage council, which represents 12 private drainage boards across farming and cane-growing areas. On its behalf, I have requested that it get access to some of the disaster recovery grants available for flooding. The council needs the funding to maintain the drains so they work efficiently. I thank the member for Wallsend for bringing the motion to the House.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:07): I too thank the member for Wallsend for bringing the motion to the House. I think, at last count, she has brought in excess of 200 motions to the House. I was only looking at that yesterday. It is always a pleasure to contribute to debate on one of the member's well thought-out motions. As members know and as was articulated very well by the member for Lismore, the responsibility for flood management and flood mitigation lies with local government. I note that the member for Swansea is in the Chamber. We have met with Central Coast Council on a number of occasions. The complication is that most of the dams are at around 100 per cent capacity, which has never been seen before. That puts added pressure on the stormwater drainage systems, not just in Wallsend but across every part of New South Wales. That was articulately explained by the member for Lismore, who probably has more experience with drainage and flooding than almost any member in this place.

Two years ago we were praying for rain and now we are praying never to see it again. I compliment the member for Wallsend for bringing the motion to the House. In the case of Wallsend, the City of Newcastle is responsible for storm drains. I highlight the work done by Mayor Nuatali Nelmes, who has become adept at securing grant funding from the New South Wales Government. It is great that investment is being spread across New South Wales, whether it is to Central Coast Council, Newcastle, or anywhere else in the Hunter, as the member for Upper Hunter mentioned. The Government has enabled councils to apply for funding through the

Floodplain Management Program for support with floods, floodplain risk management and feasibility studies, as well as the implementation of structural works, warning systems, evacuation management plans and involuntary purchases. As was mentioned by the member for Upper Hunter before he ran out of time, in the 2021-22 funding round over \$10 million was awarded to local councils and other authorities to undertake 50 projects to assess risks and reduce the impacts of flooding across New South Wales.

I am sure the member for Wallsend will be in regular contact with the mayor of Newcastle, who is doing an outstanding job, encouraging her to make sure that both Hunter Water and City of Newcastle council look at doing what is required to continue to receive funding moving forward to deal with the infrastructure issues that have seen abnormal pressure put on our stormwater systems not just in Wallsend but also across the Central Coast. As was also mentioned by the member for Upper Hunter, I would like the member for Wallsend in her reply to clarify whether Labor is committed to allocating the approximately \$40 million that will be required to widen the stormwater channel at Ironbark Creek or does the member want Hunter Water to look at imposing a levy on water users, which, I believe, would equate to approximately \$140 per stormwater customer per year?

At the end of the day, the infrastructure has to be paid for. No-one is dodging responsibility for that. As I said, the State Government provided over \$10 million in floodplain management grants in the 2021-22 budget. In 2016 City of Newcastle council sought and received funding from the Floodplain Management Program for the Wallsend Floodplain Risk Management Plan. That plan is important because it lays the groundwork for what infrastructure upgrades will be required for population growth and the changing climate. I am pleased to hear that the Minister and Hunter Water want to meet with the member for Wallsend and City of Newcastle council. It is important that all parties come to the table when talking about millions of dollars of infrastructure being done right the first time.

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (12:11): I thank the member for Wallsend for moving this motion. I acknowledge that these important infrastructure investments are critical but highlight the fact that bigger pipes and wider canals are not the long-term solution to stormwater management. With urban density increases, we are seeing more and more impervious surfaces. Stormwater is the rapidly generated and quickly transferred rain that falls into our waterways, so the solution to address stormwater run-off is to address the issue of water sensitive urban design. Good water-sensitive urban design captures rainwater, slowing it down and reusing it so that it percolates into the ground. I acknowledge Professor Stuart Khan from the University of New South Wales, whose work addressing these issues I draw a lot of inspiration from.

Backyards, verges, parklands, driveways and even footpaths can now be made from relatively pervious materials that slow down the water that enters canals and pipes to mitigate stormwater floods. Run-offs from impervious surfaces can be directed to areas that maximise infiltration into the ground. Local governments must take steps to ensure that deeper and higher capacity pit drains are installed when developments are improved and every house should be required to have a water tank so the water that rushes off the roof and down pipe does not then shoot into concrete canals and lead to flooding. In large rain events, every drop of water in the urban environment should be retained to be used later or infiltrated into the ground as a flood mitigation opportunity. That also means that in times of drought we can capture the rainwater and use it for important issues. Critically, when infiltration rates are limited, storage in household rainwater tanks, wetlands, lagoons and ponds is needed to hold the water.

I draw to the attention of the member for Wallsend that one of the problems with water authorities like Hunter Water is that they are stuck in the dark ages. I highlight a concrete canal in my electorate of Balmain, which turbocharges stormwater to flood down footpaths. We must slow the progress of stormwater, which is why the naturalisation of concrete canals, which is a cheaper investment in the long run, is so critical. I invite the member to come to Annandale to look at how powerful the flood mitigation and stormwater management process is when using sandstone canals. They make neighbourhoods more beautiful and they improve water quality. The canal in Annandale is a multimillion-dollar project, which also included a wetland that acts as an overflow flood area. It slows the speed of stormwater, which mitigates bigger and more powerful stormwater events that lead to flooding. For a century the canal was made of concrete, much like in the electorate of the member for Wallsend, and it was an ecological wasteland. That has now been changed with the planting of over 10,000 native endemic plant species.

In conclusion, naturalised canals can last 50 years longer than traditional canals. The planning processes must be in place so that councils can ensure that water is retained when developments are approved and not used to turbocharge downpipes and canals. Pipes and canals can never be made wide enough to deal with the effect of impervious surfaces in new developments. Water-sensitive design is a must.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (12:15): I thank the member for Wallsend for moving this motion. I also thank the other speakers for their contributions. I recognise that the issue of flood mitigation is important to the Wallsend community and the member for Wallsend. I join with my colleagues to urge the member in her reply to

confirm whether the Opposition is committed to allocate \$40 million for the delivery of channel widening or does it support directing Hunter Water to fund the project at an additional cost of approximately \$140 per year for each Wallsend stormwater customer? Hunter Water is committed to supporting action on Wallsend flooding by working with City of Newcastle council to progress the city's plans to manage flood risk to the Wallsend community. That includes a collaboration with council to progress a solution to address the flooding of the Ironbark Creek stormwater channel to shovel-ready status. Recently, Hunter Water funded a comprehensive review of the City of Newcastle's engineering proposal, including a review of the project's costings. The work was undertaken by independent engineering firm Jacobs.

A copy of the review was shared with the City of Newcastle earlier in the year, and an offer has been repeatedly made to provide a briefing to the member for Wallsend on its outcomes. Important work such as this will support future grant applications made by the City of Newcastle to progress a solution. It is important to be aware that a solution for flood mitigation at Wallsend does not come cheap. It is estimated that it will cost between \$40 million and \$50 million. Given the expense, funding for any such solution will require a partnership approach, as Hunter Water cannot directly invest in upgrades to address flood mitigation because it is not responsible for managing flood risk. Hunter Water plays a role in the management of flooding in Wallsend through the ownership and maintenance of the main concrete stormwater channel in the CBD. However, it is not responsible for floodplain management and flood mitigation of the Wallsend system, which remains the responsibility of the council.

It should be highlighted that this approach is consistent with the approach taken to flood planning and mitigation across the State and is linked to local government's responsibility for local planning and development controls. Hunter Water customers do not support the funding of flood mitigation investments in the Wallsend CBD. When preparing its pricing proposal to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal, Hunter Water tested the appetite of its customers to pay for the upgrades to the Ironbark Creek stormwater channel as a discretionary item. That was undertaken via a statistically valid willingness to pay for a survey of 700 Hunter Water customers that was conducted independently by Marsden Jacob in late 2018.

The survey found that the broader customer base is not willing to pay for flood mitigation investments at Wallsend. Without a responsibility to manage flood risk, or the support of its broader customer base to fund such investments in the Wallsend CBD, Hunter Water cannot invest directly in upgrades to address flooding risk. The New South Wales Government acknowledges that the Wallsend community wants a solution. However, it is reasonable that the solution is driven by the City of Newcastle. Hunter Water remains committed to working in partnership with the City of Newcastle to find solutions to flood mitigation in Wallsend, including the source of funding and any additional support for applying for grants.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle) (12:19): By leave: I say hello to the team at Hunter Water, who are no doubt watching the debate to prepare their letter of rebuke. I am quite used to receiving those letters. Hunter Water sends them out every time I say something that it does not like. I expect that the member for Wallsend has received a few of those letters in the past as well. After all, she is a frequent and fantastic agitator on this issue. In fact, it is not the first time that I have stood with her to debate the real need to expand Wallsend stormwater drains. If the community wants a member who will always fight for them, look no further than the magnificent member for Wallsend.

My question to the Government is this: What will it take? It has been 15 years since the storm that one could argue irrevocably changed all of Newcastle, particularly Wallsend. It changed the understanding of flood mitigation, the stormwater system, and the concerns and liabilities of local small businesses. In 2015 Newcastle became a natural disaster zone again, after being torn apart by another east coast low. Yet the lesson has not been learnt. Right now, there are images of total flooding heartbreak in the State's west. In July most of the Hunter region went under. In the past two years, the far North Coast was devastated twice. I acknowledge that the member for Lismore in the Chamber. She stood with her community so valiantly then and continues to do so now.

The amount of rain that fell during all of those events was exceptional. But if it keeps happening, is it really exceptional? The member for Wallsend noted the money that is going to Lismore and other parts of the Hunter for flood mitigation and resilience measures. That money is needed, absolutely. But I note that it is very reactive. All members agree that we must do what we can to reduce the risk and devastation that has happened over the past two years. After the storm 15 years ago, why is Wallsend still waiting? Again, I ask what will it take? Will Wallsend be waiting another 15 or 30 years? In 2007, about 10 minutes up the road from Wallsend, a man was swept into a stormwater drain and died. There is a huge economic cost to local businesses and there is uncertainty and fear in the community about the next big storm.

At the end of the day, none of that matters as much as people's lives. That cannot be expressed as a cost-benefit ratio. A number of drains clogged up during the *Pasha Bulker* super storm. It is a real, live issue for all of Newcastle, particularly Wallsend, which was absolutely devastated. Many issues resulted from that storm,

including businesses and lives being put on hold and people falling ill. Obviously widening the channels through Wallsend must be paid for. I remind the House that in 2018 this Government ripped an extra dividend out of Hunter Water to the tune of \$100 million. Lifesaving infrastructure needs are not being met in Wallsend, while tens of millions of dollars are sent down the M1 to Sydney.

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (12:23): In reply: I thank the members representing the electorates of Upper Hunter, Lismore, Terrigal, Balmain, Heathcote and Newcastle for contributing to debate. The current Minister, funnily enough, left the debate early. I ask the Minister what the Government's efforts are to work on and improve flood mitigation in Wallsend. I seek clarification about the \$146 per customer that the community are expected to pay for certain flood mitigation tasks in Wallsend that people elsewhere are not expected to pay. Did the Government ask the constituents at Lismore—and I hope it damn well did not—to pay for the millions of dollars in repairs? What about Maitland? All of a sudden, Wallsend constituents are expected to fork out money that the Government refused to pay. That is not the answer to the problem, and it really disappoints me.

If the Government is working with council, that is fantastic. It keeps referring to the Jacobs report, but I have not once been invited to receive an update from Hunter Water, despite repeated calls from it. I am sure I will receive an invitation now that I have brought it up, but why have I not been invited? That is a sign it does not respect the people of Wallsend and their needs. When was the last time the board of directors or senior management of Hunter Water visited Wallsend and willingly spoke to me about issues on behalf of the people of Wallsend? When was the last time the Minister for Lands and Water listened to and paid heed to my invitations to visit? Those pieces of paper must be thrown into the garbage because most Ministers do not bother to respond to me representing the electorate of Wallsend.

The member for Upper Hunter suggested that Hunter Water is apparently not required to do anything in Wallsend, but I suggest that it falls under its duty of care. I ask Hunter Water to get out of Newcastle and visit Wallsend—it is not that far away—and pay attention to the needs of the people there. The member for Terrigal also suggested that responsibility for flood management falls to council, but the Government is providing funding for flood mitigation and management in the Hunter and Lismore—as it should and as I support—so why not Wallsend? In fact, Hunter Water spent millions on septic wastewater upgrades towards the Central Coast, as it should have. That could be done without slugging Hunter Water customers, so the same should be done in Wallsend. I am not sure which side the member for Balmain was on. I do not have a problem with the type of materials used to update the drain, but it must be done. I urge members to support this important and long overdue motion.

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

Motion agreed to.

COMMUNITY SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (12:28): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that community sport provides enormous health (including mental health) benefits to the people of New South Wales.
- (2) Notes the current unacceptable state of repair of amenities buildings at various community sport grounds within the Shellharbour electorate.
- (3) Acknowledges that local government is not always in a financial position to adequately fund the construction and ongoing maintenance of amenities buildings at community sport grounds within the Shellharbour electorate.
- (4) Calls on the Government to provide adequate grant funding for the construction of amenities buildings at community sport grounds in New South Wales.

The people of the Shellharbour electorate love community sport. They show up every week in their thousands, and they deserve better. From three-year-olds doing little athletics right up to 90-year-olds playing social tennis, community sport is extremely popular, and all players deserve a fair go when it comes to facilities. Shellharbour produces more than its fair share of champion athletes, but for every professional athlete like superstar Matildas player Caitlin Foord there are hundreds of players who have no intention of playing in an \$800 million stadium in Sydney. They just want to have fun, stay active and keep healthy.

The love for community sport in the Illawarra exists despite the relatively poor and outdated facilities and fields across the area. Whilst such facilities are owned mostly by councils, local government is not always in a financial position to adequately fund the construction of facilities at community sporting grounds. It remains largely up to the New South Wales Government to provide adequate grants or ad hoc funding for the construction of amenities buildings and new fields. However, the problem is that the funding is inadequate and not delivered in a fair manner.

A player's postcode should not determine the standard of community sporting facilities that they use. We are all residents of New South Wales and we should all have access to the same sporting amenities. For 12 long years the people of Shellharbour have been denied access to amenities buildings and sporting fields that are up to the standard experienced by communities in Liberal-held electorates such as Kiama. Before this Government suspended the member for Kiama from the Liberal Party and the Parliament, he often boasted how he was able to secure funding for gold-plated infrastructure due to nothing more than his Liberal Party membership. It is not so easy for the member for Kiama to secure this type of funding now, is it? It is much tougher as an Independent. Maybe a preference deal might help.

Over the past few months I have been invited to see firsthand the shocking state of community sporting facilities across the Shellharbour electorate. Whether they are located in Wollongong or Shellharbour local government areas, the story is the same. There has been a neglectful lack of investment by the Liberal-Nationals Government over the past 12 years in community sporting infrastructure. Hardworking parents, carers and other volunteers are out there running raffles to save up a few dollars to get things fixed so their child can play sport. Meanwhile, the Government has spent the past 12 years rorting every dollar it can to prop up its Liberal-held marginal electorates in leafy suburbs in Sydney. This waste means that there have not been nearly enough grants or ad hoc funding to assist councils in the Shellharbour electorate to keep up with the growing demand for sporting facilities, including the amazing growth in girls' and women's sports across the Illawarra.

I have seen firsthand how some of these facilities are operated and how old they are, particularly facilities for women. Facilities used by community sporting clubs in Shellharbour are too old. Change rooms are too small. Players have no privacy when getting changed and there is just not enough storage. Sporting clubs are not asking for facilities designed by Cox Architecture. They do not need a premium gym or a wellness centre with a sauna and spa. From Dapto's Reed Park to Flinders Field, many of our current change rooms offer no privacy for junior players and are so small that players are forced outside to have their half-time oranges or get treatment for knocks and bruises. In most old-style amenities the buildings have no storage. Flinders Field only has a disabled toilet that is used for storage and as a space for referees to get changed before and after games. At Reed Park in Dapto the ceilings are held up with temporary props and the concrete crumbles around the players every week.

Community sport provides enormous physical and mental health benefits to the people of New South Wales, including the strong social connections it provides off the field. In fast-growing areas such as Shellharbour, joining a local sporting club allows the hundreds of families moving into new suburbs each year the chance to feel part of the community. It is time that these social health and wellbeing benefits are factored in when making decisions about how community sporting infrastructure is funded. The benefits are enormous. The return on investment is fantastic. It should not matter whether or not a club is in a safe seat; all communities should get a fair go.

Local community sport clubs such as the Warilla Wanderers—which is forced to use rusty shipping containers to store its gear at King Mickey Park—desperately need a fair go and the provision of modern facilities. I inspected these rooms only a few weeks ago. They have not been touched since 1967. These facilities are not only for local players but also for visiting teams from across the Illawarra and New South Wales. Representatives from community sporting clubs across a wide range of sports, including soccer, tennis, cricket, and league tag, have told me that they are embarrassed when they host teams from other electorates due to the state of change rooms and toilet facilities. It must be such a shock for teams that visit from nearby Kiama that are used to having seats on their toilets and doors on their shower cubicles.

It is not only the amenities buildings that need fixing. Fields with adequate drainage to withstand heavy rains are also a key issue across the Illawarra and beyond. We cannot keep cancelling children's sport because grounds cannot handle heavy rain. We need children out on the field, not stuck at home playing on their phones. Access to all-weather playing fields with adequate drainage should not depend on whether the field is in a safe or marginal electorate. The people of Shellharbour have had enough of this Government. They know that only a Labor government can ensure that they will get a fair go when it comes to community sport funding. Again, I urge the Government to invest fairly right across the State of New South Wales, not just in safe Liberal-held electorates.

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (12:35): I acknowledge the motion moved by the member for Shellharbour and the importance of sport to people of all ages across New South Wales. I take umbrage with the member's comments about excessive funding going to Liberal-held electorates. I am pleased to say that the bulk of the funding for electorates on the Central Coast has gone to the three Labor seats and not to my Liberal seat. I have been delighted to provide my support to grants such as that provided to the Wyong District Hockey Club, which received \$900,000 of Stronger Country Communities funding. Most recently we had an announcement of \$11 million going to Tuggerah sporting field, but due to council's financial situation it was going to hand the money back. We said, "That is not a good idea because we can utilise that funding across local sporting fields on the Central Coast."

Ms Yasmin Catley: That's because you amalgamated it.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: That was because it voted to amalgamate, and a Labor mayor got sacked in the end because it ran into half a billion dollars worth of debt—but that is a debate for another day. Some \$11 million was going to go to Tuggerah but has now been redirected, with \$9 million going to 16 different local sporting fields right across the Central Coast. Predominantly those fields are in the Labor-held electorates—and I am delighted. I do not care where the money goes as long as it is spent on the Central Coast. That way, everybody of all ages on the Central Coast gets to benefit from the use of sport facilities.

A great example of that is the uptake of Active Kids rebates on the Central Coast. Sadly, those opposite did not support Active Kids rebates and all the measures we put in place to pay for them. We have seen hundreds of thousands of parents benefitting from the scheme, which has got kids back into sport. After the lockdowns we saw during COVID it was especially important to get people out and about and onto sporting fields. I do not disagree that councils need to be focused on investing in local sporting fields. However, the New South Wales Government has stood side by side with councils, providing so many avenues to apply for grants to upgrade existing sporting fields and construct new ones from one end of the State to the other.

I say to the member for Shellharbour that she should sit down with her local councils and work through those projects. I sit down with Central Coast Council and it prioritises its infrastructure projects. They were going to hand back \$11 million to the State Government but we were able to keep it on the Central Coast. As I said, those funds will upgrade 13 different sporting fields, predominantly in the Labor electorates of The Entrance, Wyong—

Mr Geoff Provest: No!

Mr ADAM CROUCH: It is hard to believe, I know. Again, we see this through most of the infrastructure grants. I am delighted that those sporting fields, whether they are for AFL, cricket, netball, softball—you name it—are getting upgraded. It was a matter of sitting down with council and working out what its priorities were. Because of the council's financial situation, it was complex for it to work out how it was going to deliver infrastructure spending. It wanted to focus on upgrading existing sporting grounds.

The New South Wales infrastructure grant program has delivered funds to not-for-profit groups, especially sporting groups, which found it virtually impossible to raise funds during COVID. I am again delighted to say that most of the recipients of that funding have been in the Labor electorates on the Central Coast. As I said, I do not care where the money goes as long as it advantages everybody on the Central Coast. The best example I saw was the \$900,000 going to the Wyong District Hockey Club, which now has two state-of-the-art, world-class hockey fields. The club got a great deal. It was only going to buy one. The contract on the second one fell through. The company that provided it gave them a two-for-one deal. They got double the bang for their buck.

Again, that was invested by the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government in the electorate of Wyong to upgrade this sporting field. The member for Wyong had the good grace to accept that it was good spending and thanked the Government for the investment in that field. I note that the member for The Entrance is in the Chamber. Funding of \$1.3 million was allocated for Adelaide Street Oval, which is a world-class AFL football ground in his electorate. The Liberal-Nationals Government delivered that to you, buddy, not the Labor Party. Labor had 16 years and it did not deliver it. The reality is that we both went to the AFL grand final. It was great to see two Central Coast teams play against each other.

Mr David Mehan: Your team got beaten.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: Sadly, my team did not win, but it was great to see two teams slugging it out on the upgraded sporting field. That was sadly delayed for over two years by the now sacked mayor who was arguing over a tree that maybe one day would become a habitat for something.

Mr David Mehan: She did not know what she was talking about.

Mr ADAM CROUCH: Ironically, the tree was actually full of termites and had to be knocked down anyway. That was a sad indication of how the former sacked council held up a \$1.3 million infrastructure project for our local sporting clubs. Why? The best thing we did was sack them. As soon as we sacked them we were able to get on with this infrastructure spend that provided not only a \$1.3 million state-of-the-art AFL sportsground in the electorate of the member for The Entrance but also fantastic work for the local construction company that delivered it, and all of the local tradies benefitted. There is the economic benefit for good investment in local sporting grounds working with council.

When the councillors were sacked, we were able to deliver the infrastructure projects that they sat on for years. Quite frankly, they should have been sacked earlier because they were so bad. They racked up half a billion dollars worth of debt and there was no infrastructure delivery to any sporting fields. Now we are seeing the

delivery of infrastructure projects being rolled out. I welcome the contribution of the member for Shellharbour. Perhaps she might talk to the member for Kiama about how he worked with his councils to get infrastructure delivered. That is how you do it. As a local member, I am delighted to sit down with every sporting club anywhere on the Central Coast and provide them with letters of support and recommendations on how to get access to funding. I have got a list of all the funding that local sports clubs on the Central Coast, from one end of the coast to the other, have picked up. It is literally millions and millions of dollars because they have done the work and put in their requests. They are working constructively with council and the State Government to secure grant funding.

Whether it be for the smallest or the largest upgrades, they have been able to work with the Liberal-Nationals Government and a sacked council to get the job done for the people of the Central Coast. Thousands of people of all ages and abilities are now benefitting no matter the sport—whether it be basketball, cricket, soccer, rugby, swimming, you name it, the investment has been right across our region. I say to the member for Shellharbour that the opportunity has been there. It is about how you engage with your local sporting clubs and local councils to get this infrastructure delivered. It has not been through a lack of funding because there has been bucketloads of it. Funding has literally gone to every electorate, especially on the Central Coast, no matter what the colour—ask the member for The Entrance. [*Time expired.*]

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (12:42): I welcome the advocacy by the member for Shellharbour on this important matter and thank her for bringing her motion before the House. Over the past 10 years the population of the Shellharbour Council area has grown from about 66,000 to about 76,000 and multiple new developments are underway but, despite this, the Liberal-Nationals Government has not had a plan to support community sport in Shellharbour or across New South Wales. The Government does not have an overarching whole-of-State sports strategy. It does not have a plan to support grassroots sports clubs or to boost participation in sport and active recreation. When it has had strategies for facilities and individual sports, it has been a shambles and its implementation has been selective and sporadic at best.

For example, in the case of motorsports, the Government has developed a motorsports strategy involving a centre of excellence and the Sydney Motorsport Park, both of which were welcome, but it did not focus on the role of the fans or motorsport enthusiasts in the strategy. The Goulburn electorate is next door to the Shellharbour electorate. The Government has been asleep at the wheel and that has had a real-life impact. In July 2022 a Land and Environment Court judgement imposed much stricter operating conditions, primarily in relation to noise management at Wakefield Park Raceway near Goulburn. Goulburn was home to Australia's first motorcycle grand prix in 1924 and motor car grand prix in 1927. Since then motorsports have been a big drawcard to Goulburn, or at least until recently when the raceway had to close indefinitely.

Motorsports were a big driver for tourism in the region and the Government has been absent in dealing with this matter. Ministers have checked out. The Minister for Sport has been disengaged, disingenuous and disinterested. At budget estimates hearings the Opposition asked if he had met with the member for Goulburn, the raceway operator or the local council. The answer was no. Months after the Land and Environment Court decision it appears that he just did not care. Months of inaction have dealt a real blow to Goulburn. There appears to be no recognition by the Government that putting your head in the sand will not make it go away. Locals and motorsport fans are looking for short-term and longer term solutions. I understand a number of solutions have been proposed but the operators are still waiting for a reply. The silence from the Government has been deafening.

The impact on Goulburn is already being felt—18 employees have been made redundant and businesses are suffering. Each and every month this matter drags on about \$1.5 million is not being spent in Goulburn. Time is of the essence. The Government has the resources and goodwill of hard-working public servants to find a way forward, but it is not using them. It has the support of motorsport fans, Wakefield Park's operators and the local council. They all want to see the Wakefield Park Raceway reopen. They need to find a balanced solution that keeps the raceway running without excessive impacts on neighbours. Like the member for Shellharbour, I will be interested in the response of the Minister to this motion. However, I suspect all we will hear is excuses. Excuses like we keep hearing about the Government's Female Friendly Community Sport Facilities and Lighting Upgrades Grant Program, which was announced in May but not one project has been approved as yet.

In contrast, Labor's Kristy McBain, Federal member for Eden Monaro pledged \$1 million to upgrade the change rooms at Freebody Oval, Queanbeyan, before the Federal election. That commitment is being implemented with funding allocated in the October Federal budget. We have a tired 12-year-old Liberal-Nationals Government that is focused on itself, instead of finding workable solutions to matters facing sports across our State. New South Wales deserves better than this. For months and months community sport has been washed out with heavy rain, yet we have heard nothing from the Government about improved drainage across the State. All sorts of problems are facing community sport and there are no answers. The silence is deafening. What is happening in Goulburn is an absolute disgrace.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (12:46): Talk about a fresh start. There is the fresh start, the vision, the positivity; its radiating off those opposite today. Essentially this motion boils down to "I'm looking over my back fence and I'm not getting what he's getting. I'm going to have a whinge about it." How about instead of having a bit of a whinge about it, pull your socks up, roll your sleeves up and have a bit of a go. Work with your local councils and local community organisations. Like so many members in this place, I had the benefit of spending nine years in local government before coming here. In the years that I was the mayor of Gunnedah Shire Council and those opposite occupied the Treasury benches; we never got a dollar from them.

We didn't whinge. We just said, "If we're not going to get a dollar from them, we will work out where else we can get a dollar from." We worked with local philanthropic organisations, local businesses in town, council looked at putting on special levies to support the development of sports infrastructure and we got there. When we worked with local groups we made sure that every sporting group did not build its own dunghill and its own empire. We actually worked with groups to bring them together to share facilities—rectangular sports, sharing rectangular fields; oval sports, sharing oval fields. Sharing joint kiosks, canteens and amenities. My region has benefited greatly from programs that support that smart, strategic planning of sports infrastructure to combine sports and share facilities. We are now seeing those programs rolled out right across the state.

I agree with paragraph (3) of the member for Shellharbour's motion that local government is not always in a financial position to fund the construction and ongoing maintenance of amenities. Absolutely government has a role to support that but, fundamentally, these are local facilities for which the local communities are responsible. They own and operate those facilities. When looking at the full life cycle management of costs and depreciation, we must look at how to adequately maintain and then recapitalise on that infrastructure when it reaches its use-by date.

There are many ways to fund and manage those facilities sustainably. It is not sustainable for local councils to seek handouts all the time and think the Government owes them something, and on that I do not mean to be partisan. I say that as someone who has worked in local government. A sports infrastructure strategy that is designed on the premise that the Government will fund it will end in disaster. It does not matter who occupies the government benches, there will be times when money is made available through grants programs and there will be times when it is not. One must manage those facilities on the assumption that there will not be external funds and, if there are, that is great. In those instances, councils can go for something big.

I have a 20-page document that contains all of the grants that have been made available to the Northern Tablelands, though that is irrelevant to this debate. The important element of the motion is the sustainable delivery and management of sports facilities. I strongly advise all members to sit down and have a mature discussion with councils and sporting organisations because there is always a way forward. I know there is always a way because I was party to such discussions before I came to this place. If one is smart and positive, the money and the good decisions will come, and that will benefit the community.

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (12:50): I thank the member for Shellharbour for moving this fundamental, nuts-and-bolts motion. I am not surprised by the member's motion. It addresses the issue that many of us are asked about when we walk down the main streets of Tweed, The Entrance, Wallsend or Shellharbour. Our communities want more sporting fields. They are not asking for a handout—I disagree with the member for Northern Tablelands on that. We want more sporting fields because we need them. For the Government to promote health and fitness for everyone, from children to the elderly, facilities must be made available to them. The member for Shellharbour and I cannot overstate the importance of that. The populations of Shellharbour and Wallsend are growing dramatically. While there is much more housing in our area, councils do not have the ability to build sporting fields, which is what we need.

Our soccer, cricket, rugby league and hockey clubs are crying out for available land. I disagree with the comments from the member for Northern Tablelands. In fact, the fields in Shellharbour, Wallsend and other Labor electorates are often overused and unavailable. We are asking the Government to support councils to provide residents with what they deserve, regardless of whether they live in Shellharbour or Armidale in the Northern Tablelands. It is about equality. It was interesting to hear the member for Terrigal talk about the Government assistance that was provided to certain areas on the Central Coast because it brought to mind the articles I have read in the papers over the past few years on Government pork-barrelling. I love swimming, I love pools and I love to see little children and elderly people in the water because it is a wonderful way to keep healthy and fit. The articles about pork-barrelling in particular were very interesting. The State Government gave hundreds of millions of dollars to councils in National Party electorates like Bega when a former National Party member was in power at the time.

Beautiful pools were provided to Nationals and Liberal electorates, and Parramatta is a good example of that. It was provided with an \$800 million pool—what Shellharbour and Wallsend residents would give for a pool like that. But it will not happen. The member for Northern Tablelands spoke of philanthropic opportunities for

organisations, but I remind him that they do not have the money for those fields. Charities cannot always buy sporting fields. The council and State Government are responsible for that. I ask members to support the motion of the member for Shellharbour. It is a fundamental, nuts-and-bolts motion. Members must remember that there is inequality in our electorates, and Shellharbour and Wollongong have missed out on funding.

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (12:54): The member for Wollongong described it as a nuts-and-bolts motion, but I would leave out bolts because it is nuts that the motion is before the House. However, I welcome the opportunity to set the record straight. Many sporting clubs and organisations were devastated by floods earlier this year, including in Hawkesbury. Our community's facilities were left in absolute disrepair. Earlier this month I welcomed sports Minister Alister Henskens to my electorate with open arms. He announced \$12 million in Government support to rebuild and repair facilities in priority local government areas across New South Wales. And guess what? Funding was spread across a mixture of Labor, Liberal and Nationals electorates. Members must remember that.

That funding was not provided for pork-barrelling; it was provided to assist the communities that were impacted by floods. Grassroots sport plays a critical role in the fabric of our communities. It keeps people healthy, active and socially connected. Government funding will help local clubs to rebuild and recover. They cannot do it themselves and nor can local government. Hawkesbury council does not have a plethora of funds, so it sought help from me to approach the Government for support. Minister Henskens announced \$1.28 million for local sports grants as part of the flood recovery. I will outline the available funding. The council received \$382,940 to repair Bensons Lane Sporting Complex, \$105,825 to repair sports fields and drainage at Bensons 7 and Owen Earle Oval and \$366,206 to repair the netball courts at South Windsor because they were absolutely trashed.

Local government cannot supply that money, so the State Government is assisting in whatever way it can. That funding is essential for the restoration of those grounds. Further funding includes \$53,000 for Breakaway Oval and \$156,326 for remediation works at Colbee Park, where six floods in 20 months trashed the grounds. Further, \$37,000 was provided to remediate the sports fields and \$185,000 was provided for a new amenities block at Dyarubbin park. Some \$43 million is available to help more local clubs to recover from floods, storms and heavy rain. Applications are open for sporting fields and organisations in 74 flood-declared local government areas. The program opened on 3 November and closes on Friday 9 December.

I urge community sporting groups and councils to look at the range of funding opportunities that are available. Some \$25 million in funding is available for female-friendly community sporting facilities. That program is open until 23 November. Some \$150 million is available under the Centre of Excellence Fund and \$4.65 million is available under the Local Sport Grant Program. That program opened to every electorate on 17 October and councils have until 21 November to make an application. Program details are available on the Office of Sport website. I encourage community groups and the member for Shellharbour to look at the website. If the member for Shellharbour had looked at the website before moving her motion, I would not have had to contribute to this debate.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (12:59): By leave: I thank the House. I appreciate the opportunity to speak in support of the motion moved by the member for Shellharbour and help her to get a bit of fair funding for her electorate. Community sporting facilities are super important. It is not just playing fields and that sort of hard infrastructure, but the amenities that allow the community to get out and about and to develop their own events, which help to build our sense of community and allow people to meet informally and interact, building a stronger society as a result. I am thinking of events like parkrun, a successful worldwide phenomenon that has encouraged a whole bunch of people to take up running, get moving and meet once a week on a Saturday morning with fellow citizens in their community to develop relationships and improve the health of the overall community.

Parkrun has four events on the Central Coast, which essentially rely on shared pathways. The parkrun at The Entrance is grounded in the ability to get permission from council to use those council facilities—a shared pathway around the lake—to run the event without being charged. It is basic social democracy and basic community building that local government should be able to do. We must fund local government adequately to provide those basic facilities as well as the more code-oriented facilities that are formed in a particular manner for various sports. The State and local governments can do a bunch of things to enhance community health and community sport.

Grant funding is important. The Community Building Partnership grant funding introduced by the former Labor Government has been a great success, and it is being continued by the current Government. Its success, as well as that of the Local Sport Grant Program, lies in the fact that each electorate is allocated the same amount of money. That means the whole State has access to equal funding and to choose how to spend that funding locally. We fall down, though, when pork-barrelling enters into the equation, which we saw over the last term of this Parliament. It would still be happening if ICAC had not exposed the bumbling of the former member for Wagga Wagga and his weird view of the world, which was ultimately his undoing.

The \$252 million Stronger Communities Fund has left a terrible stain on the history of this State. A parliamentary inquiry quite clearly indicated that it was an example of a "brazen pork-barrelling scheme". Some 95 per cent of the grants from that fund went to Coalition Government electorates or marginal electorates. We must avoid that sort of funding. The community expects better of us and of this Parliament. Funding must be based on need and fairness, and we must ensure that each electorate across the State gets similar and equal funding.

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (13:03): By leave: I thank members for allowing me the opportunity to contribute to debate on the motion—it is clearly the last sitting day of Parliament when members give me a go, which is great. The key theme that has come through in this debate is fairness and equity of funding. The member for Terrigal talked about wonderful investments in his electorate. He used the example of getting extra hockey fields. At the same time, it is a tale of two cities and the Government needs to be a bit more connected with what is happening. About eight or so years ago—maybe 10 years ago—the New South Wales Government and Hockey NSW offered to build a new synthetic hockey field in the Blacktown council area. Blacktown council was prepared to match that funding dollar for dollar to build two fields, before the then sports Minister Stuart Ayres interfered and took money from Blacktown to upgrade existing deteriorating fields in the Penrith area. That is the problem we face with the Government, which maybe not all Government members realise. Areas like Blacktown are missing out on sports funding because of the rorts.

Eight years ago the State Government's policy was to reduce the developer section 7.11 contribution, which resulted in \$50,000 being reduced to \$20,000. The Government said it would make up the difference. In those eight years, \$250 million worth of section 7.11 grants have not been delivered to Blacktown council, which the Government promised to do. Blacktown mayor Tony Bleasdale sent invoices to the Government asking, "Where's our \$250 million?" Blacktown council has been denied that funding, which could have been used to build sportsgrounds. There is no money whatsoever allocated in any budget to pay that \$250 million. It is great to hear the member for Northern Tablelands stand up in this place and say he has 20 pages detailing what they have built in the Northern Tablelands, but that money has come from Blacktown. You owe \$250 million to Blacktown, which you stole from my area. If you feel really good about that, then that is great.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Order! The member for Blacktown will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr STEPHEN BALI: I am trying to speak; members opposite are the ones yelling. The Government used to support an Olympic legacy asset in Blacktown with \$700,000 a year to the council, which it cut all of a sudden. The ratepayers of Blacktown are supporting a national—if not international—facility, but the money goes to Northern Tablelands. The money goes to support Liberal electorates, yet the ratepayers of Blacktown have to maintain a nationally significant asset. The Government is paying \$3.5 million to build a facility in St Ives, which the Speaker was quite happy to announce with the sports Minister. That is \$3.5 million to Ku-ring-gai Council, whose population will grow by about 13,000, according to the latest data from the planning department. Currently it is one-third of the size of Blacktown, which will hit 110,000—10 times the growth, yet we do not get a cent. St Ives gets \$3.5 million for an upgrade, but Blacktown gets absolutely nothing. As the shadow Minister said, the delivery of funding is selective and sporadic.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (13:07): In reply: I thank the member for Terrigal, the member for Granville, the member for Northern Tablelands, the member for Wallsend, the member for Hawkesbury, the member for The Entrance and the member for Blacktown. Unfortunately, it is obvious that those members opposite who contributed to debate have their heads well and truly buried in the bunker of their private golf courses. The community sporting organisations across the Shellharbour electorate and across New South Wales should not have to wait for desperately needed sporting infrastructure funding because they live in electorates not deemed worthy by this tired Liberal Government.

It is not a whinge, as the member for Northern Tablelands has said. This is not about whinging. We have suffered through almost 12 years of this Government not caring about community sporting infrastructure in the Shellharbour electorate because it is not a marginal Liberal electorate. We have all seen the sports rorts from this tired, unsophisticated, old Government. This is a government that has been so busy wasting money on rorts, pork-barrelling and jobs for mates that it forgot about the children of Shellharbour and the Illawarra regions doing it tough on weekends. They are playing sport on substandard sports fields and getting dressed in disgusting change rooms. It is more likely it did not forget; it just does not care about the people in the Shellharbour electorate. It does not care about anyone else but itself. It is all smoke and mirrors from this Government, but its tricks are old and the public has seen through them. The public has seen enough of the pork-barrelling and the waste.

The residents of Shellharbour are fed up with the blatant and completely unfair distribution of taxpayer funds across New South Wales over the past 12 years. They are sick to death of missing out on fair funding, and rightly so. Their taxes are being wasted to prop up this incompetent Government. I will continue to fight and I know that my colleagues in all our communities will continue to fight. I assure every one of my residents of the

Shellharbour community, the community groups and the local businesses that they will get a fair go under a Labor government led by Chris Minns. Labor is ready to govern in New South Wales. We will end the rorts and the waste and we will ensure there is no more pork-barrelling across New South Wales when it comes to the fair and even distribution of funds for sporting facilities in each and every one of our electorates.

I can remember the member for Kiama doing a victory lap with his arms in the air and talking about his gold-plated sporting facilities when just over the electorate boundary it was like stepping back into the 1940s with fences falling down, no doors on toilet cubicles, no seats on toilets, no wash basins, people living in containers and uninhabitable canteens that are rat- and cockroach-ridden. Kids turn up to play sport, and they are playing sport against teams from other electorates, who turn up to sporting fields within the Shellharbour electorate and shake their heads in disgust. How do Government members think the families and the kids who are playing on those fields feel when they go to places like Kiama, Warrindah, Terrigal, Dubbo, or the Northern Tablelands and see gold-plated sporting facilities that are available in Liberal-held marginal seats? We know it is pork-barrelling. I assure the House that those rorts will end under a Labor government led by Chris Minns. I look forward to March 2023 when those types of rorts and pork-barrelling finally come to an end.

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

Motion agreed to.

UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales) (13:11): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Congratulates the Dubbo branch of the University of the Third Age (U3A), which recently celebrated its thirty-first birthday.
- (2) Acknowledges U3A is volunteer run and provides important learning and social opportunities for our older citizens.
- (3) Recognises the Dubbo branch boasts 340 active members and runs an astonishing 33 classes for people from all walks of life and education levels.
- (4) Commends all U3A members across the Dubbo electorate and New South Wales for their commitment to lifelong learning.

I congratulate the Dubbo branch of the University of the Third Age [U3A], which recently celebrated its thirtieth-plus birthday because COVID-19 hampered its thirtieth birthday celebrations. Recently I was with the Dubbo group. There is a fantastic group in Mudgee, which also has a new home. I congratulate the Dubbo branch and acknowledge that U3A is run by volunteers and does an amazing job for all people in all communities across New South Wales. I move:

That the question be now put.

Motion agreed to.

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

Motion agreed to.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Congratulations to volunteers of the University of the Third Age Dubbo branch for receiving the final motion of support in this term of Parliament.

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

Announcements

THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER: I have been requested by more than one member to don the wig. As I said at the beginning of my term, I have decided not to do so. The wig was last worn over 27 years ago by Speaker Rozzoli. It may well be that the next Speaker chooses to wear the wig, but I am happy to bring in my little friend today in honour of the member for Lane Cove. Props are allowed occasionally in the Chamber.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I welcome to the gallery guests of the member for Ryde, his mother Josephine Dominello, who makes delicious muffins; his sister, Maria Olivesi; his sister, Catherine Gillies; and his niece, Charlotte Gillies. I extend a warm welcome to the gallery to my guest, Christine Kay, who is on the executive of my local conference. I welcome to the Chamber staff from the Environment Protection Authority Strategic Coordination Unit and members from the Environment Youth Advisory Council, in particular

Jasmine Cook, Jessica Muir, Jaleel Albaf and her guardian, Tamanna Anand, Emily Rose and parent Jane Rose, Nicholas Chambers, Lotte Weber, Evan Ademovic and Lily-Anne Chapman, guests of the member for Manly. I also welcome to the gallery the Lord Mayor of Newcastle, Nuatali Nelmes, guest of the member for Swansea and member for Newcastle.

I acknowledge John and Kate Cunningham, guests of the member for Hawkesbury. I acknowledge Seb McDonagh and Jody Lindbeck, guests of the member for Wagga Wagga. I acknowledge Ben and Felicia Nash, guests of the member for Monaro. I also acknowledge Lauren Finlayson, Sophie Paterson and Cherice Anquetil from Lake Macquarie Nature School, guests of the member for Lake Macquarie. I welcome Margaret Meagher from Hello Koalas, Chris and Trish Denny and Alan and Jeanette Hyde, guests of the member for Port Macquarie. I am informed that former, and very entertaining, member Mr Adrian Piccoli is in the gallery. I understand that he may be looking for a house in St Ives, which is in my electorate. I give him a very warm welcome back to the Chamber. We do miss him.

Announcements

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS

The SPEAKER: I inform the House that one of my staff members as well as the Premier's photographer have been authorised to take still photographs on a pool basis from the members' doors and the gallery.

Committees

STANDING ORDERS AND PROCEDURE COMMITTEE

Reports

The SPEAKER: I table report No. 8/57 of the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee entitled *Modernisation and reform of practices and procedures: Final report*, dated November 2022. I order that the report be printed.

Question Time

HEALTH SYSTEM

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (14:22): My question is directed to the Premier. A recent heart attack patient was stuck in the emergency department at Blacktown Hospital for eight hours waiting for a room, as lack of staff meant they could not monitor him. Meanwhile, 35 Blacktown Hospital emergency department nurses have left in the past 12 months and 35 have left Westmead. Given people are waiting longer than ever after calling an ambulance, waiting longer than ever in the back of an ambulance, and waiting longer than ever for treatment, does the Premier believe there is a crisis in our health system?

Mr Brad Hazzard: There certainly is not. It's the best health system in the country by a long shot.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:23): I acknowledge Adrian Piccoli. He is looking a lot younger these days. I am looking a lot older. Good to see him. I hope he is doing well. In relation to the question, it is as the health Minister said. He should not have been put on a call because he was speaking the absolute truth. We have the strongest health system in the country, hands down. That did not just happen; it is because year after year the Liberal-Nationals invested where Labor did not. We invested right across the board, including in this year's record \$33 billion health budget—10,000 more nurses, doctors and allied health professionals.

That is why during the pandemic—a one-in-100-year pandemic—New South Wales stayed more open and more free than anywhere else in the country. That was no accident. The Labor Opposition raised the topic of ambulances. The Government has invested in more paramedics than ever before in the history of the State. Some \$11 billion will be invested in health infrastructure over the next four years. Our health workforce has increased by 29 per cent while the population has increased by 13 per cent. Hospitals that are being built or that have been delivered across the State include Nepean, John Hunter, Bankstown, Tweed—

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: —Cowra, Shellharbour, Campbelltown, Ryde, Shoalhaven, St George, Wagga Wagga, Blacktown, Westmead, Wyong, Muswellbrook and Royal North Shore. From metropolitan Sydney to regional New South Wales, never before has there been such an investment not just in our hospitals but in our frontline health workers as well, and the Opposition knows that.

The SPEAKER: Order! I will put members on calls to order if they continue to interject. I call the member for Prospect to order for the first time.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We can do that because the Liberals and The Nationals manage money well. That is why Labor closed all the maternity units.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: That is why Labor closed all the maternity units across the State. Labor closed 37 maternity units, including in Ballina, Cessnock, Cowra, Crookwell, West Wyalong, Wellington, Hay and Yass.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Those opposite closed 2,000 hospital beds while the New South Wales population grew by more than one million people.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: That is why we are providing record investment in frontline health workers, including more nurses and doctors across the board and more hospitals to give the best health care to every single person across this great State.

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

FIRST HOME BUYERS

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote) (14:26): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on the greatest threat to first home buyers in New South Wales?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:26): Labor.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 128. Questions cannot request an expression of opinion. Standing Order 128 (3) (a) is very clear on that. I suggest that the question from the member for Heathcote is asking the Premier for an opinion rather than anything based on fact.

The SPEAKER: I do not uphold the point of order. The Premier will continue.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: One week has passed since the Liberal-Nationals Government legislated our historic First Home Buyer Choice scheme. It is a nation-leading policy that will ensure young families across New South Wales are able to achieve the great Australian dream of getting the keys to their very first home. It is all about choice. As I have said to people across New South Wales, go and check out the first home buyer calculator on the Service NSW website. Since we passed that legislation last week, the hits to that calculator have gone through the roof. Over 7,000 people have typed in addresses since last Thursday. Families like Chloe and Derek from Riverstone are taking advantage of this scheme. Labor wants to stand in the way. Labor wants every single first home buyer across this State to pay stamp duty.

Based on modelling, two-thirds of eligible first home buyers purchasing a home are expected to choose the smaller annual property fee rather than pay tens of thousands of dollars up-front in stamp duty. Under reasonable assumptions, if they bought a \$1 million house and sold it 10 years later, which is around the median period, the annual property payments over 10 years would be \$19,000 in present value compared with \$40,000 in up-front stamp duty. That is a saving of over \$20,000 to first home buyers. The NSW Labor Party does not want first home buyers to obtain that saving of \$20,000. The NSW Labor Party wants to add 2½ years, which is the time it takes for every first home buyer to get into the property market. That is incredibly disappointing, because we know that owning a home is one of the best ways that families can set themselves up for the long term. [*Extension of time*]

We know that owning a home helps provide people with financial security, and our policy will bring down the substantial barrier of stamp duty for first home buyers across the State. It is not just our stamp duty reform—

[*An Opposition member interjected.*]

There he sits. There is Potts Point Park, Mr Harbourside Mansion, slumlord of New South Wales. There he sits in his Potts Point palace.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order: The Premier is directing his latest remarks at the member for Keira, which is an infringement of Standing Order 73. He cannot refer to members as "slumlords" simply because they own a property.

The SPEAKER: It is not a breach of Standing Order 73. I ask the Premier to direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: He's the closest thing to Malcolm Turnbull in this place. The member for Keira sits in his Potts Point palace, Dom Pérignon in one hand and iPhone 35 in the other.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order—

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

Mr Greg Warren: It is Standing Order 129. The Premier has moved well beyond the relevance of the question that was put to him. I ask that he be brought back to the specifics of the question.

The SPEAKER: The Premier has been directly relevant to this point.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The member for Keira is tweeting out to the masses, "Let them pay stamp duty." That is the difference between the Liberal-Nationals Coalition and Labor. We believe in freedom and choice. We want to drive opportunity and prosperity across the State, whereas Labor members stand in the way of every young family across New South Wales getting the opportunity that each of them had. Opposition members do not own just their own property, they own multiple investment properties. They want to lock out young people across New South Wales from getting the keys to the great Australian dream. Our policy will transform lives by providing security for families across New South Wales. Only the Liberals and The Nationals have a positive plan to set up our State for success for generations to come.

HEALTH SERVICES

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (14:32): My question is directed to the Premier. As the Health Services Union delegates in the gallery today know only too well, over the past five years the Government has cut the number of hospital beds by 360, and in the last quarter 76,000 people left emergency departments without getting treated. Given that, why will the Premier not acknowledge that there is a crisis in the New South Wales health system?

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (14:33): The member for Keira does not even know what the Health budget is. Members might recall that at the last election when the member for Keira was the shadow Treasurer he was asked one question: What is the Health budget? He did not know. What did Labor do? They made him the shadow Minister for Health. They moved him out of Treasury. He does not know the Health budget. He will fit right in being Labor's health spokesperson. He talks about closing hospital beds.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: We have completed over 180 health capital projects since coming to office while Labor was closing hospital beds across the State. We have invested close to \$12 billion in health infrastructure projects over the next four years. Whilst Opposition members are wholly owned subsidiaries of the union movement, the Government stands up for every single person across the State, not just union members. That is why New South Wales leads the country on wages policy. And when it comes to frontline investment—whether in health services or education—that is why, right across the board, New South Wales is in the strongest position in the country. Every decision that we made to get us into the great state that we are in today was opposed by members opposite.

I still remember going up to see the member for Tweed with the Minister for Health after the budget in 2017 to announce a new Tweed hospital. We met with doctors and nurses up there, who were asking for a refurbished hospital. The health Minister and I, as the then Treasurer, were able to sit down and say, "You know what we can do because of the way that we manage money in this State? We can build a new hospital for the people of Tweed." And that is what we did. Guess what Labor did? They opposed it because of their development mates. That hospital is soon to be opened; I think the open days are about to start. Every person in Tweed knows that the hospital would not have been built but for the member for Tweed, who is a tireless and strong advocate for his area and a person who does not complain. That is why only the Liberals and The Nationals can transform health because Labor stands in the way of quality health care for every single person across this State.

REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (14:36): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Regional New South Wales. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on how the Liberal-Nationals Government is delivering major infrastructure projects for the people of regional New South Wales?

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (14:36): I thank the member for Coffs Harbour for his question. When I think about members who deliver big projects for their electorates, I think about the member for Coffs Harbour because he is delivering the Coffs Harbour Bypass, which will revolutionise the way people travel on the Pacific Highway. Once that project is complete, people will be able to travel on the Pacific Highway all the way from Hexham to the Queensland border and there will not be a set of traffic lights that people will have to travel through.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: This is game-changing infrastructure that is being delivered under the Liberals and The Nationals in government. The last four years have been busy for this Government. We have been building big, bold infrastructure projects right across this State. Through our hard work and good management, we have delivered big wins for the people of regional New South Wales. I will not go through every project today because that would take me weeks, but I will highlight a few for the benefit of the House. In the far west of the State a once-in-a-generation program is the Silver City and the Cobb highways. The Government is sealing those two roads. The impact of those changes being made is impossible to understand. If members have never travelled to that part of the State, they would not understand the value of those road projects for those communities.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: I refer the House to Mia, the owner of the Packsaddle Roadhouse. When asked about the completion of the sealing of Silver City Highway to Tibbooburra, she said:

We can't believe it's actually finished. We're so excited. It has opened up a whole new tourist destination and much-needed boost for all the small businesses and tourism operators out here.

To locals it is more than just a road; it is a lifeline that connects them to the rest of the State. That is true for the Newell Highway as well. We are constructing 40 overtaking lanes on that road. It is also true for the Great Western Highway, where our planned upgrades would have saved time, money and lives. Sadly, thanks to Federal Labor, the people of the west will have to keep waiting for that project because, again, Labor has put the city ahead of regional New South Wales. That is what Labor does—it axes projects that are important in our regional communities.

Ms Trish Doyle: Point of order: I think my point of order is under Standing Order 59. The Deputy Premier should stop being irrelevant.

The SPEAKER: The member for Blue Mountains will resume her seat. I call the member for Blue Mountains to order for the first time.

Mr Gurmesh Singh: I seek further information.

The SPEAKER: I grant an extension of two minutes.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: The member for Blue Mountains is trying to silence me on that project. She knows that her community wanted the project, but she wanted to shut it down as well. If this important project was in western Sydney, the Leader of the Opposition would be falling over himself to announce it. He does not understand the project because he does not leave Kogarah. If he left Kogarah and he listened to people in western New South Wales, he would put a project like this on his radar. This morning I was at the AgDay breakfast, which was a great time for members opposite to show that they support the bush. It was no surprise that the only two shadow Ministers were in attendance: the shadow Minister for Regional NSW, the Hon. Mick Veitch; and the shadow Minister for corporate hospitality, the member for Coogee. One is a great advocate for the regions, and the other is a great advocate for free food and drink. I hope she enjoyed it.

Dr Marjorie O'Neill: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 73. I actually own a farm. I have grown up in the country and I know how to muster cattle. If the Deputy Premier wants me to show him how to castrate them, I can do that as well.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Coogee will resume her seat. The Clerk will stop the clock.

[Members interjected.]

The SPEAKER: The member for Coogee is entitled to take a point of order but not in that way. I call the member for Coogee to order for the third time. The member is perilously close to being removed from the Chamber on the last day of this Parliament. The member will cease interjecting.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Government members will turn up for our farmers. I will see how that plays out for the Opposition. Whether or not it is breakfast, we will turn up for our friends, unlike those opposite. On 2GB this

morning the Leader of the Opposition called the Hon. Mick Veitch a good mate. Well, if that is how he treats his mates then I would rather stay an enemy of his. I say to the Leader of the Opposition to tell us where he stands. What infrastructure projects is he going to cut in the bush? What projects and what hospitals is he going to cut? Those programs are important for regional New South Wales, and the Liberals and The Nationals will continue to deliver.

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

HEALTH SYSTEM

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (14:43): My question is directed to the Minister for Health.

[Government members interjected.]

Ms PRUE CAR: It might be funny, but it is a very serious question. Given that one in 10 patients spent longer than 21 hours and 16 minutes in the emergency department, the worst recorded in New South Wales history, why did the Minister just yell out that the claims that our health system is in crisis are "bullshit"?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health) (14:43): Because they are. I start by acknowledging the Health Services Union, which does a very good job under Gerard Hayes. I acknowledge all of its members—paramedics, cleaners and allied health staff—who do an incredible job. I thank them for that. As to the broader issue of health, just because Mr Minns says that something is a fact does not make it a fact. Having listened to him, I can guarantee that more often than not when he says it is a fact, it is not a fact.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: I could take multiple points of order, but my point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. That is independent health data; it is not the Minister's data.

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough. The Minister will continue.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I thank the member for Keira for taking a point of order. I have been waiting for a question from him for months. I am grateful that he took a point of order. Every other jurisdiction and health Minister in Australia knows that New South Wales leads the nation in health. I will not list them as a matter of courtesy, but other health Ministers come to New South Wales to see how it provides a world-class health system. The drivel about less beds is not true. A Labor member—and I will not bother stating who—found that adding a couple of hundred beds did absolutely nothing. If that is the way Labor members think they can run government, they have to be kidding themselves. I know that the spin doctors with Mr Minns are saying, "We have to do something to show that we are good at health," because Labor did not do that last time around. Some 16 years of Labor Government saw the health system driven into the ground—

Dr Hugh McDermott: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Minister will resume his seat.

[Interruption]

The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Ku-ring-gai will stop telling me to stop the clock. I will hear the point of order.

Dr Hugh McDermott: That is a good ruling. My point of order is taken under Standing Order 75. The Minister should refer to the member by his correct title.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: The short answer is that if the New South Wales community wants to go back to the dark days of 16 years of a Labor government not building any new hospitals, closing beds and sacking staff, then vote for One-minute Minns. That is about the amount of time that he has spent trying to work out health policies. He has no idea.

Mr Ryan Park: You've got no idea. You haven't listened to enough health workers or patients.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I was just about to say that the member for Keira is not so bad, but he is trying to win today. That is all right; I love him dearly.

FINANCIAL INTEGRITY

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (14:47): My question is addressed to the Treasurer. Will the Treasurer update the House on the importance of financial integrity for the good governance of New South Wales?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (14:47): I certainly can. I acknowledge one of the hardest-working and most dedicated members of Parliament in the entire House.

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

Mr MATT KEAN: She is an outstanding parliamentarian in New South Wales and certainly one of the best to ever have served the Holsworthy electorate. Speaking of good officials in government, I also acknowledge the Mayor of Newcastle, who is in the Chamber today. It is great to finally see a strong voice for Newcastle in the Chamber. The member for Holsworthy asked a great question because she understands the importance of financial integrity, which is at the core of this Government. That is why last night we gave unprecedented powers to the Auditor-General that it requested so that it could follow the dollar. That is important to ensure that the public can have confidence in the direction the State is going. Let us follow the dollar from Chris Minns to Huang Xiangmo's acolyte James Zhao, who is the director of a Chinese communist front organisation.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 75, Standing Order 129 and Standing Order 73. Firstly, the Treasurer should refer to the Opposition leader by his title or electorate.

The SPEAKER: I uphold that part of the point of order.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Secondly, the Treasurer is not dealing with the financial integrity of the State when by referring to the person who is in a photo with him.

The SPEAKER: I will hear further on that point.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Thirdly, he is about to impute improper motives and personal reflections on the Opposition leader.

The SPEAKER: I will not rule pre-emptively. If the Minister does that, then another point of order can be taken.

Mr MATT KEAN: Members opposite are upset because I have documents that prove that James Zhao was a business partner with the Minns family business.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: I am not yet satisfied that the Treasurer has crossed the line, but I am listening intently. I counsel the Treasurer not to overstep the mark.

Mr Ryan Park: You are not satisfied that that should not be dealt with under Standing Order 73, substantive motion?

The SPEAKER: I have just ruled. I am listening intently, and I have asked the Treasurer not to overstep the mark.

Mr Ryan Park: I do not think that you have to listen more. The Treasurer has already said it.

The SPEAKER: The member will resume his seat.

Mr MATT KEAN: Financial integrity matters. We have given the Auditor-General unprecedented "follow the dollar" powers, which are important to ensure that the public can have confidence that their money is going where it is intended. [*Extension of time*]

James Zhao was in the Minns family business when he was employed in the electorate office of the member for Kogarah. We think integrity matters.

Mr Ryan Park: Point of order: My point of order is under Standing Order 73. Let me be clear, we are happy to debate integrity. We will talk about their 12 crooks at ICAC in the first term of their government.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock. I am happy to hear the point of order of the member for Keira.

Mr Ryan Park: My point of order is under Standing Order 73. I said that straightaway.

The SPEAKER: I am not satisfied that the Treasurer has overstepped Standing Order 73. I counsel him not to go any further.

Mr MATT KEAN: We have passed the follow the dollar laws and we have fully funded ICAC because we believe in integrity in government. The Leader of the Opposition does not like integrity.

Mr Greg Warren: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 74 (1) and (2).

The SPEAKER: Did you say Standing Order 73?

Mr Greg Warren: No, I said Standing Order 74 (1) and (2). The Treasurer is being disorderly and flouting your ruling. You have been very clear and straight with him.

The SPEAKER: I will now uphold the previous point of order taken under Standing Order 73 and the direct attack on integrity. I ask the Treasurer to refrain from doing that.

Mr MATT KEAN: Integrity matters, and that is why this side of the House supports it. That is why we funded the ICAC. That is why we support follow the dollar legislation. The Leader of the Opposition does not like that. I am told that Chris Minns has silenced another female whistleblower, like he did to Jodi McKay and the member for Bankstown. But I will leave that to other bodies.

Mr Michael Daley: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer will resume his seat.

Mr Michael Daley: Sit down and listen to the Speaker, Matt. Stop gasbagging. We have had enough of you.

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

Mr Michael Daley: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 73. If the Treasurer keeps it up, I will move that he be not further heard.

The SPEAKER: I could not hear what the Treasurer was saying because of the noise in the Chamber. The Treasurer's time has expired.

WEEDS AND PESTS

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (14:53): My question is directed to the Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales. The Government likes to talk about turbocharging and supercharging everything, which is nice. As an automotive enthusiast, forced induction is nice. I warned three years ago that a flood event would see the spread of Hudson pear into our river system. That has now happened. Where is the turbo when it comes to managing the explosion of weeds and pests in New South Wales before it gets out of control?

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

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales) (14:54): I thank the member for his question. Obviously there have been unprecedented flooding events. It is hard to prepare or create a plan to combat what is happening at the moment. We are working with local councils on forming plans for the future. Some of that will involve raising levees. Some of that will involve taking a different approach to how water is actually thought of in the landscape. Specifically on weeds, the member would be aware there is a regional weed strategy administered by Local Land Services. Hudson pear is one weed in the western region that has had hundreds of thousands of dollars spent on its eradication. There is another plan around that, and a meeting of landowners is scheduled in the not-too-distant future. A couple of meetings were planned but the weather has meant they could not go ahead. To get people to come together, you need be able to get access to them.

The regional weeds plan has been extremely successful. It sees collaboration between councils and county councils. What we need to do better is involve the landowners, and that is what the plan does. We have plans involving cochineal, which is a biological solution to Hudson pear. We have plans around chemical solutions, assisting landowners, and extra staffing. It is all being controlled by Local Land Services from the top level but making sure that every level of government and every single person is involved. We need landowners to have skin in the game. There is no point handing out hundreds of thousands of dollars to people if they do not have that.

The next part of the equation is to make sure we have the people on the ground to help deliver the services. I am committed to that. Beyond that, we have to make sure we wrap around landowners so that they have the opportunity to know the best way forward together with their neighbour and their neighbour's neighbour. In that way, everyone is involved. It is difficult when things are left and there is a sea of Hudson pear. It is cruel, mentally disturbing and very hard to cope with. We are absolutely committed to doing as much as we can to support landowners in this space.

The flooding event will make it very difficult, but we are trying to ring fence where the weed has been and where it can possibly spread to. This Government has led the way on biosecurity of all kinds. We are continuing pest eradication—wild pigs, deer, dogs—at the same time as we are trying to combat one of the biggest weed burdens we will ever see. Hudson pear is one of those weeds, but we are concerned about every area across the

State. We have a big job ahead of us. The funding and support will be there, and it will be managed by the Department of Primary Industries and Local Land Services. I thank the member for his question.

STATE ECONOMY

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (14:56): My question is addressed to the Minister for Enterprise, Investment and Trade. Will the Minister update the House on how the Liberals and The Nationals are supporting businesses to create jobs and grow the economy?

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) (14:57): I thank the member for Terrigal for his question. He is a great supporter of manufacturing businesses on the Central Coast. He will have seen today's announcement under our Jobs Plus Program to support Central Coast manufacturers, like Reinforced Concrete Pipes Australia. The Leader of the Opposition said that we need to bring back manufacturing in New South Wales. He does not seem to be aware we have over 250,000 people working in manufacturing in New South Wales. It is either ignorance or a fantasy on his part, because those factories we went to were not some elaborate simulation.

Over the last 12 years the Liberals and The Nationals have turned around New South Wales. We have built infrastructure the State needs, such as schools, hospitals, roads and rail. We have invested in our communities both in regional areas and the cities. We have delivered revolutionary tax reform, like our first home buyer stamp duty reform, because we understand aspiration. We understand ambition. We want people to be able to build a brighter future for themselves and their families. We have a forward-looking agenda, and we look to the future with hope and optimism for a brighter future for New South Wales.

Ms Kate Washington: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 59, tedious repetition.

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

Ms Kate Washington: We have heard this drivel for 12 long years, and we are tired of it.

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

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: Recently the Leader of the Opposition said he wanted 1,000 manufacturing jobs in New South Wales. We will not be limited by the Leader of the Opposition's small ambition. Today alone we announced 2½ thousand new jobs under our Jobs Plus Program. They are jobs with world-leading companies, like Hollywood's DNEG.

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

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: We believe in highly skilled jobs in this State. DNEG is a world-leading visual effects company.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Maitland has taken a point of order. The Clerk will stop the clock. I warn the member for Port Stephens that she is right on the edge of being removed from the Chamber. I do not want to remove any members today, but one more word from the member for Port Stephens or the member for Cooee will see them removed. What is the member for Maitland's point of order?

Ms Jenny Aitchison: It is Standing Order 129, relevance. Are these 2½ thousand jobs going to be in Australia, in New South Wales or offshore?

The SPEAKER: The member will resume her seat. I call the member for Maitland to order for the second time.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: That is the most ridiculous point of order I have ever heard. DNEG has offices all around the world, and it is setting up in Tech Central here in Sydney. We have built the precincts, we have set the policies, and people from all around the world want to come to New South Wales and experience the great innovation ecosystem we are building here. By the way, DNEG has worked on films such as James Bond, Harry Potter, and *Fast & Furious*. Its first job here in Sydney will be to work on the *Mad Max* prequel. [*Extension of time*]

Our future is so bright in New South Wales that people like Chris Hemsworth want to come to here to work. We are creating the opportunities for world-leading people to come and work on films here in New South Wales. While the Liberals and The Nationals want to look to the future, all Labor wants to do is talk down our State. Those opposite have spent 12 years trying to talk down our State. That is no way to get into government.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order—

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

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: Unfortunately, NSW Labor is like a pack of backwater Tories.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: The member for Swansea has taken a point of order.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: It wants to take New South Wales back to the 1970s.

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

Ms Yasmin Catley: Mr Speaker, I would just like you to—

The SPEAKER: What is your point of order, please?

Ms Yasmin Catley: I am asking you to consider the ruling of Speaker Murray—

The SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Ms Yasmin Catley: I am getting there.

The SPEAKER: The Clerk will stop the clock.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Speaker Murray ruled that members "cannot read verbatim from a text". We would expect the silk over there to be able to answer a question—

The SPEAKER: Thank you. I am satisfied that the Minister is referring to copious notes. The member will resume her seat. The Minister has the call.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: Labor wants to take us back to the 1970s, where the unions run the State, there is no infrastructure and there are higher taxes. That is its aspiration for New South Wales. The member for Bankstown was right: Labor is not ready to govern. All we get under this Leader of the Opposition—

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: It is Standing Order 129. The question relates to what the Government is doing. It is not a way to discuss alternative policies. In fact, it is a breach of your ruling, Mr Speaker. Those opposite cannot use a backdoor mechanism to get around your ruling.

The SPEAKER: The Minister has an additional two minutes. He has had a good go at balance in his answer. I ask him to come back to the leave of the question.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: We are going to build a brighter future for New South Wales. We are not going to be held back by all the dodgy people associated with Labor. All Labor wants is dodgy donations—

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order—

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: —and dodgy candidates and to surround itself with dodgy people.

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

Ms Yasmin Catley: The Minister is getting very close to Standing Order 73. Mr Speaker, I ask you to take note of that.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. I do not uphold the point of order, but I ask the Minister to focus on the Government in his answer.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: Our Government is all about investing in our State, investing in our economy, creating more jobs and building a brighter future for New South Wales.

GRANVILLE BOYS HIGH SCHOOL

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (15:03): My question is directed to the Premier. This morning I met with a teacher who shared that this year Granville Boys High School had over 400 uncovered classes in only five weeks. After 12 years, why has the Government failed to recruit and retain the teachers that our children need?

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:04): We have put record investment in our education system. To the question, we do know that right across the country and a whole range of areas there are

staff shortages. What just came out today? It was the unemployment rate in New South Wales. What was it? Do you know? Does anyone know? Oh, that's right, that would be an economic issue, so you would not know.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The Premier has not had much opportunity to answer but I will hear the point of order. The member should come straight to the point.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Mr Speaker, would you request the Premier to answer the question through the Chair and to stop speaking across the table?

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order. The Premier will direct his comments through the Chair.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: They don't know. But for the Chamber, I will say that it is 3 per cent, the lowest in the country. It is a record low and below the national rate of 3.4 per cent.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: But it is not just that 34,600 new jobs, that tally which is much higher than anywhere else in the country. Compared with pre-COVID, we now have 192,000 more jobs.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Canterbury to order for the third time. She will not be given leeway today.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Participation rates increased to 66.3, with the female participation rate at 62.1.

Ms Julia Finn: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was specifically about uncovered classrooms at Granville Boys High School—400 of them.

The SPEAKER: I ask the Premier to address the issue of Granville Boys High School.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: I will address the question. We put record investments into our education system and our frontline teachers. As a result, we are in a very good position to deal with labour shortages across the country because we invested record amounts in our education system.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Londonderry will remain silent.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: On top of that, with the great reforms from the education Minister of rewarding excellence, we will have the best paid teachers and the highest quality teachers, giving our children the best start in life.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Wollongong to order for the third time. I call the member for Summer Hill to order for the first time. I remind members representing the electorates of Coogee, Canterbury, Port Stephens, Wollongong and South Coast that they are on three calls to order. The member for Wakehurst is on one call to order. I call the member for Shellharbour to order for the second time.

WATER LICENCES

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (15:08): My question is addressed to the Minister for Water. Will the Minister update the House on how the Liberals and The Nationals are securing a brighter future for communities in the Murray-Darling Basin by opposing buybacks for water licences?

Ms Trish Doyle: Sing us a song, Tamworth.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing) (15:08): Yes, sing us a song, piano man. I acknowledge the former Deputy Leader of The Nationals Mr Adrian Piccoli in the gallery. We remember how colourful this fellow was. He lives in Griffith in the southern half of the State, just up the road from the member for Albury. He knows how important water is to our communities and to the agricultural sector on the lower half of the Murray-Darling Basin. First and foremost, I will explain what water buybacks are. It is when the Federal Government buys water licences from farmers. It costs jobs, it costs agricultural production and stops regional growth and economic development. The New South Wales Government's primary objective is to save agriculture; the Federal Government's primary objective is to shut it down. That is the Federal Government stepping into the New South Wales water market and purchasing water rights. It is taking away water that could be used to grow crops and produce food.

We have seen the socioeconomic damage it does to not only communities but also farmers. I checked NSW Labor's policy on water buybacks. I had nothing else to do, so I looked, and there is no policy section on NSW Labor's website. That shows us that they operate in a vacuum. This side of the House has consistently opposed non-strategic buybacks because of the detrimental social and economic impacts they can have on regional

communities. We know that a State Labor government will side with the Federal Government when it looks at water buybacks. We know that NSW Labor will side up with the slippery Greens and will shut down agriculture. Labor does not know what it means to be able to provide food and fibre. Under Labor, they will run farmers off their land. Labor is the scarecrow and there will be blood on the plough. This land has fed a nation. This land has made us proud and, son, when Labor is in control, they will be memories for you now.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Has the Minister completed his answer?

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: No.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. I want to know what the Minister for Environment and Heritage thinks about your water policy.

The SPEAKER: That is not how members take points of order. I call the member for Maitland to order for the third time.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON: Only the Liberals and The Nationals will protect agriculture, healthy rivers, healthy farms and healthy communities come March.

TEACHER SHORTAGES

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown) (15:11): I direct my question to the Premier. Last week teachers and staff at Condell Park High School shared their desperation that teacher vacancies were leading to merged and cancelled classes almost every day. Does the Premier believe there is a crisis in our education system?

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:12): We know, particularly when we talk about merged classes, that we have had over 800,000 sick days since we have been through a pandemic. Members opposite might not be aware of it. They may have missed the past two years, but the Government did not. There are 90,000 teachers in our public schools, the most we have ever had—

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Londonderry will remain silent.

[An Opposition member interjected.]

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: No, they are not.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: —as we have had for student enrolments. Guess what has grown at a greater rate? It is teachers, right across the board, as the Minister for Education in the upper House knows, and as the former education Minister and the former Deputy Leader of The Nationals Adrian Piccoli knew. Whilst Labor closed schools, we have invested record amounts in our schools and in our frontline teachers. We are also paying them more, improving the curriculum, reforming pre-K education, giving every young child across New South Wales one free year of school before kindergarten. What did we see under Labor?

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

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Premier is straying away from the question.

The SPEAKER: I am satisfied the Premier is being relevant.

Ms Yasmin Catley: That is why you are less popular than Matthew Guy.

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: What did Labor leave us? It left us with a \$1 billion maintenance backlog in our schools alone.

Mr Stephen Kamper: That is not true.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Yes, it is. How many schools did Labor close? Was it 30, 40, 50, 70, 80? No, it was 90 schools.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: It is under Standing Order 129. The Premier is not answering the question.

The SPEAKER: The member for Swansea will resume her seat. The Premier may continue. There is no point of order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: Not only that, there was \$1 billion in proposed cuts to the education system. Compare that to the Liberal-Nationals Government, which has made a record investment in every school across New South Wales. We are building more than ever before. That is why we have the strongest education system in the country.

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (15:15): I address my question to the Treasurer. Can the Treasurer update the House on how the Liberal-Nationals Government's record funding delivery for the people of New South Wales is securing a brighter future?

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby—Treasurer, and Minister for Energy) (15:15): I sure can. I thank the dynamic member for Camden for his question. He knows that only the Coalition Government has a plan to deliver for this State and a plan to build a brighter future for everyone in it, Mr Speaker. That stands in stark contrast to the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Speaker, who has no plans, no policies and no ideas.

Mr Ron Hoenig: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Clerk will stop the clock. The Treasurer has hardly begun his answer.

Mr Ron Hoenig: I take a point of order under Standing Order 129. The Treasurer was not asked to contrast anything. He was asked to provide information to the House in accordance with a legitimate question under Standing Order 128. The Treasurer is trying to get around the Speaker's ruling that alternative policies cannot be the basis for questions or answers.

Mr Alister Henskens: To the point of order: Opposition members have made many frivolous, vexatious and interfering interjections and points of order. Mr Speaker, I draw your attention to Standing Order 131 (9) and ask you to use your power to stop the frivolous points of order that have unfortunately contaminated the final question time of the parliamentary term.

The SPEAKER: Members will remain silent. Standing Order 131 (9) is not relevant to the point of order of the member for Heffron, although it relates to other points of order that were frivolous and resulted in members being called to order. Having said that, the member for Heffron took his point of order very early in the Treasurer's response. Making comparisons is not equivalent to asking about alternative policies. I allow Ministers to make certain comparisons so long as they are not laboured or lengthy. The focus of the answer should be on the Government's performance. The Treasurer has hardly begun his answer. I will hear further from him.

Mr MATT KEAN: That was an excellent ruling, Mr Speaker, because the Government is delivering for the people of New South Wales. It has delivered record infrastructure across the State. We have delivered NorthConnex; the WestConnex; the North West Rail Link; the CBD light rail; hundreds of new and upgraded schools; and new and upgraded hospitals across New South Wales. In this year's budget the Government provided a \$112.7 billion pipeline of further infrastructure projects across the State. What have those opposite delivered? Nothing. We have also delivered affordable and accessible child care across New South Wales. We have provided \$5 billion to increase the female participation rate and \$5.8 billion to ensure universal pre-kindergarten so that every child can get the best start in life. That is the biggest reform to our education system in over a century.

We are also delivering for first home buyers. Who stood in the way of first home buyers being able to realise the great Australian dream? The Leader of the Opposition. We are making sure that first home buyers can choose between paying a large up-front stamp duty or a small annual fee, based on their financial circumstances, to ensure that they can access the great Australian dream sooner. What have those opposite delivered? Nothing. We have delivered for the bush with the record \$3.3 billion Regional Growth Fund, which will support regions like the Hunter with projects like hydrogen hubs. I acknowledge the advocacy of the member for Upper Hunter. We have also delivered \$2.4 billion in regional health funding. Record infrastructure spending in the bush was delivered by the Deputy Premier of New South Wales. There has been record spending for the regions.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: It is under Standing Order 59. The Treasurer has referred to the Speaker 17 times in the past two minutes. That is tedious repetition.

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

Mr MATT KEAN: What have those opposite delivered for the regions? Nothing, zero.
[Extension of time]

Ms Anna Watson: Point of order: Before the Treasurer continues with his boring rant, I take a point of order under Standing Order 130. The Treasurer is debating the question rather than answering it. I ask you to direct the Treasurer to answer the question, not debate it.

The SPEAKER: The Treasurer is in order. He may continue.

Mr MATT KEAN: Just because the Opposition does not like our record of delivery, it does not mean that we will not spruik it. We have delivered for the environment by providing 600,000 additional hectares of new national park in New South Wales. We have also delivered our nation-leading Net Zero Plan and our leading Electricity Infrastructure Roadmap to drive down electricity prices, keep the lights on and modernise our electricity system. We have our hydrogen plan to set up regions like the Hunter and the Illawarra because, for Derek Zoolander's benefit, we know the future is green hydrogen, not blue steel. We are delivering the Waratah Super Battery and the Electric Vehicle Strategy in New South Wales. What will the climate deniers opposite deliver? Nothing.

The SPEAKER: The member for Rockdale will cease interjecting.

Mr MATT KEAN: We have done that while ensuring two of the rating agencies have delivered triple-A credit ratings for New South Wales. In fact, we are the only State to have two triple-A credit ratings. We have the lowest unemployment rate, the strongest construction industry and the highest State final demand in the country. Today it was announced that we have the highest ever women's participation rate in the history of New South Wales. Our Government has delivered, and we will continue to deliver because we always put the people of this State first. How many days has it been since the Leader of the Opposition said he would deliver his 100-day plan? Has it been 100 days? Has it been 200 days? Has it been 300 days? No, it has been 531 days, 14 hours and 20 minutes, Mr Speaker.

GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (15:23): I direct my question to the Premier. New South Wales emergency departments are so overcrowded that one in 10 patients are simply forced to leave, the education system does not have enough teachers to ensure that our students can even go to classes, and the cost-of-living crisis will see energy prices double in the next two years. Why does the Government persistently deny those problems and instead impose on the people of New South Wales more privatisations, low wages and a brand-new forever land tax?

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

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:24): The indisputable fact is that New South Wales is a much better place today than it was under Labor—a \$35 billion infrastructure backlog, the worst performing economy in the country, the State in its worst financial position, a conga line of corruption. That is what we had for those 16 long years, with its corruption quota. Those opposite are all getting very defensive about it.

Ms Yasmin Catley: Point of order: I do not know what point of order I am taking, but I can say that 14 members from the other side went to ICAC. That is why we are even here.

The SPEAKER: The member for Swansea is not taking a point of order.

Ms Yasmin Catley: I did not know which point of order it was.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Swansea to order for the third time. The Premier has the call.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: What did this Government deliver? We delivered the strongest health system in the country, hands down. The Leader of the Opposition raised cost-of-living measures in his question. What measures do we have in New South Wales? We have provided over \$7 billion in cost-of-living support to go towards every single person in this State. The Commonwealth Government provided around the same amount for the entire country. That is how the Liberal-Nationals Government is different. Our strong financial management—prior to the drought, prior to the fires, prior to the pandemic, and prior to flood after flood—meant that we could stand side by side with every single person across New South Wales during one of the most difficult periods in our State's history. Every step of the way, every measure was opposed by Labor. Those opposite have no plan, no policies, no principles and no vision for a brighter New South Wales. That is the difference. They oppose privatisation and then they go out on the weekend and spend the proceeds.

Ms Yasmin Catley: It's not your money.

Ms Jenny Aitchison: Point of order—

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

Ms Jenny Aitchison: The point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. In my electorate, one in four people leave the emergency department and I really want the Premier—

The SPEAKER: The member for Maitland will resume her seat. That is not how members take a point of order.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: It might not be my money, but under Labor there is no money. Those opposite do not make the tough decisions to take our State forward. They oppose our position on wages. They oppose asset recycling. Every single means that we have set up our State for success has been opposed by Labor. Only a Liberal-Nationals Government can set up our State for future success.

REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence) (15:27): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on how the Liberals and The Nationals will deliver a brighter future for the people of New South Wales?

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (15:27): Yes, I can. I thank the member for Clarence for his question and I also thank him for the work that he has done for the past decade. I acknowledge in the gallery the former deputy leader of the NSW Nationals. I think he left in 2017.

Ms Trish Doyle: Come back, Adrian.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Those opposite were hopeless then, they stood for nothing then, and they have not changed. They do not care about the regions today. I want to take this time to talk about the future. Only the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government has a vision for the people of regional New South Wales. It is a bold vision that is designed to ensure that our regions reach their full potential.

The SPEAKER: The member for Macquarie Fields will remain silent.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: It is about turbocharging growth and opportunity in the regions. Over the next few months, I will be travelling the State sharing this vision with the people of regional New South Wales. I will be travelling up and down the Pacific Highway—which we upgraded—and I will be telling the people about what we stand for. I will be travelling up and down the Newell Highway, talking to people about the things that matter to them in regional New South Wales. I will be travelling up and down the Cobb Highway and talking to the people in the Far West of the State about the things that matter to them in regional New South Wales. I will be talking to regional voters about the things that matter to them. I will be reminding them, "You can't trust Labor." They cannot trust Labor to deliver for the regions. You can't care about Kempsey when you don't leave Kogarah.

Ms Trish Doyle: Point of order—

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Those opposite cannot care about the country when they have killed off Country Labor. They cannot speak for the regions when they speak to the regions.

The SPEAKER: The member for Blue Mountains has the call.

Ms Trish Doyle: The point of order is taken under Standing Order 73. W-T-A-F, Tooley. Go home.

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

Mr PAUL TOOLE: Our vision for the regions is ambitious, and we know what the regions are capable of. The people of New South Wales have a choice at the next election between a Government that delivers for the regions or an Opposition that barely recognises the regions exist. They have a choice between vision and vanity. We have assembled a team of local champions, MPs and candidates who are going to fight for their communities. We are not content to hold ground. The people of this State deserve a government that will represent them. I will tell you this: We will win in Clarence, in Cootamundra, in Tamworth, in Tweed, in Monaro and in the Northern Tablelands.

Mr Stephen Kamper: Point of order—

The SPEAKER: The member for Rockdale rises on a point of order.

Mr PAUL TOOLE: We will continue to fight for Coffs Harbour, Dubbo and the Upper Hunter. We will have candidates running in Oxley and Myall Lakes—

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Premier will resume his seat.

[Interruption]

I call the Deputy Premier to order for the first time. I remind Ministers that when I ask them to sit down following a member taking a point of order, they are to resume their seat. The member for Canterbury will come to order. I remind the member for Canterbury that she is on three calls to order.

WAGGA WAGGA ELECTORATE HEALTH SERVICES

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (15:31): My question is directed to the Minister for Health—and I wish him good health after today. The people of Griffith have been assured their soon-to-open radiotherapy centre will offer patients treatments with no out-of-pocket expenses, as happens throughout regional New South Wales in public facilities. What action is the Government taking to make sure that people undergoing treatments in Wagga Wagga receive the same promise?

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health) (15:31): I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for his question. I indicate that at present we are negotiating with the Riverina Cancer Care Centre. Suffice to say, the member's representations have been well and truly on the radar, and I understand the need for the service to be in Wagga and to look after the people of Wagga in a similar way to what is occurring in Griffith. But I also understand the need to get the balance right so that the taxpayers are not unfairly burdened, so it is important that we negotiate carefully with the Riverina Cancer Care Centre. For commercial reasons, I cannot say much more, but I will certainly say that we are doing all we can to get the service for Wagga Wagga. I will say that the Government has done a lot of work in Wagga Wagga: nearly half a billion dollars for the new Wagga Wagga hospital; new ambulance stations in Ardlethan, Lockhart and Wagga Wagga; the \$50 million new Tumut hospital—

Dr Joe McGirr: And ambulance station.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: —and ambulance station. So our Government is certainly working with the member to achieve what we need to achieve. Having answered that substantive question—and I again thank the member for Wagga Wagga for the question—I note that Lachlan Kennedy last night expressed concern that apparently he had not been mentioned in the list of journalists I acknowledged. So I acknowledge Lachlan Kennedy. Since I am doing that, I should also acknowledge that this is my very last question time. Even though you have given me a razz up from time to time—a necessary razz up, I can say, on behalf of democracy—I acknowledge all the journos in this place. He is a bit "how do you do" sometimes but I mention Chris Maher at Channel 7. Kate Aubusson, Lucy Cormack and Lucy Carrol are all absolutely good journalists—and never down in the mouth like Chris. Angira Bharadwaj from the Telegraph does a great job. Rose Brennan saw the light and bolted, as members know. I love Rose Brennan. She is now looking after little kids at school.

Finally, I want everybody to be very cautious because just yesterday Dr Kerry Chant announced an amber situation now in our hospitals. Please understand that we are facing quite a dramatic increase in COVID numbers. Unfortunately, a peak in the current COVID wave probably will not occur until early to mid-December, which is a little later than we thought. I suggest that if people are going somewhere with a bunch of people they do not know and they are out in a public place, it might be a good idea to wear a mask. If people are on a bus, it is definitely a good idea to wear a mask. Just be very cautious.

If people think it is not serious, a good indicator is the number of people in Health who are off work—it has gone from 458 the week before last to 1,089 today, so it is pretty serious. People should take it seriously and do all the things that we have talked about before: washing hands and wearing a mask when out and about. My final comment is to be cautious. We are not going to go mandatory, but please be cautious. With that, I indicate that that was my last question in question time for 32 years. I thank everybody in this place on both sides of the Parliament. I love you all—I genuinely do. Thank you.

Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.

The SPEAKER: Let it be recorded in *Hansard* that there was substantial applause from an upstanding Chamber—and the Speaker did not stop it.

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (15:35): My question is addressed to the Premier. Having made New South Wales number one again, will he update the House on how the Liberals and Nationals are transforming New South Wales?

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:36): I can do that because we know that at the next election there is a clear choice between the Liberals and The Nationals, who want to take our State forward, and the Labor Party, which has not changed one bit. It is still owned by the unions, with a bloated bureaucracy,

and is still arguing for taxes and taking our State backwards to the dark days of higher unemployment, less opportunity and less prosperity for the people of New South Wales. When we came to office in 2011, we transformed the finances and we rebuilt the infrastructure, which we have continued to do.

Over the next four years \$112 billion will be invested in infrastructure, which means more metros, more rail, more roads, more hospitals and more schools—the things that make a difference to people's lives. Ultimately, that is the difference between the Liberal-Nationals Coalition and Labor. That is why members on this side of the House will not just win every single Government seat, we will come after each of Labor's. Londonderry is gone. On the night, the first to fall will be Londonderry and then the coast will come in. The member for The Entrance has been in this place for way too long. They still think he is the janitor.

Mr Stephen Kamper: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 74. I ask the Speaker to intervene to avoid quarrel.

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET: The member for Rockdale will be gone at about 9.30 p.m. on the night. The values of the Liberals and The Nationals—opportunity; freedom; prosperity; less government, not more; and getting out of the way to allow people and families across the State to flourish—are the great values of the people of New South Wales. It is our values that have turned the State around and that will take New South Wales to even greater heights for every single person across our State.

Government members: Four more years! Four more years! Four more years!

The SPEAKER: It is the end of question time. I will let all that pass.

Documents

TABLING OF PAPERS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I table the following papers:

- (1) Reports for the year ended 30 June 2022 of—TAFE NSW; Investment NSW; NSW Institute of Sport; Office of Sport; Venues NSW; Combat Sports Authority; and State Sporting Venues Authority.
- (2) On behalf of Mr Dominic Perrottet:
Reports for the year ended 30 June 2022 of—Department of Premier and Cabinet; Public Service Commission; Parliamentary Counsel's Office; and New South Wales Electoral Commission.
- (3) On behalf of Mr Paul Toole:
Reports for the year ended 30 June 2022 of—Department of Regional NSW entitled *Annual report on the Administration of Agricultural Statutory Authorities*; Regional Growth NSW Development Corporation; New South Wales Crime Commission; and NSW Police Force.
- (4) On behalf of Mr Matt Kean:
Reports for the year ended 30 June 2022 of—The New South Wales Treasury (containing the reports of Alpha Distribution Ministerial Holding Corporation; Electricity Assets Ministerial Holding Corporation; Epsilon Distribution Ministerial Holding Corporation; Electricity Transmission Ministerial Holding Corporation; Liability Management Ministerial Corporation; Electricity Retained Interest Corporation - Ausgrid; Electricity Retained Interest Corporation - Endeavour Energy; Roads Retained Interest Pty Ltd and Restart NSW; Social and Affordable Housing NSW Fund; Electricity Retained Interest Corporation - Ausgrid (ERIC-A) Fund; Electricity Retained Interest Corporation - Endeavour (ERIC-E) Fund; NSW Generations (Debt Retirement) Fund; NSW Generations (Community Services & Facilities) Fund; New South Wales Treasury Corporation; SAS Trustee Corporation (containing a separate report for the SAS Trustee Corporation Pooled Fund); Trustees of the Parliamentary Contributory Superannuation Fund; Essential Energy (with Statement of Corporate Intent); Forestry Corporation of New South Wales (with Statement of Corporate Intent); Hunter Water Corporation (with Statement of Corporate Intent); Port Authority of New South Wales (with Statement of Corporate Intent); Sydney Water Corporation (with Statement of Corporate Intent); Landcom (with Statement of Corporate Intent); Water NSW (with Statement of Corporate Intent); Transport Asset Holding Entity of New South Wales (Volumes One and Two) (with Statement of Corporate Intent); and Insurance and Care NSW (Volumes One and Two).
- (5) On behalf of Mr Brad Hazzard:
Reports for the year ended 30 June 2022 of—Ministry of Health (incorporating the Financial Statements of Public Health Organisations under its control) - Volumes One to Three; Health Care Complaints Commission; Combined New South Wales Health Professional Councils (Volumes One and Two); New South Wales Health Foundation; Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency; National Health Practitioner Ombudsman and Privacy Commissioner; Administrator of the National Health Funding Pool; Mental Health Review Tribunal; and Mental Health Commission of New South Wales.
- (6) On behalf of Mr Mark Speakman:
Reports for the year ended 30 June 2022 of—Anti-Discrimination Board of New South Wales; Department of Communities and Justice (Volume One to Three); Judicial Commission of New South Wales; Law Society of New South Wales, incorporating annual financial statements of the Public Purpose Fund and the Legal Practitioners Fidelity Fund; Committees of the Law Society of New South Wales; Legal Aid New South Wales; Legal Profession Admission Board; New South Wales Bar Association; NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal; NSW Crown Solicitor's Office; NSW Trustee and

Guardian, incorporating report of the Public Guardian; Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions; Office of the Legal Services Commissioner; Public Defenders; and New South Wales Law Reform Commission.

- (7) On behalf of Mr Rob Stokes:

Reports for the year ended 30 June 2022 of—Place Management NSW (including the report for Luna Park Reserve Trust); Infrastructure NSW; Greater Cities Commission; Department of Transport for NSW (Volumes One and Two); Sydney Trains (Volumes One and Two); NSW TrainLink (Volumes One and Two); Sydney Metro; and State Transit Authority of New South Wales (Volumes One and Two).

- (8) On behalf of Mr Victor Dominello:

Reports for the year ended 30 June 2022 of—NSW Architects Registration Board; Board of Surveying and Spatial Information; Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal; New South Wales Government Telecommunications Authority; Rental Bond Board; and State Insurance Regulatory Authority.

- (9) On behalf of Mr Anthony Roberts:

Reports for the year ended 30 June 2022 of—Department of Planning and Environment; Hunter and Central Coast Development Corporation; Property NSW; Sydney Olympic Park Authority; Teacher Housing Authority of New South Wales; Waste Assets Management Corporation; Independent Planning Commission; Natural Resources Commission; New South Wales Aboriginal Housing Office; and Cemeteries and Crematoria NSW.

- (10) On behalf of Mr David Elliott:

Report of Office of Transport Safety Investigations for the year ended 30 June 2022.

- (11) On behalf of Mr Kevin Anderson:

Reports for the year ended 30 June 2022 of—Cobar Water Board; Dams Safety NSW; Dumaresq-Barwon Border Rivers Commission; Murray-Darling Basin Authority; Greyhound Welfare and Integrity Commission; Racing NSW; Greyhound Racing New South Wales; Harness Racing New South Wales; Valuer General NSW; Art Gallery of New South Wales Trust; Australian Museum Trust; Trustees of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences; State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales; Library Council of New South Wales; Sydney Living Museums; and Sydney Opera House Trust and Destination NSW.

Report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled *Licence compliance under the Water Industry Competition Act 2006 (NSW), Report to Minister, Water – Annual Compliance Report*, dated October 2022.

- (12) On behalf of Dr Geoff Lee:

Reports for the year ended 30 June 2022 of—Serious Offenders Review Council; and NSW State Parole Authority.

- (13) On behalf of Ms Steph Cooke:

Reports for the year ended 30 June 2022 of—New South Wales Rural Fire Service; New South Wales State Emergency Service; Fire and Rescue NSW; and Resilience NSW.

- (14) On behalf of Mr James Griffin:

Reports for the year ended 30 June 2022 of—Environment Protection Authority; Zoological Parks Board of New South Wales (trading Taronga Conservation Society Australia); Jenolan Caves Reserve Trust; New South Wales Environmental Trust; Biodiversity Conservation Trust; and Lord Howe Island Board, Heritage Council of New South Wales.

- (15) On behalf of Mr Mark Coure:

Report of Multicultural NSW for the year ended 30 June 2022.

- (16) On behalf of Mr Dugald Saunders:

Reports for the year ended 30 June 2022 of—Administration of Agricultural Statutory Authorities; Animal Research Review Panel; Local Land Services; NSW Food Authority; New South Wales Rural Assistance Authority; Rice Marketing Board; and Veterinary Practitioners Board of New South Wales.

- (17) On behalf of Mr Victor Dominello:

Reports of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal, dated November 2022, entitled *Maximum prices for water transportation services supplied by WaterNSW for the Murray River to Broken Hill Pipeline – Final Determination; Review of WaterNSW's prices for the Murray River to Broken Hill Pipeline – Final Technical Report; Review of Essential water's prices for water and wastewater services in Broken Hill – Final Determination; Review of Essential Water's prices for water and wastewater services in Broken Hill – Final Technical Report; and Review of Essential Water's prices for water and wastewater services in Broken Hill – Final Report*.

PARLIAMENTARY DEPARTMENTS

Reports

The SPEAKER: I table the following annual reports for the year ended 30 June 2022:

- (1) Report of the Department of the Legislative Assembly for year ended 30 June 2022.
- (2) Report of the Department of Parliamentary Services for year ended 30 June 2022.

It is with great pleasure that I table the 2021-22 annual report of the Department of the Legislative Assembly. In the year in which the pandemic continued to present many challenges, this report highlights what the staff of the department did to support members and to ensure the smooth operation of the Chamber. The department's last annual report won an award at the Australasian Reporting Awards for its design and comprehensive presentation of information. This year's report shares the same level of quality and design and evidences the department's tireless efforts to engage and to share information with the public. I encourage members to read the report, which will be published on the website shortly. I order that the reports be printed.

Committees

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE AND ETHICS

Reports

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES: As Chair: By leave: I table the protocol of the Independent Complaints Officer, as required under clause 4 (a) of the resolution to establish an Independent Complaints Officer, passed by the Legislative Assembly on 29 March 2022. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Reports

Mr GREG PIPER: As Chair: I table report No. 12/57 of the Public Accounts Committee entitled *Examination of selected Auditor-General's Financial Audit Reports 2021*, dated November 2022. I move:

That the report be printed.

Motion agreed to.

Motions

STANDING ORDERS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: By leave: I move:

That:

- (1) The following amendments to the standing orders, as recommended by the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee, be agreed to—

PROCEDURE FOR FIRST DAY

2. On the first day of a new Parliament after a General Election the proceedings shall be as follows:
 - (1) Members shall assemble at the time and place specified in the Governor's proclamation calling Parliament together and the Clerk shall read the Proclamation and announce the receipt of writs of election and the list of members elected.
 - (2) The House shall await a message from the Commissioner(s) appointed by the Governor for the Opening of Parliament.
 - (3) The House shall attend at the place named in the message to hear the commission read. The House shall then return to its own Chamber.
 - (4) The Commissioner(s) appointed by the Governor for administering the pledge or oath to members shall be announced, and the commission read by the Clerk.
 - (5) The writ of election of each member, with the return endorsed, shall be produced by the Clerk.
 - (6) Members shall make a pledge of loyalty or oath as prescribed by law and sign the roll.
 - (7) The House shall then elect a Speaker (see SOs 10, 10A and 10B and Constitution Act 1902, section 31B).
 - (8) Until a Speaker is elected, the Clerk shall preside and in any debate shall decide any point of order and determine which member is entitled to address the House.
 - (9) A Minister may then inform the House when the Governor will summon the House for the hearing of the Governor's reasons for calling the Parliament together. The House may then adjourn to that hour.

WHEN AN ELECTION FOR SPEAKER TAKES PLACE

10.
 - (1) An election for Speaker shall take place at:
 - (a) the opening of a new Parliament after the members have been sworn or made an affirmation; or

- (b) any time when the office of Speaker is vacant. (See SO 16 regarding the conduct of business when a vacancy in the office of Speaker occurs when the House is sitting.)
- (2) The election shall be conducted by the Clerk acting as Chair in the manner provided below in standing orders 10A and 10B.

THE NOMINATION PROCESS FOR THE ELECTION OF THE SPEAKER

- 10A.** The nomination process for the election of the Speaker must be in accordance with section 31B of the Constitution Act 1902. In addition, the following procedures must apply:
- (1) In the case of the election of the Speaker following a General Election, at least one week before the scheduled sitting all members will be notified by the Clerk that nominations for the office of Speaker will be called for at the prescribed time (immediately after members have taken the pledge or oath). A sample copy of the nomination form will be attached to the notification.
 - (2) In the case of the election of the Speaker due to a vacancy arising in the office of the Speaker, the Clerk will notify all members as soon as practicable that nominations for the office of Speaker will be called for at the start of the next sitting day. A sample copy of the nomination form will be attached to the notification.
 - (3) Nominations must be seconded.
 - (4) The member nominated must accept the nomination by endorsement on the instrument of nomination.
 - (5) At the prescribed time of the first day of sitting or in the case of a vacancy in the office of the Speaker at the commencement of the next sitting day, nominations are to be delivered to the Clerk at the Table in a sealed envelope by the person nominated or by any other member.
 - (6) The identity of the nominator and seconder are not to be disclosed by the Clerk.
 - (7) The Clerk will ask the House if it is satisfied that reasonable opportunity has been given for the receipt of nominations and advise that further nominations may not be made between ballots.
 - (8) The Clerk will then declare nominations to be closed.

PROCEDURES FOR THE ELECTION OF THE SPEAKER

- 10B.** The process for the election of the Speaker must be in accordance with section 31B of the Constitution Act 1902. In addition, the following procedures apply:
- (1) Until a Speaker is elected, the Clerk shall preside and, in any debate, shall decide any point of order and determine which member is entitled to address the House.
 - (2) In conducting the election, the Clerk will:
 - (i) announce the number of nominations received;
 - (ii) if there is one valid nomination, declare that member to be elected;
 - (iii) if there is more than one valid nomination, announce the fact that a ballot will be required;
 - (iv) inquire if any member wishes to speak to the nominations. Any member may speak for no more than 10 minutes each. During debate, a Minister may move at any time without notice "That the ballot be taken now". The question is put immediately and without amendment or debate. If the votes are equal, the question is negatived. If the question is carried, or when debate ends, the House proceeds to a ballot;
 - (v) have ballot papers prepared and initialled;
 - (vi) order that the bells be rung as prescribed for the taking of a ballot; and
 - (vii) call each member by order of electorate, with members proceeding to the Table to collect a ballot paper. The names of members issued with ballot papers will be crossed off a list.
 - (3) After collecting a ballot paper, members will cast their vote in secret at the Table. Members will place their ballot paper in the locked ballot box on the Table, before returning to their seat.
 - (4) When all members present have been called, received a ballot paper, voted and placed a ballot paper in the ballot box, the Clerk will ask if any member has not voted and desires to do so. The Clerk will then ask the House if there is any objection to declaring the ballot closed.
 - (5) The Clerk will then declare the ballot closed.
 - (6) The votes will be counted by the Clerks.
 - (7) The Clerk will report the result of the ballot and declare a member to be elected or the House will proceed to further ballots or, if necessary, the Clerk will determine the question by lot, in accordance with s.31B of the Constitution Act.
 - (8) At no time during these proceedings will the Chamber be locked or the sitting suspended.

PROCEDURES AFTER ELECTION OF THE SPEAKER

- 11.** After election:
- (1) The elected member shall be conducted to the Speaker's rostrum by two members.

- (2) Having been so conducted, the member elected makes acknowledgement to the House for the honour conferred and takes the Chair as Speaker. The Mace shall be taken from under the Table and placed on the Table.
- (3) After the House congratulates the Speaker, a Minister shall inform the House where and at what time the Governor will receive the House for the purpose of presenting the Speaker.
- (4) At the stated time, the sitting may be adjourned or suspended and the House shall proceed, with any members then present, to be received by the Governor.

If the election occurs at the meeting of a new Parliament after a General Election

- (5) At such presentation the Speaker shall, in the name and on behalf of the House, lay claim to its undoubted rights and privileges.
- (6) On return, the Speaker shall report the making of the claim.

If the election occurs during the parliamentary term

- (7) A new Speaker filling a vacancy occurring during the currency of a Parliament does not lay claim to the privileges of the House.

DISSENT FROM SPEAKER'S RULING OR DECISION

- 95.** The procedure for dissenting from a ruling or decision of the Chair is as follows:

- (1) The member must give notice of a motion at the time for notices with precedence stating the grounds of the dissent.
- (2) The notice shall be given and set down to be considered within three clear sitting days after the day on which the ruling was given.
- (3) The motion shall take precedence of all other business on the day appointed.
- (4) The Speaker shall be entitled to put the question where the debate exceeds 30 minutes, and to call on the mover in reply.
- (5) The notice lapses if not moved or postponed on the appointed day.
- (6) Any member and the mover in reply shall each be entitled to speak for up to 10 minutes.

ANSWER RELEVANT

- 129.** An answer shall be directly relevant to the question asked.

QUESTION TIME (ORAL QUESTIONS)

- 131.** The procedure for Question Time is as follows:

- (1) Questions are asked orally and may be read and are subject to the same rules as written questions but shall not be recorded in the *Questions and Answers* paper.
- (2) An answer to a question must not exceed three minutes.
- (3) At the conclusion of the Minister's answer to a question, the member who asked the question may, at the discretion of the Speaker, seek additional information from the Minister. The Minister's response on the additional information must not exceed two minutes.
- (4) No question shall be asked after 55 minutes from the Speaker calling on questions or the answering of 14 questions, whichever is the longer, so long as Question Time has a maximum period that does not exceed 70 minutes.
- (5) One supplementary question per Question Time may be asked immediately by the member asking the original question. The answer shall count as one of the 14 answers.
- (6) The Leader of the Opposition is entitled to be called first by the Speaker at the commencement of Question Time.
- (7) Ministers seeking to provide additional information to questions already answered at the current or a previous sitting shall do so at the conclusion of Question Time.
- (8) Points of order taken during an answer to a question should not be vexatious, repetitive, interfering or used to make a statement in response to the answer.
- (9) When, under Standing Order 49A, the Speaker has stopped the clock during an answer in Question Time, the member's speaking time clock shall be stopped but the overall timing clock for Question Time shall continue to run.

TABLING AND PRINTING OF PAPERS

- 266.** The following procedure shall apply for the tabling and printing of papers:

- (1) Wherever practicable, Ministers should table papers to the Table Office electronically and announce the tabled papers at the time provided in the Routine of Business or at other times by leave of the House.
- (2) Papers also can be tabled in hard copy in the House at the time provided in the Routine of Business or at other times by leave of the House.
- (3) Papers that are to be deemed as tabled, by way of a Minister's announcement in the House, must have been provided in electronic copy, under the Minister's written authority, to the Table Office by 12 noon on the day of tabling, or at least two hours before.

- (4) Papers received in accordance with paragraph (3) are authorised for publication, including to the Parliament's website.
- (5) The Leader of the House, on a subsequent sitting day, may give a notice of motion regarding the printing of papers tabled but not yet ordered to be printed. Consideration of this motion shall be Business with Precedence.
- (6) Alternatively, such motion may be moved without notice at any time.
- (7) The question on the motion is open to amendment and debate.
- (8) Any member may speak on the motion for up to three minutes, including the Minister in reply.
- (9) The Speaker may call on the Minister to reply if the debate exceeds 30 minutes.

TABLING OF REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS WHEN THE HOUSE IS NOT SITTING

266A.

- (1) Where, under any Act, a report or other document is required to be tabled in the House by a Minister and the House is not sitting, such report or document may be lodged with the Clerk.
- (2) Any report or document lodged with the Clerk is:
 - (a) on presentation, and for all purposes, deemed to have been laid before the House;
 - (b) to be printed by authority of the Clerk;
 - (c) for all purposes, deemed to be a document published by order or under the authority of the House; and
 - (d) to be recorded in the *Votes and Proceedings* of the House.

PRINTING AND PUBLICATION OF PAPERS AND DOCUMENTS

- 266B.** Unless otherwise ordered, any reference to printing in the Standing and Sessional Orders is taken to mean publication, including by electronic means.

SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

365.

- (1) A member may at any time after 10.00 a.m. and up to 1.15 p.m., without leave, move a motion to suspend Standing and Sessional Orders to deal with any matter.
 - (2) A Minister may at any time, without leave, move a motion to suspend Standing and Sessional Orders to deal with any matter.
 - (3) The mover, one other member and the mover in reply shall be entitled to speak to the motion for up to five minutes each.
 - (4) When the mover is a member not supporting the Government, the response shall be by a Minister, and when the mover is a member supporting the Government, the response shall be by the Leader of the Opposition or a member deputed.
 - (5) Such motions shall not be entertained during Question Time.
 - (6) The closure shall not apply.
- (2) The amendments to the standing orders be forwarded by the Speaker to Her Excellency the Governor for approval.

Motion agreed to.

Adjournment

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I move:

That the House at its rising this day do adjourn until Tuesday 28 February 2023 at 12 noon.

Motion agreed to.

Motions

CONSTITUTION (DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS) REGULATION

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: By leave: I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that should the Integrity Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 pass the Parliament, the Government proposes to make changes to the Constitution (Disclosures by Members) Regulation 1983.
- (2) Notes the requirements of section 14A (5) of the Constitution Act 1902 that a designated committee of the Legislative Assembly must be afforded the opportunity to consider and make representations with respect to any such proposed changes, and that such representations must be taken into account.

- (3) Designates the Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics as the committee for this purpose.
- (4) Requires the committee to report to the House on its review of any proposed changes to the Constitution (Disclosures by Members) Regulation 1983.

Motion agreed to.

Petitions

PETITIONS RECEIVED

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

Connells Point Public School

Petition requesting the Legislative Assembly instruct the Department of Education to undertake upgrades to Connells Point Public School, received from **Mr Chris Minns**.

Bills

INTEGRITY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Returned

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

GOVERNMENT SECTOR EMPLOYMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Returned

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

Motions

CHRISTMAS FELICITATIONS

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (15:48): I move:

That the House take note of Christmas felicitations.

Once again we approach the most wonderful time of year where we pause from the cut and thrust of politics to pay tribute to the many people in this place who devote their lives to "oiling the wheels" of democracy in this great State of New South Wales. It cannot be said often enough, while we stand in the limelight, there is an army of people behind us, without whom this place would not be as effective and efficient as it is. They have served in the good times and the bad—and, let's face it, 2020 and 2021 have been tough for everyone. Even if we are now free of the pandemic, Mother Nature has not relented. The floods, which cut a swathe through all corners of our State, have brought out the best in Australians. It is only appropriate that, first and foremost, I thank our emergency and frontline workers, who have supported the State during these difficult times. I thank the police; the ambos; the State Emergency Service; every volunteer, whether organised or not; and every neighbour who rolled up their sleeves and said, "Let's get it done". Every man and woman on the front line has made a difference. Our State is indebted to them. I thank them all. They are the real spirit of this great country. At this time, we remember the sacrifices they have all made personally over the past year.

In this place, I thank the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, the Assistant Speaker and all the temporary speakers for the important role they play in making sure that this Chamber—rowdy as it is at times—works with efficiency, impartiality and effectiveness. Mr Speaker, in particular I acknowledge your service to the House and your commitment to the institution of Parliament. Your collaborative and bipartisan approach has meant that you are sincerely respected by both sides of the House. Your reforms will stand for many years and your—sometimes—wise rulings will add to the treasury of Speakers' rulings for decades to come. You will be missed and I wish you and Jacqueline all the best in your retirement.

I also acknowledge the Leader of the Opposition. Public life is a challenge at the best of times, and every political biography says there is no tougher job than the Leader of the Opposition. We disagree on many things, but one of the great aspects of Australian political life is that disagreement does not decay into disdain. When we look at other systems around the world, we should be eternally thankful that we have a polity where opponents clash with words, rather than bullets, bombs and bayonets. I extend my thanks to the Leader of the House, Alister

Henskens, and the shadow Leader of the House, Ron Hoenig, who facilitate as much as possible the smooth running of this place. Trying to get legislation through a place where one's majority keeps dropping, to the point of it almost disappearing entirely, has been a challenge. Alister took over from Mark Speakman, and has done a wonderful job in those circumstances. I know he has the sincere respect of the crossbench. Similarly, I thank the Hon. Damien Tudehope, the Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council and his Labor counterpart. We all know that the other place has its own peculiar ways of doing things and Damien has been a stalwart, both professionally and personally, over the past year.

I acknowledge the great work done by our new Government Whip, the member for Wollondilly; the Assistant Whip, the member for Heathcote; and The Nationals Whip, the member for Coffs Harbour. I also pay tribute to the Whips' team, ably led by Asha Towers. I acknowledge the Opposition Whips and their staff, who similarly work long hours to ensure the smooth running of this place. I turn now to the Clerks. The professional and impartial way in which they conduct their roles is deeply appreciated. While the political storms rage around them, they remain islands of calm and tranquillity. I thank the Clerk, Helen Minnican, for her advice and for the support that she provides to everybody in this place. I acknowledge the Deputy Clerk, Carly Maxwell, and the assistant clerks, Simon Johnston and Jonathon Elliott, and thank them for the great work that they do every day in this place.

I thank the Hansard reporters, who turn the rough utterances of this place into a record of clarity and precision. Some days I can barely hear what is being said in this place, and yet they manage to pick up every word, or at least all the words that are fit to print. I thank everybody in the Table Office, the committee secretariats and the parliamentary attendants. Thank you so much for your patience and care. The attendants, in particular, do a wonderful job supporting all members in this place. They do it professionally and with great dignity. I also thank the parliamentary librarians and archivist, whose research efforts are exemplary and who are so important in publicising the great work of this place. I thank all the members of the press gallery. A free and impartial Fourth Estate is a defining feature of any nation that wants to call itself a democracy. We appreciate their efforts, and we wish them very well in this Christmas and holiday period,

I thank the administration staff, the facilities staff, the IT support teams, the catering staff, the cleaners and the maintenance workers. All these individuals collectively make sure, in a most professional way, that members have every bit of comfort whilst we are in this place so that we can do our jobs to the best of our ability. Their efforts do not go unnoticed. I thank all our political staff, especially the staff in our electorate offices, who "hold the fort" while we are here doing parliamentary or ministerial business. They are often required to exercise independent judgement, inquiry and representation while we are not in the electorate. They make sure that our constituents are well served and have a sympathetic ear. I thank my parliamentary colleagues in the entire Liberal-Nationals team. It has been a tough year, and they have all been champions across the board. It is a rare occurrence in Australian parliaments that the Government does not have an effective majority in the lower House and their discipline and work ethic in these circumstances has been exemplary.

In particular, I thank the Deputy Premier and Leader of The Nationals, Paul Toole. Tooley's support, vigilance and hard work has been unwavering. He is a great advocate and has truly made a real difference in the way that the regions receive support and the way that they are represented in this place. I pay particular tribute to him for that. I thank all of our ministerial office staff, who do not get enough credit for the work they do, including my own diligent team, especially my chief of staff, Bran Black, and deputy chief of staff, Monica Tudehope. I appreciate the long hours, the passion, the drive and the fantastic effort that they and everyone in my ministerial office put in each and every day, working for the people of this State.

I thank all the members of the crossbench for the positive and constructive way in which they have worked with the Government. The current crossbench has achieved a range of outcomes that exceed even the famous 1991 crossbench. I also extend my best wishes to every single member of this place. I wish every member of Parliament the very best over the Christmas period, and I hope everyone has a happy and safe time with their families over the Christmas break. I join others in bidding a fond farewell to all retiring members. The contributions they have made will be recorded in the annals of this State's history. Their successors will have big shoes to fill, but we congratulate them on their efforts and wish them well for the future. In ending, let me express my deepest Christmas and holiday felicitations to all members of this Chamber, all our staff and all the people in the Parliament who keep this place going. It has been a great honour this year to serve as Premier. I wish everyone in this place a very merry Christmas.

Debate interrupted.

*Bills***COMPANION ANIMALS AMENDMENT (PUPPY FARMS) BILL 2021****First Reading**

Bill received from the Legislative Council, introduced and read a first time.

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that I have received a written authority from the Hon. Emma Hurst, MLC, advising that the member for Sydney will have carriage of the bill in the Legislative Assembly. I order that the second reading of the bill stand as an order of the day for a later time.

*Petitions***RURAL AND REGIONAL HEALTH SERVICES**

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The petition requests that the Legislative Assembly calls on the Government to reinstate the former New England Area Health Service, directly employ doctors in emergency departments and increase the number of nurses in rural and regional hospitals. The petition was lodged by the member for Northern Tablelands.

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

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (15:58): With unsurpassed pride, on behalf of my communities, I contribute to the debate on this 16,000-plus signature petition, which is the very last petition of the Fifty-Seventh Parliament. There is no more appropriate subject for debate than rural and regional health services for the current and future safety and prosperity of the people of rural and regional New South Wales, because without high-quality primary healthcare services, we have nothing. Sadly, for our region and many parts of the State, we are staring down the barrel of that sad reality unless something changes dramatically now. The concern, frustration, despair and anger in our region has brought us to this debate.

I acknowledge in the gallery today the collective leadership of our region, the mayors and deputy mayors of the Northern Tablelands and beyond, including Eric Noakes from Walcha, Bob Crouch from Uralla, Sam Coupland from the Armidale region, Rob Banham and Troy Arandale from Glen Innes Severn, and Paul Harmon from Inverell Shire, and from just outside the Northern Tablelands, Russell Webb from Tamworth region, Doug Hawkins, OAM, from the Liverpool Plains, and Jamie Chaffey from Gunnedah Shire. I note the mayors of Gwydir Shire, John Colton, and Moree Plains Shire, Mark Johnson, are both unable to be in the gallery representing the collective civic leadership of our region but I know they are watching this debate online. I thank all of them for their leadership in supporting the tilt to improve health services in our region because they know as well as I do how crucial good health services are to the people they serve and lead.

We are in the field of battle today to fight for better healthcare services and lives. The region's civic leaders are in the gallery, and we have an army of more than 16,000 people, the signatories to the petition, at our back. The real question is this: Will the Government and Opposition join us on the field or will we take them on today? I cannot thank enough the people of the Northern Tablelands who signed this petition and who are still signing it and voicing their concerns as late as today. One thing is for sure: Through this petition our region has declared loudly and unequivocally that we will not accept the continuing trend of the reduction in health services in our region. We will not accept our hospitals continually being put on bypass to send patients to Armidale and Tamworth hospitals, which are struggling with the extra burden of patients. Those patients should be treated, and have a right to expect to be treated, in their own local towns because they always used to be.

I thank Maria Hitchcock, OAM, from the New England Visions 2030 Institution and the Nurses and Midwives' Association branches across the Northern Tablelands, particularly the Armidale branch, led by Michelle Chappell and secretary Warren Isaac, for its strong support of this issue. The petition does not represent a broadside at the Government, and it does not represent a giant whinge-fest. We have put together in this petition three very practical and tangible solutions that can be implemented right now to help arrest the decline in services that has happened over the past few years. Our communities are sick and tired of the same thing being done with the expectation of a different result. That is not going to help our people.

The first point in the petition is about splitting the Hunter New England Local Health District, which currently services 25 local government areas and over 950,000 people. It is the only health district in the State that tries to deliver rural and remote services from a metropolitan base. In our part of the world at the very end of the line, which is over 500 kilometres away from the mandarins in Newcastle, we are sick and tired of decisions being made centrally in a metropolitan location without respect for the individual needs of rural and remote communities that are very different to Newcastle.

The most important part of the petition is the point about employing doctors again in our local hospitals. The visiting medical officer [VMO], the locum model, and the mercenary culture of general practice is failing our communities. We do not have the stock of GPs that we used to have, and we want to see those doctors employed again in our local hospitals. I am very pleased that, as a result of this petition, the Minister for Regional Health, Bronnie Taylor, has written to the Commonwealth Government, asking it to grant exemptions so that we can directly employ general practitioners in our hospitals and not rely on the locum model and on the failed VMO model. It does not work. It is not fit for purpose. I thank all the petitioners for their support. I look forward to the contributions of members.

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore) (16:03): I thank the member for Northern Tablelands for bringing the petition to House. I note that the issues raised in the petition show the deep concern of people in the north, in the rural areas and in the area of Tenterfield. Tenterfield is in the Lismore electorate and is part of the same Hunter New England Local Health District as the communities of the member for Northern Tablelands. To put it simply, Hunter New England Local Health District is too far away and too big to be able to service the health needs of rural areas. I understand why so many people have signed the petition.

I have spoken with people in the Tenterfield community—and I think the joint organisation of councils passed a motion stating that they wanted this to happen—who said that they want to go somewhere other than the Hunter New England Local Health District. Some of them have said they want to come to the Northern NSW Local Health District, which is in the other part of the Lismore electorate I represent. I said to them in the beginning, "Let's try to work it out so that we get the health services that are needed there before we look at moving." However, that option is becoming far more attractive, particularly to people in the Tenterfield area.

There are two points in the petition. One is about having more salaried doctors and medical specialists in hospitals. That is something we all want. They are desperately needed in rural areas. When I was elected the member for Lismore in 2019, I was shocked and surprised to find that there were no visiting medical officers at Tenterfield hospital. The hospital services a reasonable sized community. There are major highways around it. It is a farming and forestry community, with lots of various accidents. I have worked constructively with former mayor Peter Petty, former deputy mayor Greg Sauer, and current mayor Bronwyn Petrie to try to get the best deal with Hunter New England Health. A nurse return was blocked by the chief executive of Hunter New England Health, whom I did not know at the time. I rang him and said, "You may not know this but one of the nurses has been removed. On a humanitarian level can you please put them back?" The nurse had been through bushfires and a whole lot of trauma at the time. I said that they just cannot cop this, so he reinstated them. Smaller hospitals have three by two by two but we need three by three by three to make it work to give people the service that they need.

I worked with Rural and Remote Medical Services and the health district to get doctors into the hospitals. I was happy to broker that deal but the health service should have done that before I had to step into the breach and make sure that that happened. I met with the health Minister, who is in the Chamber, a couple of times about this. At the time he lent some of his good officers to help Tenterfield hospital. He even turned up unannounced. A nurse told me, "Someone is saying they're Brad Hazzard down here and wants to come in." They eventually worked out that it was the health Minister and let him in. It is not working with Hunter New England Health. One big issue is that it is a border community. Like many of the places that the member for Northern Tablelands represents, Tenterfield is a border community. Unless someone lives in one, they would not understand. The member for Tweed is nodding his head. We know that well. People in border communities often want to go over the border to Stanthorpe, Toowoomba, the Gold Coast or down to Lismore. Despite the chief executive and the Minister telling them that that can happen and there is no barrier, it still does not happen. It is so frustrating. Lastly, I note that we must take note of the findings in the report of the Legislative Council inquiry into health outcomes and access to health and hospital services in rural, regional and remote New South Wales.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (16:08): I commend the member for Northern Tablelands for bringing this petition to the House and I recognise the people who signed it. The state of the health system is probably the number one issue that people living in the regions face. It is extremely important to us all. I can certainly understand the frustration of people who have signed this petition. They are concerned about the health system and they are looking at how the whole system is being set up. Hunter New England Health is a very large local health district, so perhaps the beast has got too big. We must look at the best way to manage this huge area, so I support a review into the structure of the system.

I fear that the frustration of people with the health system comes from other causes, such as the lack of GPs and the visiting medical officer system that is used in hospitals. If all patients could get in to see a GP, the load on our hospitals would be reduced. If our local GPs worked in hospitals through the visiting medical officer system, then patients would not be sent on to the next hospital. There is no doubt that GPs not willing to work in hospitals puts a lot of pressure on hospital staff. Aged-care facilities are also without good GP access, meaning

that residents are being brought into hospitals. The visiting medical officer system looks like it is broken and we have not seen such enormous pressure on our hospitals before.

One of the things that I have discovered since becoming an MP is the Federal Government's involvement in primary health care and its responsibilities for GPs. The new Government started off very badly by changing the Distribution Priority Area system so that foreign-trained GPs coming into the country, who we are competing for with the rest of the world, are spread out to places like Lake Macquarie and other the coastal areas. Now we are trying to get them back to country areas.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind the member for Port Stephens that she is on three calls to order. The member will cease interjecting.

Mr DAVID LAYZELL: It is a competitive field. I have been told by the Minister for Health that the goodwill of the current Federal Labor Government towards solving the GP problem is getting a lot better, so I commend it for that. The Federal Government made an excellent move by making sure that those GPs who work in regional areas will have their HECS debt paid off. The second key issue is the workforce. If those GPs can be moved into regional hospitals, then the workforce will need to be expanded. We need to attract nurses to our hospitals, but that can only be done if those GPs are working in regional areas. It is important that the Government looks at solutions and faces the challenges in the healthcare system. New South Wales is certainly best placed to deal with those challenges. The Opposition has no ideas and no policies. I can guarantee the people of Hunter New England that there will be no new ideas from members opposite.

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

Mr DAVID LAYZELL: On the other hand, there will be some fantastic ideas from our wonderful Minister for Regional Health, the Hon. Bronnie Taylor. She has brought some great policies to the table, including 10,000 additional workers and nurse practitioners—an excellent policy. There is \$883 million in additional regional incentives; increased patient transport; increased pharmacy services scope of works—also an excellent policy, which was announced this week—and the Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme, which is one of my favourites. She is also looking at introducing new health models, and I encourage her to keep going with that policy.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Ballina, I remind a number of Opposition members that they are already on three calls to order. I do not want to remove any members from the Chamber during the last petition debate of the Fifty-Seventh Parliament. The member for Ballina will be heard in silence.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (16:14): I contribute to the petition debate on behalf of The Greens. I recognise the member for Northern Tablelands for introducing the petition and also the mayors and guests in the gallery from the Hunter New England region. As the member for Ballina, I share a lot of their general concerns. With the health Minister in the Chamber, I give a huge shout-out to all of our health staff in the Ballina electorate across the primary health network and also the local health district. They have done an outstanding job over the past few years. In no way are the things that I raise during the petition debate about them.

I will not speak about the splitting of the Hunter New England health district because that is a matter for the community. However, I will certainly speak about directly employing doctors in emergency departments in rural and regional district hospitals. Doctors and nurses in my electorate tell me that it is incredibly hard because locums make so much money. How is the Government attracting doctors to hard-to-staff areas? As an ex-teacher, it reminds me of the incentives needed to attract teachers to hard-to-staff areas. Not enough is being done to attract doctors with the capacity to provide outpatient services.

The petition calls to increase the number of nurses in rural and regional hospitals. I am proud that The Greens have committed to introducing nurse-to-patient ratios and guaranteeing safety and better health outcomes for patients. At the moment, nurses in my electorate are working alongside agency nurses who earn an extra \$10 per hour. They are not complaining about that, because they are so exhausted from doing so much overtime that they do not bat an eyelid about the fact that another tier of nursing staff is earning more than them. That is unacceptable, particularly after the incredible work that they did throughout COVID.

It boggles the mind that a Nationals member introduced the petition into the Parliament and that a Nationals Minister, the Minister for Regional Health, Bronnie Taylor, responded to it. I find that perplexing. The Minister has announced an \$883 million investment in response to this petition. If that \$883 million is spread over 15 health districts, that is approximately \$59 million each. The Northern NSW Health District—covering my electorate and the Lismore electorate—has 12 health facilities. They would be left with approximately \$5 million per facility. Over four years, that is approximately \$1.2 million per year. That says it all. That figure is not fit for purpose. The old parties must pledge some serious money moving forward after the election. Frontline workers say to me that they are understaffed and overworked right across the health sector.

If the Minister for Health does anything before he leaves this place, I urge him to introduce the patient transfer system to regional New South Wales and the Northern Rivers. I could not leave without saying that, even though it is not strictly an area health district matter. The ambos in my electorate are critical care workers and highly qualified professionals who are being used as taxidrivars, taking patients to John Flynn Private Hospital and out of the area. With so few ambulances, I lie awake at night thinking about what would happen if someone had a heart attack in Alstonville while the ambulances are at John Flynn waiting to leave patients who are not critically ill. It is not good enough and it must be reduced. We must introduce the patient transfer system. The situation is not just demoralising for our paramedics; it is also extremely expensive. I would love to know how much money could be saved in that sector alone. I commend the member and the 16,000 people who signed the petition. Let us do much better for regional health moving forward.

Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth—Minister for Lands and Water, and Minister for Hospitality and Racing) (16:19): In 2005 the New England Area Health Service merged with Hunter and became Hunter New England Health, promising a range of improvements right across the board. In the 17 years since Hunter New England Health was formed, there have been significant investments in facilities across the area. I do not speak on behalf of members for other electorates. I do not perceive to understand or control other electorates. I look after the Tamworth electorate, and I speak on behalf of that community. In the Tamworth electorate, there was a \$211 million upgrade of the Tamworth Hospital in 2011. You will recall that, Madam Deputy Speaker, because you were there. There was \$53 million promised for Gunnedah. I notice that various mayors and general managers are in the gallery today.

New multipurpose services were opened at Werris Creek, and I note that the Mayor of Liverpool Plains Shire, Doug Hawkins, is in the Chamber today. I also note that the Mayor of Walcha, Eric Noakes, is in the Chamber, and that there is a brand-new Walcha multipurpose service. Manila multipurpose service was also upgraded, which was announced by the now Federal Minister for the Environment and Water, Tanya Plibersek, when she was the Federal Minister for Health. Barraba multipurpose service was upgraded as well.

There have been significant facility upgrades, but the workforce is suffering and there continues to be a significant problem. The Minister for Regional Health is acutely aware of the significant workforce shortages suffered in the Tamworth electorate and the other areas I just spoke about. We have been working very closely with Liverpool Plains Shire Council, and that is why I speak on behalf of it. Werris Creek is in the Tamworth electorate. I appreciate the mayor being here. We must work hard to ease workforce shortages of nurses, clinicians and doctors. We must get better at providing opportunities for workers to come to regional New South Wales and the Tamworth electorate. We must recruit and retain. The \$883 million incentives package announced in the 2022-23 budget will help to ease staff shortages. The package aims to attract and retain staff in rural and regional New South Wales by transforming the way health clinicians are incentivised to work in the bush. Already the district has identified well over 1,500 positions that are eligible for incentives. Work will soon begin on shifting workforce recruitment and retention.

The Government is extending the scope of pharmacists so that health services are provided closer to home. I call Tamworth hospital the Tamworth base hospital, but it is actually called the Tamworth Rural Referral Hospital. People from Tamworth are watching this, and I will get belted when I get home because I keep calling it the Tamworth base. The services there are considered first class anywhere in the world, including the cancer centre and radiology and diagnostic treatment centres. The staff do a magnificent job, and they need support. They need to know that there is hope on the horizon.

The staff need support like accommodation, for example. Pods are being built at Tamworth hospital to assist nurses. A couple of million dollars are being put into an upgrade of the old nurses' quarters. The pods at Gunnedah hospital come off the back of a \$53 million hospital upgrade. I welcome a review of Hunter New England Health—and the 17 years that it has been in operation—to check the pulse to ensure that it can deliver services closer to home and address workforce shortages and important clinical networks and pathways. I look forward to making a valuable contribution to that review to provide the very best health care for the Tamworth electorate.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (16:24): By leave: This is an important issue and one that a lot of members on both sides of this House feel strongly about. I acknowledge the member for Northern Tablelands, a former Cabinet Minister. It is pretty alarming that on the final day of the Fifty-Seventh Parliament, a former Cabinet Minister would bring this petition to the House. It indicates a health system that is under enormous pressure. From the outset, I say that the frontline healthcare workers, the allied health careworkers, the clinicians, the nurses and midwives, our security staff and our cleaners do an incredibly important and fabulous job. Earlier in this debate the Minister acknowledged this, and it is important that Opposition members acknowledge it as well. I get incredible feedback on the good and important work of health staff from members from my side of the House who

represent the area, such as the member for Lismore—a tireless advocate for people in the northern areas of the State—the member for Maitland and, of course, the member for Port Stephens and my other colleagues.

But the health inquiry that I fought hard to establish cannot be ignored by a future Parliament, whether or not members on this side of the House form government. It was a landmark inquiry that shone a light on an area of our health system that probably did not have enough light on it for a long time. I will not say that previous Labor governments did everything well. However, I do think this Government should have done better after 12 years. The focus of the next Parliament and the next government must be on what happens inside our hospitals, not just on the buildings and opening of new facilities. No-one expects people to work in chicken pens, but we have got to start to focus on the men and women who deliver the health care to the patients and communities that we are proud to represent and support.

The member for Upper Hunter said the Opposition does not have any policies. We have announced a commitment around safe staffing levels. That is very important for multipurpose services and emergency departments. It is not a silver bullet, but it will result in an additional 1,200 staff delivered through mandated performance of staff to patients, starting in those areas. We have not said that it is a silver bullet but rather the start of a change to the way in which, we believe, health care needs to be delivered. We have also committed to an additional 500 paramedics on top of what the Government has announced, targeted exclusively to rural and regional areas. We want to increase their level of training because we know from the rural and regional health inquiry and the Health Services Union that paramedics can do more. They can assist in care at home. They can assist in trying to keep people out of our hospitals, which I agree with the Minister is something we all must try to work towards.

Yes, GPs are an issue; there are no two ways about that. I have already had those discussions with Minister Butler, and I know that Minister Hazzard had those discussions just a fortnight or so ago. I wrote to Minister Butler to state that it would not be a good move for the Federal Government to pull funding from the States at this time. I am not saying this is loaded up to one area, but after 12 years we should not be in this position. We must make a commitment to those people in the gallery who represent communities right across regional and rural New South Wales that the next Parliament and the next government will put this issue front and centre. We want to make sure that NSW Health understands that this is a priority.

The delivery of health services is more than just new buildings. It is about making sure that when you go to hospital there is adequate staffing. It is about making sure that the State and Commonwealth governments, regardless of their colour, are working together to make sure that primary health care is working. It is about making sure that our paramedics are there to do what they need to do and not waiting through the ramping that other members have talked about. Those matters will be a focus of members on this side of the House, and I hope they are a focus of all members in this place.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (16:29): By leave: I thank the member for Northern Tablelands for bringing this petition to the House. He knows I have a deep personal interest in this issue. I acknowledge the mayors who have joined us in the gallery for this debate. I probably have a unique perspective on this issue, having lived and had babies in both the New England and Hunter regions. In 1999 I had my son at Armidale Hospital. I was very lucky that there was an obstetrician at that hospital because I had a one-in-10,000 birth event that could have killed me and my child. But at that time the resourcing that was there for that hospital enabled me to have that birth safely. That is what women, men and families across this State want.

I say to those people in the gallery that I know your situation now is not like that. You do not have a hospital at Walcha; you have a multipurpose service. I was able to go back to Walcha to have care after I had that delivery. That allowed me to be close to my family and have that support around me, which was really important to us as I started taking those important steps. Now I live at Maitland in the Hunter, where we have a great hospital. I thank the Minister, and member for Wakehurst, for the work that we did to keep that fully public. However, we have not got enough staff. The Minister for Regional Health has not kept the promise to maintain that staffing at a level that will ensure that we have doctors, nurses, midwives and health professionals across it.

Recently a friend who lives in Guyra had a baby. There were some complications. I was so concerned that my friend would try to have the baby up there because of the lack of resourcing. It is a safety issue. I was concerned for that woman's life. That should not be the situation in our health system. A person in my electorate had to wait on a gurney for 100 hours in the emergency department [ED] at Maitland Hospital. They did not go from there to the GP. We always hear members opposite say that it is just a shortage of GPs in the area. The contribution of the member for Upper Hunter to this debate was the first time I have heard him speak on health—no, yesterday he said his hospital is perfect, but today for those visitors in the gallery he says there are some problems and it is all about the Federal Government. That person who waited for 100 hours in Maitland Hospital did not go home to their GP. They did not go to another ward. They went to the ICU. If you are in an ED and you go to ICU, you never needed a GP; you actually needed proper health care.

When I have been on visits to the New England region, I have expressed to some of the councillors there my concerns that there is a really generous bucket of money at Hunter New England Health at the moment. If you guys secede from the nation, so to speak, you just might get a smaller bucket. I do not know where they then escalate people from that region to. I have experienced a lot of health issues in my time in this Parliament. When you live two hours away, you should not have to go to Sydney to get surgery. I have had people come to me who had to travel from Forster or Tuncurry to get a mastectomy at the John Hunter Hospital. That should not be the case. We should be resourcing these hospitals and services so that people can get treatment locally. My mother-in-law's cousin died because she did not seek cancer treatment as it was just too hard to get.

The tyranny of distance in rural health is too much of a burden, and it should not be borne by those people in the gallery. Their communities should not have to carry that load alone, but under the current regional health Minister that is what is happening. I have been trying to get meetings. In February this year, we had a brand-new hospital open and immediately there was a 10 per cent increase in presentations. People from the electorate of the member for Port Stephens are now coming to Maitland, yet there was not one commensurate increase in staff. Those from the electorate of the member for Upper Hunter also go to that hospital, but I do not hear him complaining about this.

We have been working to get extra staff. Look at the job advertisements. Registered nurses who are working their guts out on their second, third or fourth double shift for the week are supported in their job by very junior people who are only there temporarily for short periods. That is no help. This Minister for Regional Health has to step up. The member for Keira, the shadow Minister is right: We cannot let the rural health inquiry die on the shelf under this Government.

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

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (16:35): By leave: I thank the member for Northern Tablelands for bringing this petition to the House, and the members of his community who are here today. My interest in this petition stems from the fact that I think it illustrates two key principles around rural health. First, for health services to thrive in rural and regional communities, they must take control of their own destiny and not be dictated to by metropolitan cities. I am talking about training and about the second principle, which is that they must have service models for the employment of doctors and other health professionals that are fit for their communities. There is a lot of talk about the value of hub-and-spoke models. Life is good in the hub-and-spoke model when you are in the hub. But if you are out on the rim of the wheel, it is not so good.

In fact, it is usually a pretty rough ride. For 30 years I have worked in regional health, and I have to say that maintaining health services in regional New South Wales is like a battle and growing them is like a war. It is not just a battle against government bureaucracy; it is a battle against a metropolitan culture. It is a culture that says the best health care is big-city, big-hospital health care and then says, "And don't worry about things in the regions. We will give you what you need; don't you worry about it." Of course, what happens is that the funding, the power and the control stay in the city. As soon as there is a cut to services and budgets, what gets cut? It is the services in rural and regional areas—the services on the rim.

I have had some personal experience of this. I have worked in the bureaucracy. Many people point to health services in Wagga Wagga and say they are good—and they are. But they are good because the community has fought hard for those services over many, many years. I know many community members, both in the health profession and outside it, who have worked tirelessly. I know the people in the public gallery are working tirelessly for their services because rural and regional leadership is the key. Over the years, many times we have succeeded despite the government—I am talking about governments of both political persuasions. Why does this have to be the case? I must give credit where it is due. The current Government has appointed a rural health Minister and it has a rural health division. I think it should be a department, but at least a division is a step forward.

I think in that there is a recognition—and the Opposition health spokesman pointed to the rural and regional inquiry—that more needs to be done in rural and regional New South Wales. I think we need a mindset shift from thinking you can run rural health from the city. Of course, Hunter New England was based on that model—that by creating this link from the rural area to the city somehow it will improve the service. I think it is pretty clear that that is not the case when you are in the rural part. I make a very firm point. After many, many years in regional and rural health, I have developed the firm conviction that for rural and regional health services to thrive, they have to take control of their own destiny. They need to be responsible for training their health services, and they need to be responsible for the service models in those areas.

I acknowledge that the current Government has provided funding to develop a health precinct in the Murrumbidgee region. That health precinct will explore and research workforce and service models in that region, by that region, for that region. It has runs on the board. The Murrumbidgee model of employing GPs in their training came out of the Murrumbidgee region. It is now being adopted by the Federal Government. I suggest that

a similar model should be adopted in Hunter New England—or, should I say, the future New England area health service. The Murrumbidgee model is supported by the Government—credit where it is due. The point I make is that that model arose from the regions. I think the important principle here is regional and rural control of health services. I give credit to the Government because I think we are seeing a shift to that. I think this petition highlights the importance of that principle going forward.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (16:40): By leave: I acknowledge the leaders from the communities affected by the petition that has been brought by the member for Northern Tablelands. I also thank the 16,000 petitioners and acknowledge their contribution to bringing this important issue to the House. I have one message that I want to share with the petitioners and the leaders: It doesn't matter where you live in the Hunter New England Health district, you still do not get the services you need. I am the member for Port Stephens. I represent a beautiful area just north of Newcastle where the local health district is based, but we still do not get the services we need. The member for Maitland has already outlined some of the issues that affect my community. A new hospital has been built in Maitland, but it does not have the services or staff it needs. One in four people leave the emergency department without being treated. My constituents go to this new hospital but leave without receiving treatment because they have to wait so long to see anyone. That is but one problem facing us right now.

The main problem we face is that our local hospital, Tomaree Community Hospital, is not a hospital; it is not even a multipurpose service [MPS]. It is still managed by community and aged care; it is not even in the hospital system. Nurses and doctors who speak to me say it is a ticking timebomb because it does not have any oversight by the hospital system. We do not have hospital management, resources and staffing at Tomaree Community Hospital. It is a hospital in name only. Instead, an auxiliary raises funds to get the basics. Every bed and every mattress in that place has been paid for by our community through the Tomaree Community Hospital Auxiliary. This is in Port Stephens, which is at the very bottom of the local health district that the petitioners have issues with.

I share the frustrations that have been brought to this Chamber today. My community shares their community's frustrations. But know that, wherever we are within the health district, these issues affect access to health services, people and their health outcomes. Recently I spoke to a gentleman who went to my local hospital, Tomaree Community Hospital. It has an emergency department with four beds. There is a ward with 14 beds but often no doctor to be seen in the entire place. Ambulances bring people who need urgent care to the hospital. When this gentleman arrived, hospital staff realised that it was way beyond their capacity to manage his needs. They called for an ambulance to take him to John Hunter Hospital, and it took nine hours for that ambulance to arrive. When he got to John Hunter Hospital, he was put immediately on the operating table and they only just saved his life.

The health professionals in my health district say it is a ticking timebomb because lives are genuinely at risk. This is in Port Stephens, and I imagine it is happening in the areas that the petition refers to as well. In the Upper Hunter, babies are being born on the side of the road, and yesterday the member for Upper Hunter told us that everything is perfect in his area. We have problems everywhere. I thank those in the gallery for putting a spotlight on such an important issue. After 12 long years, we have had enough of this Government.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD (Wakehurst—Minister for Health) (16:44): In response: I thank the mayors and community representatives for being here and for expressing their concerns on various aspects of health provision in the area through the member for Northern Tablelands. I also thank the many members who contributed to debate on the issue.

Ms Kate Washington: Any time, Brad.

Mr BRAD HAZZARD: I am sorry I will not be here to hear that anymore. I thank the member for Lismore, the member for Upper Hunter, the member for Tamworth, the member for Keira, the member for Maitland, the member for Port Stephens, the member for Wagga Wagga and the member for Ballina for their contributions. It shows the level of interest in regional health more broadly, even though the petition did not go directly to those issues. I note that before I was demoted to Minister, I went to the Northern Tablelands with the member. The regional health Minister goes there quite a bit. She has worked very hard with the member for Northern Tablelands.

Some of these issues have been raised by the member for Northern Tablelands for an extended period of time. We have done a lot of work up there as a result of his advocacy. We visited Glen Innes District Hospital, which received \$50 million for its redevelopment. Further, the \$80 million Moree Hospital redevelopment will kick off soon and upgrades to Glen Innes and Armidale ambulance stations are underway. The Inverell Hospital redevelopment was completed in 2021. There are very challenging issues in regional areas. It is easy for the Opposition to say that everything is terrible—and that is not what the member for Northern Tablelands was saying—but it is not terrible. However, services are challenged in regional areas.

The Hunter Local Health District [LHD] has a budget of \$2.7 billion. That is bigger than the ACT and Tasmanian health budgets. It is the biggest in the State. The challenge for us is getting doctors and staff into those areas. Three or four years ago there was a meeting in Wagga Wagga, which the member for Wagga Wagga attended. We put to the Federal Government the need for a joint model, which required an amendment under section 19 of the Federal legislation—that is known as the Murrumbidgee model. Doctors there have a right of private practice but they can also be employed by the hospital. That model seems to be working, and it came out of that meeting in Wagga and then again in Dubbo. We are doing more on that, and we would like the Federal Government to assist us on that front. Certainly Mark Butler has been responsive, though we hope he will be more responsive.

We hope to increase staff all over the district. I understand the call to split the LHD, but I ask people to be cautious. The major hospital in the Hunter provides services and outreach to some of those smaller hospitals. We cannot ask specialists of a particularly high level to work in a very small hospital because they will not. I experienced that in my role as health Minister. It is a very challenging situation. The petition makes it very clear that people are concerned about the situation, but splitting the LHDs might not be the best solution. Minister Taylor and I have had deep discussions to try to find the best way forward. We are very conscious of the community's concerns. Finally, I thank the health staff in the district. They have worked under massive pressure, particularly during COVID. I also thank manager Michael DeLorenzo for the work he has done. We will continue to work together to try to address the issues raised by the member for Northern Tablelands and the locals who have taken part in the petition. I hope we find a better way forward.

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (16:48): In reply: I sincerely thank every member of this House who participated in genuine debate on the petition. I particularly acknowledge the health Minister and shadow health Minister. Often in petitions debates Parliamentary Secretaries and shadow Parliamentary Secretaries are dispatched to make contributions, but in this instance the health Minister and shadow health Minister participated in debate. That shows to those in the regions who have contributed to the petition as well as to community leaders how important this topic is to every single member on either side of the Chamber. We know there are challenges. The petition was never about finding the silver bullet. It is about putting forward sensible reforms and changes that can be implemented to make a difference.

The Government will not split the Hunter New England Local Health District, but on behalf of my community I will continue to campaign for that in this Parliament, and hopefully the next. Critically, the petition debate has achieved agreement from the regional health Minister and health Minister to implement the Murrumbidgee model in our part of the world. If the Commonwealth signs off on those exemptions under section 19 (2) of the Health Insurance Act 1973, we will directly employ GPs in our rural hospitals. People who go to the emergency department can rest assured a doctor will be there to triage and help them. They will not simply bypass the regional hospital and be taken to Armidale or Tamworth. That is crucial and fundamental. We have never had that in our region.

The petition has helped bring that about because of the combined pressure of people power, commonsense arguments and a model that works. The Murrumbidgee model was demonstrated to work in another part of the State. I thank everyone, including all of our healthcare workers. They do a terrific job. While we have had a big win out of this, the battle continues to improve our health services. I am prepared to work with the community to get that done.

Petition noted.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before we move to Christmas felicitations, I say that this is my final moment in the chair as Deputy Speaker of the Fifty-Seventh Parliament. I wish my colleagues and parliamentary staff a very safe and happy Christmas.

Motions

CHRISTMAS FELICITATIONS

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah) (16:51): Christmas felicitations are traditionally a time for members of Parliament to thank their staff and those who work in Parliament House, and I will get to that. But first I acknowledge one of the most important issues to come before the Fifty-Seventh Parliament of New South Wales: harassment and misconduct in parliamentary workplaces. I place on record my gratitude to the staff members who participated in both the Goward and Broderick reviews. I thank them for their honesty and courage. I want each of them to know that we have made a difference and changed the culture of this place. I thank the Premier and the leaders of other political parties for their bipartisan response to the recommendations made by those reviews. I acknowledge union delegates for the support and guidance they provided to staff who took part in the reviews.

I welcome the *Statement of Acknowledgement* that was delivered in Parliament this week and applaud the Presiding Officers and Parliamentary Executive Group for their apology.

I speak for all members when I say that, regardless of the election outcome, the work that was begun in the Fifty-Seventh Parliament to make a better, safer and more inclusive workplace will continue in the Fifty-Eighth Parliament. Mr Speaker, I pay tribute to you and your team. I wish you well when you leave this place. In your first speech as Speaker, you flagged the need to make better use of technology in the Parliament to enhance our democratic processes. Your words proved to be prophetic, as we all relied on technology to do our work through the COVID-19 pandemic. Thank you for helping Australia's oldest Parliament to find new ways to operate and for bringing this nineteenth-century institution into the twenty-first century by embracing digital technologies. On a personal level, I believe you have brought dignity, decorum and fairness to the Chamber. Parliamentary democracy—if I am not putting too fine a point on it—and this Chamber owe you a huge debt of gratitude for that. I wish you all the best. I know my staff are personally appreciative of the emails that they receive wishing them a happy birthday—maybe not all of them, depending on the age, but they appreciate the gesture. I thank Madam Deputy Speaker, the Assistant Speaker and the temporary speakers for their role facilitating the work of this House.

Let me turn now to the professional parliamentary teams, who help us to do our jobs and serve our communities. I offer my thanks to Clerk of the Legislative Assembly Helen Minnican, Deputy Clerk Carly Maxwell, and Sergeant-at-Arms Simon Johnston. I pay a special tribute to the Legislative Assembly Office and to the staff who work on parliamentary committees. Thank you to the Department of Parliamentary Services, under the leadership of Chief Executive Officer Mark Webb and executive directors Julie Langsworth and Kelly McFadyen. To the DPS team—IT, HR, accounting, entitlements, security, engineering and building services, including the various special constables out the front and at the back of Parliament House—without you there would be no Parliament for us to serve in. Thank you to Lee Kwiez and catering team—from the kitchen to Café Quorum to the dining room staff—for helping sustain us all until the early hours of the morning and certainly late at night.

To the Parliamentary Librarian Deborah Bennett and her staff, you are the custodians of a 180-year legacy of service to our democracy. As one of the oldest libraries in Australia, we are grateful for the modern and efficient service you provide. Thank you to Editor of Debates Vanessa Schlenert and the Hansard team for all the patch-up jobs you have been responsible for—particularly my speeches—and for the hours you spend transcribing, editing and producing the transcripts each day. To Nicola Dunbar and the Research Service team, thank you for your consistent high-quality work. To Annette O'Callaghan and the Parliamentary Counsel's Office, I express my gratitude for your skill and knowledge. Thanks to Ian Delahunty and the Legislative Assembly front desk and Chamber staff.

I thank Trajana Aceski, who has provided professional cleaning in my offices in Kogarah for years and years now. I pay a special tribute to Irma Carrian, who has cleaned the offices on level 10 for many years. We absolutely love Irma, and she received parliamentary recognition for years in service last week. We all gave her a huge hug, and she is a fantastic person. If we pull off a victory in March, we are going to put in a request to nick her from level 10 and pull her back down to level 8.

I now address my remarks to the amazing New South Wales parliamentary Labor team. The Labor caucus has been part of our State's Parliament since June 1891, when Labor won 35 seats at the first election it ever contested. No other party has that history or that pedigree, and no other party has played—in my view—a greater role in the affairs of this State or contributed more to the wellbeing of the people of New South Wales. As each of you know, it is a great privilege to be a Labor member and to sit in this House as a Labor member of Parliament. So let me place on record the pride I have in our team and the honour I feel as the New South Wales Labor leader.

To my deputy leader and the member for Londonderry, Prue Car, your advice and judgement have been absolutely invaluable to me—early in the mornings and late at nights, at tactics meetings and parliamentary meetings, before question time and as we rewrite questions in the middle of question time, often when we are standing at the lectern. Your bravery this year in confronting and overcoming cancer has inspired all of us. It is wonderful to have you back. To Ron Hoenig, Manager of Opposition Business, we love you, Ron. You are an amazing person. You are doing a great job in trying circumstances. Thanks for stepping up for the past 18 months. To the chief Opposition Whip Anna Watson, we love you too, Anna. You have done an amazing job this year in really trying circumstances, particularly in a hung Parliament. My thanks also to the deputy Opposition Whip David Mehan. The Government Whip demanded that I include him, so I acknowledge the Government Whip.

Thank to our leadership team in the other place—Penny Sharpe and John Graham, together with Opposition Whip Mark Buttigieg and to all my shadow Ministers and parliamentary colleagues—not just for the unwavering work that you do but also for the work that we put into the people we represent. I acknowledge the Labor alumni of 2022, the staff members working for Labor members in both Houses. When you look back on this time, you

should do so with a sense of pride and achievement. I cannot name all of you, but I will single out Colleen Symington, who works for Anna in the Office of the Whip. She keeps us organised and on track during sitting days. I have no doubt that she is watching right now to make sure that somebody somewhere is at least on duty—is it possible to see from the television?

Mr Tim Crakanthorp: Yes, yes.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Tim is on duty, otherwise he would not be in the Chamber listening to this speech. I thank Cara Punch and Peta Waller-Bryant, who play a similar role in the other place. Thanks to my electorate staff—Cheryl, Loretta, Jessie and Matthew Iemma. They work tirelessly in support of the constituents of Kogarah.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: Any relation?

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Maybe; there aren't too many Iemmas around. To the team in Kogarah, you know who you are. Thank you for all your help and support. I cannot wait to do that pizza night soon. Thank you to former members for Kogarah Cherie Burton and Brian Langton, who have been incredible in helping me in the most marginal electorate in Australia. Their advice, support and stepping in to help out—Anzac Day services or Rotary functions or basketball assignments—with anything and everything over the past two years has been wonderful. I am in deep gratitude to both of them for, effectively, stepping out of political retirement to help out the constituents of Kogarah, whom they know very well. I thank the team of the Leader of the Opposition: chief of staff James Cullen, who has been amazing as our chief steward for the past year and is looking forward to the next four months; my private secretary, Jenny; and the drivers for the Leader of the Opposition, Dom Mirarchi and Wayne Sole—fantastic fellows.

I also recognise the members of the crossbench—particularly the crossbench. Aren't they fantastic, good people, tireless workers on behalf of their community? What a record of achievement. I cannot wait to speak to them more, and I wish them the very best in the months ahead. I hope they have a special and warm Christmas. I hope that they spend time with their family and friends, and that every hope and dream has been measured and achieved by those wonderful people—well, nearly all of them. As we leave this place for the last time this year, our thoughts must turn to those facing hard times. It will be a very difficult Christmas for many families whose lives have been turned upside down by floods.

We started the parliamentary year shortly before floods devastated the Northern Rivers and parts of western Sydney, on a scale we have never seen before. The floods continued across New South Wales, and by midyear around 10,000 people were subject to evacuations across the State, 14,500 homes were damaged and more than 5,000 homes were uninhabitable. Nearly 8,000 SES, RFS and ADF personnel were deployed to assist across the State. On behalf of NSW Labor, I thank all of them for their help and service on behalf of this State. I wish everybody happy Christmas and a restful period as we head towards the end of the year in the election season. I hope everybody across the parliamentary spectrum, across all political parties and Independents, gets an opportunity to spend some time with their families.

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst—Deputy Premier, Minister for Regional New South Wales, and Minister for Police) (17:02): I begin by echoing the comments of the Premier and add my thanks to those who keep the Parliament functioning effectively. As has been the case every year, we are incredibly well served by our parliamentary staff. I offer particular thanks to the Clerks, the attendants, the parliamentary staff, the reception staff, the ministerial drivers, the cafe and restaurant workers who feed us, the cleaners, the library staff, the special constables and countless others who work in this place. I also extend my thanks to you, Mr Speaker, and wish you all the very best in your future. The staff in the Speaker's office also deserve acknowledgement, in addition to the staff in the office of the Leader of the House and the Whips, who keep this place running smoothly.

My warmest thanks, however, go to those who have put themselves in danger to keep us safe this year. As in previous years, we are indebted to our frontline workers and emergency services. They are the fabric that holds our communities together, and in times of crisis we learn their true value. Flooding has brought significant damage to our towns and cities, but the damage would be far greater were it not for the actions of our police, our SES volunteers and RFS volunteers, Fire and Rescue officers and other community members who just rolled up their sleeves and got to work when things got tough. They are the best of us, and we should all aspire to follow their example as we conduct ourselves in this place.

I acknowledge our hardworking Premier, Dominic Perrottet, and the energy he has thrown into steering this State through good times and bad over the past 12 months. We have worked side by side on a big bold plan to secure a brighter future for New South Wales, and that is what we will roll out ahead of the 25 March election and, with the support of our communities, beyond it for the next four years. I acknowledge the Leader of the Opposition and his team for their work and pay special mention to the shadow Ministers I have worked with, both

here and in the other place. Because of the collaborative relationship that we have developed, I believe that on many occasions we passed legislation that will make a positive and lasting change in our communities.

I also give thanks to my parliamentary colleagues in The Nationals, particularly the Deputy Leader of The Nationals, Bronnie Taylor, and the Leader of The Nationals in the other place, Sarah Mitchell. They are smart, strong, compassionate women, who spend their days working to make people's lives better, and I thank them for their support and friendship. I pay tribute to all retiring members, particularly those in my own party: the member for Myall Lakes, the member for Oxley and the member for Clarence. All have distinguished themselves in their years of service and I wish them and their families all the best in the future.

Regional MPs are often required to spend long periods away from their electorates and that places a heavy burden on our electorate office staff. They play a critical role and I extend my thanks to all of them. I say a special thankyou to my staff in Bathurst—Belinda, Daryl and Laura—for their tireless efforts in supporting our community. I also thank my ministerial team, who have worked hard this year to support me in everything I do—especially my chief of staff, Sally White. I also thank my amazing electorate office of Bathurst and the people I represent. I thank them for the privilege they have given me in serving them over the years.

I conclude by thanking my family. The job of Deputy Premier is an extraordinary honour but the sad reality is that it involves considerable time away from my family. This year I have missed birthdays, milestones and had far more dinners on the road than around the table with them. I know I am far from alone in this regard. My wife, Jo, deserves more time than I have been allocated here, so I am forced to be brief. I thank her profoundly for everything that she does to support me in this role and for her endless patience which members of this House will appreciate she needs living with me. To my children, Rhayne, Keely and Scout, I am so proud of the adults that they are growing into. I hope they know that every day I spend away from them is focused on making our State a better place in which to live, work and raise a family. I close by wishing everyone a restful Christmas, spent with family and friends. Drive safely, if you are travelling, and I look forward to seeing you all on the campaign trail.

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry) (17:07): Somehow we are back again giving Christmas felicitations to one another and to the people of New South Wales in the electorates we represent. This year has gone extremely fast. I know it is a cliché to say this, but I cannot believe we are here again giving Christmas felicitations. I start by sending best wishes to the people of New South Wales, to the people we all are privileged to represent in this place, the first Parliament of this country. I hope that everyone is able to spend some of the Christmas festive season surrounded by people they love and people who support them in their life.

A lot of people are struggling at the moment. They have struggled through various challenges throughout the year on top of a really rough couple of years generally across the State. I pay tribute in particular to our frontline workers in New South Wales, including our nurses and our health workers. I have personal experience of their incredible expertise. I pay tribute also to our wonderful teachers, our transport workers, our police, our paramedics, our council workers—everyone who serves our State. We would be in a much worse place if it was not for all of the frontline workers. It may not seem like it to many of them, but many of us see them, value them, and know what they bring in public service to the people we represent in Parliament.

To the team at Parliament who works in Macquarie Street, I think it is a bit of a mystery sometimes to the people of New South Wales what happens inside this rather grand building. To Mark Webb and everyone who works on Macquarie Street, I thank them for their utter professionalism at all times. To the Clerk's team, led by Helen Minnican, I thank them for their incredible hard work in serving us all and ensuring that we do not make too many mistakes—even if sometimes some of us do not sign amendments in public interest debates. I thank them for their utter professionalism at all times. I imagine that it is not easy working with a large group of politicians—in fact I know it is not easy, so hats off to the Clerks.

I thank everyone else who works at Parliament. It is incredible how Hansard captures everything that is said. I thank the attendants, the catering staff and all the staff in Café Quorum—Kylie and everyone who keep us caffeinated and who have become friends over the years. They are lovely people who in their own way continue to serve the people of New South Wales. I thank the Parliamentary Library and the cleaners—as Chris said, the cleaners in our Macquarie Street offices as well as those in our electorate offices. I thank the press gallery, the Fourth Estate, who do a wonderful job for our democracy even if, at times, we might grit our teeth. I make the point that one of the things we should value most about living in this great country, particularly in New South Wales, is that we have a free press that can criticise a government and an opposition and we can use that to make our case to the people of New South Wales.

To the team of staff across Parliament working for the Opposition, the staff in our electorate offices and the staff members who come into Parliament on sitting weeks to help us serve our communities, thank you for everything. Working for a member of Parliament is not the easiest job in the world. I know that all members would say that our staff members are constantly going above and beyond. I say on behalf of Labor that for us it has

always been a team effort. We are the party of the collective. Our staff give up their time, often volunteering on the weekends, and they are constantly doing work early in the morning and late at night. We literally could not do it without them. It will continue to be a team effort. I acknowledge that in the lead-up to the next four months we will be asking them to do a lot. Their commitment to our cause, our movement and our case for change in New South Wales does not go unseen. We acknowledge them and the amazing work that they do for us.

With the indulgence of the House I will thank my staff in particular. Luke Heffernan is an absolute font of knowledge. Somehow he has in his brain information about almost every school in New South Wales. I would be lost without Luke. To Emma Hogan, Lois Fisher, Julian Gonzalez and Laine Fox in my electorate office, thank you for constantly reminding me that I need to go and do the signing in St Marys; for always keeping me abreast of what is happening in the electorate; and for keeping people in our community so well served. One of the things about having a marginal seat and being out in the community constantly asking people how I can help them, is that it generates a lot of work for electorate office staff. They are always on the ball, responding and getting results. I cannot walk down the main street of St Marys without someone telling me that someone has fixed their issue. That shows me that my office is working extremely well. I will never forget everything that they have done for me.

To my boss, the Opposition leader, I hope this is one of the last occasions that I refer to him as the Leader of the Opposition. He has given his all, and then some, to the job of leading the Opposition in New South Wales and not just to the challenge of holding the Government to account—an incredible job in itself and something that is wonderful about the democratic processes in this country—but also in doing the hard work that is required to present a positive alternative vision to the people of New South Wales. We are going to see a lot of that in the next four months. It is an honour to work with him and be his deputy. I love every minute of it, and I mean that. I cannot wait for the campaign.

To my colleagues in the State parliamentary Labor Party, it has been the honour of my professional life to be the Deputy Leader of the Labor Party. We have put in a lot of years leading up to the March 2023 election. A lot of people have worked extremely hard over the years, since 2011 in particular, working in their own electorates, winning new electorates and continuing the work of campaigning in communities. When we go to the people of New South Wales and present ourselves for judgement and present an alternate vision for the people of New South Wales, I want to make sure that the people in the Labor Party understand that they should be proud of all the work that they have done throughout the years.

We have a very busy few months ahead. Take time to recoup, spend time with your loved ones, with your kids, your parents, everyone in your life who helps you recharge, and get ready for a very busy time. I know that we all are wishing everyone a merry Christmas. I wish a merry Christmas to everyone across the Chamber, across the political divide. I look forward to seeing everyone on the campaign trail, at pre-poll. I am not encouraging anyone to come to the Londonderry pre-poll; they will be right, that is fine. I am looking forward to the contest, as we all are. We have many disagreements and different views on how to get to the end result but we are all here to serve the people of New South Wales. How privileged are we to go to the people of our electorates every four years and put our careers in their hands, as it should be in a democracy.

I finish by saying to the people of my electorate of Londonderry, it has been a very challenging year for me personally, and you have been incredible to me. In response, I have tried very hard for you and I continue to try very hard for you. I ask for your support again in March. I hope I will be back here to continue serving you, hopefully on the other side of the Chamber. I continue to be committed to you as my number one priority. Thank you for supporting me and for keeping me busy on all the various challenges we face. Merry Christmas to all and hopefully see you next year.

Debate interrupted.

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit the consideration of any messages from the Legislative Council immediately following the valedictory speech of the member for Pittwater.

Motion agreed to.

*Bills***NSW RECONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY BILL 2022****Returned**

The SPEAKER: I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the NSW Reconstruction Authority Bill 2022 with amendments. I order that consideration of the amendments be set down as an order of the day for a later hour.

*Motions***CHRISTMAS FELICITATIONS****Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

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) (17:19): As we approach the festive season and on the final sitting day of 2022, it is my pleasure to give my first Christmas felicitations as Leader of the House. We have achieved a lot this year: 68 divisions, 91 bills introduced, 69 bills passed, 205 reports tabled, eight petitions with 10,000 signatures, and 535 questions without notice. The New South Wales Parliament—the oldest in Australia—functions like a well-oiled machine, but that is not by accident. It is thanks to the many people who work behind the scenes in this wonderful institution. To our distinguished Clerk, Helen Minnican, and her team, Carly Maxwell, Simon Johnston, John Young and Ben Foxe and all your other support staff, thank you so much. You have provided an abundance of support to my office and to me and we thank you very much.

I thank my neighbouring MP for Davidson, Jonathan O'Dea, for being an impartial and fair Speaker. I wish you well as you leave this place and embark on your future endeavours. I also thank the Deputy Speaker, the Assistant Speaker and Temporary Speakers who all keep this place going. The Government Whip, Nathaniel Smith, is not only the biggest but also the best Whip that the Chamber has ever seen. He has risen to the occasion. It has been a pleasure working with you, Nathaniel. You are a great parliamentarian and a great local MP. I thank you for your loyalty and friendship and I know your future is very bright. I also thank the Deputy Whips, Gurmish Singh and Lee Evans, who have done an outstanding job. I thank the Leader of Opposition Business, Ron Hoenig, for working so well with me. He is my learned friend. He is a man of great integrity. It is not easy being in this role where you both have to keep the place going but also be members of Parliament. I thank him very much for his diligence and integrity. It has been a pleasure to work with him.

I have worked well with all members of the crossbench. I especially single out the member for Sydney, the member for Lake Macquarie and the member for Wagga Wagga. Thank you for the work that you do in this place representing your communities but also for the constructive and professional way that you have worked with me and my office. To the members on all sides in this place, thank you for bringing the Chamber to life each day—sometimes too much to life. To the members departing, you will be missed, and I wish you all the very best in your future endeavours.

People often ask me how I get through all the work and manage my responsibilities, and the simple answer is that I have great staff. They are individually and as a team absolutely exceptional, incredibly hardworking, and they really look after each other. My ministerial staff are led by my chief of staff Chris Ashton. He is a great leader and manager and an excellent networker. He recruits exceptional staff. I am incredibly lucky to have him as my chief. Chris cares about policy. He has compassion and depth. I thank him very much for his hard work and friendship. My fantastic policy team is strongly led by Thomas Ryan. I also thank my advisers, Marc Landrigan, Zoe Hilton and Peter Bowers. They are all smart, they have great experience, two have first-class honours and we only have one political economist amongst our team. They are absolutely outstanding.

My parliamentary team has been instrumental in the smooth running of the House. I am, of course, referring to Adelaide Cuneo and Thomas Ryan. These two are both exceptional and they have been incredibly efficient. They have always acted with honesty and integrity. They have helped build incredible trust between my office and the MPs. I do not wish to give them the kiss of death, but I think they are both future MPs. My fierce media director, Jordan Matthews, has led an outstanding media team, including Miki Nicholson and Caterina Polistina, who have completely worked wonders. They have turned someone who has been used to talking to the judiciary for years into someone who can actually talk to the real people of our State. I especially thank Jordan Matthews for his leadership, loyalty and hard work. He is incredibly talented. Miki has been with me for a long time. It has been great to see her grow. Katerina has been an absolutely great addition to our team. The departmental liaison officers in my office are all great. I thank Rebekah Stuart, Sarah Puglisi, Holly McGahey, Jehan Beeldman and Ryan Hanrahan.

I thank my great ministerial drivers, Skinny Warren and Chis. I also thank our departmental staff. It was great to see Warren in Florence on the television last week. I thank all the departmental staff from across the many departments I have the pleasure to work with for their hard work. I also give a special shout-out to my sadly departed staff James Malin and Tabatha Jenkins, who have moved onto bigger and better things this year. I really appreciate the work they did, and they are greatly missed. The great Ku-ring-gai electorate office is led by Deanna Turner. I often say that the best decision I ever made was to keep Deanna Turner on as a staff member. She worked for Barry O'Farrell and she has been absolutely fantastic. I thank her very much; she knows how much I appreciate her. Di Woods has been employed in the office since 2015 when I first came into Parliament, but she has been a friend since the 1990s. She is absolutely invaluable. She has informed me that she will not be with me after the election. I will miss her terribly and I thank her so much for everything that she has done for me. I also acknowledge Janet Newing, Emily Keris and Ryan Aivazian. I thank them for all they do for me; they are fantastic.

I pay tribute to the beautiful electorate of Ku-ring-gai and its people, who have given me the great privilege of representing them in this House. I thank the Premier, whom I consider to be an exceptional intellect, a person of great character and a wonderful leader. He has a strong reform agenda, and I thank him for his friendship and the faith that he has shown in making me Leader of the House and a senior Minister in the Government. I thank the complete army of people who work in Parliament, from the cleaners to the security guards and the people who work in catering. We work in an incredibly big and complex Parliament. I thank them all very much.

Almost finally, I thank the whole of the Coalition team and their staff. We are a group of people united in the belief that our team has the economic and policy values that will push our State in the right direction in the future. We are a group of people who understand the concept of aspiration, hard work and opportunity. We also understand the importance of adding education and training to that, as well investing in services, whether it is hospitals or other government agencies. As the son of an immigrant and someone who went to the local primary school and non-selective high school, I feel that I have been incredibly fortunate in my life. We understand that everyone in our State deserves the opportunities that I have had in my life and to achieve their potential. Finally, I wish everybody a restful Christmas. I wish everyone the best on the hustings, especially our side, and I look forward to seeing a Perrottet-Toole Government re-elected in March, leading our State to a brighter future.

Debate interrupted.

Bills

MOTOR ACCIDENT INJURIES AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Returned

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

Motions

CHRISTMAS FELICITATIONS

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron) (17:29): I contribute to this year's Christmas felicitations. Whether or not one chooses to celebrate Christmas, as 2022 draws to a close it is fitting to reflect on and celebrate the year and the parliamentary term that was. As the world slowly but surely reopened following the challenging couple of years in the shadow of a difficult global pandemic, it seems that normalcy could return to our lives, our Parliament and our communities. Instead, the State faced the challenges of a La Niña season, including floods and infestation; the consequences of an internationally condemned war in the Ukraine, which saw oil and gas prices soar, affecting every aspect of the distribution network and driving inflation to a large extent; and the loss of a head of State who, merely ceremonially or not, represented stability and endurance to many in Australia and in New South Wales. Author Taylor Caldwell once wrote:

And that, of course, is the message of Christmas. We are never alone. Not when the night is darkest, the wind coldest, the world seemingly most indifferent.

Whatever challenges have befallen our communities, the holiday season gives us both time and a reason to remember what we have overcome and what we remain grateful to have experienced. In that spirit, I thank my friend the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Kogarah, Chris Minns, for the unwavering dedication and zeal he has brought to the role of NSW Labor leader. I thank him for his support of our party and his determination to move to that light on the hill that can and will yield a better future for the people of New South Wales.

I also thank all the hardworking men and women in the Opposition leader's office, who have been instrumental in making sure that the Opposition leader and the shadow ministry have so capably held the New South Wales Government to account. James Cullen and his team's long hours and dedication to the office have not gone unnoticed, and our State has been stronger for their contribution. In a similar vein, I thank the deputy leader and member for Londonderry, Pru Car, for her indefatigable devotion to the Labor cause, even in the face of personal health challenges. During last year's felicitations, I said that she makes working so hard for her community and espousing Labor values look so effortless. That has remained true each step along the way.

I express my deep respect and gratitude to the Opposition Whip, my friend Anna Watson, the member for Shellharbour. I also express my appreciation of the Deputy Opposition Whip, the member for The Entrance, David Mehan, who I refer to as my second local member. There are no finer overseers of the Opposition's role in this House. As I have said before but it bears repeating, their ability to muster the troops is indeed a testament to the enormous respect and fear that members of this House have for them both because a member does not get a pair unless they do what they are told. That is in large part due to the tremendous hard work and unfailing performance of none other than Colleen from the Opposition Whip's office. Despite working long and indescribably dynamic hours, Colleen has never faltered as the linchpin who holds the Opposition together and who maintains our smooth running.

As the manager of opposition business, I particularly recognise the Speaker and member for Davidson, the Hon. Jonathan O'Dea, for the even-handed professionalism that he has brought to one of the hardest jobs in the Parliament. I thank you for the cordiality that you have afforded me and my Labor colleagues. I also recognise the major change in the paradigm of the bearpit that has occurred as a result of your stewardship of the ancient role of Speaker that has improved the important democracy that takes place in the People's House. As you leave Parliament and the office of Speaker, you take with you the gratitude of not only all members of the House but also the people of New South Wales, on whom you have bestowed a far better, more democratic and dynamic Chamber than those who came before you.

My gratitude goes to the Deputy Speaker, the Assistant Speaker and all the Temporary Speakers for the unfailing independence that they have shown in the chair. I also recognise and thank Helen Minnican, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, the Deputy Clerk, Carly Maxwell, and all the team in the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly's office for the outstanding job they do to make sure that this Chamber functions in accordance with the Constitution and the rules made under it. Without their guidance, professionalism and assistance, many members—particularly me—would be at a loss. I thank them for all they do behind the scenes and for the professional advice and support they provide.

I thank the Government Whip, the member for Wollondilly. I have the highest respect for his father, whom I know well as a learned friend. He has shown cordiality and respect to me and other members of the Opposition. The House can only work with cordiality, respect and trust between the Government Whip and the Opposition Whip. I pay tribute to the member for Wollondilly for his efforts. I thank the Deputy Whip, the member for Heathcote, for the cordiality and assistance that he has afforded all members. I thank my counterpart, the Leader of the House, member for Ku-ring-gai and Minister for too many portfolios to list, for his confidence and candour and that of his staff.

The Government is a minority government. Although confidence and supply has been provided to the Government by the Opposition, it has only been because of the trust, respect, integrity and fierce negotiation during the past year that the House has been able to run in an efficient manner that has not resulted in the government of the day being destabilised so that the people of New South Wales could be governed effectively by the Government that they elected for four years. That task involved considerable trust, confidentiality and discussions. As tough as he would have been as an opponent on the other side of the bar, democracy works in New South Wales as a result of his efforts behind the scenes.

I thank the Premier, the Deputy Premier, and all the Government and crossbench members. Despite the theatrics for which the New South Wales Parliament's bearpit is so well known, I remain pleased that when members leave the Chamber, we are all capable of recognising and valuing each other as representatives of our respective communities. I also acknowledge the staff of the Department of Parliamentary Services. I thank them for their hard work keeping the Parliament running. Without the cleaners, the Clerks, the ushers, the special constables and all the officers of the department this place would neither function nor endure. I thank them for keeping us safe, ensuring that our offices are clean, helping to solve our computer issues, organising rapid antigen testing and making sure that we are fed.

I thank the members of the press gallery for keeping us honest. There would be no democracy without them. Despite the discomfort that some members might feel from time to time, they are more than an essential part of the democratic fabric of this State. I acknowledge everybody who, in one capacity or another, has been part of my team at the Heffron electorate office this year: Omar, Blair, Charlotte, Gabriella, Joanne, Aldan, Joshua,

Boris and Dorothy. I thank them for their assiduous dedication to making sure that every constituent who contacts me has the same opportunity to seek assistance and representations. They consistently treat residents with courtesy and compassion as they strive to have their issues addressed. For that, I remain truly grateful.

I thank my Labor comrades in this Chamber and in the other place for the confidence and support that they have afforded me, both as a member of the Labor team and Manager of Opposition Business. It is truly a privilege to work with such talented and steadfast representatives who never cease to put the interests and wellbeing of their communities and the whole State above their own. I look forward to the battles ahead, knowing that I am privileged to stand with them all. Finally, I thank my family: my ever-understanding wife, Christine, and our two sons, Ben and Matt. I know very well the sacrifices that they have had to endure and the patience that they have had to exhibit so that I may represent the community I love so dearly both in Parliament and in local government before I was elected. I conclude by wishing those who celebrate Christmas in my community—and, indeed, throughout New South Wales—a very safe Christmas. I wish those who do not a happy holiday. I hope that people get an opportunity to spend time with their loved ones and have a vibrant, prosperous and happy new year.

The SPEAKER: I thank the member for Heffron. On a personal level, I very much appreciated those comments.

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (17:41): As the song goes:

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas
Everywhere you go

I thought that would wake everyone up. Isn't it a great time of the year? Christmas is coming and my kids are going to send me broke. Firstly, I acknowledge all the dedicated staff in the Chamber, including the attendants and Hansard, who do a magnificent job, for the work they have done in the past year. I thank the caterers and the cleaners, who look after us every morning; the IT staff, Amir Keshwani; Justin and Glenn from the facilities team; Helen Gors; Mark Webb; Simon Johnston; Carly Maxwell; and our wonderful Clerk, Helen Minnican—I hope you enjoyed that musical performance. The invaluable knowledge that Helen gives me makes my role as Government Whip a lot easier, so thank you very much.

Special thanks go to Ben, Manuela, Todd and Rickee at the Table Office for being so accessible. I thank the Speaker, Jonathan O'Dea, for his leadership in this Chamber. What can I say? He brought out the wig today, but I wanted to see a little bit more. I thank his wonderful staff, including Paul, Jodi and Shu-Fang. I thank them for all their help and assistance. I thank the Government Whip in the Legislative Council, the Hon. Scott Farlow and his staff, including Bo Ok, for working hard with me to keep this place going. I also mention the Leader of the House and the "Minister for many things", Alister Henskens, SC. He has been a wonder to work with. As he said in his Christmas felicitation, the Government has passed a record amount of legislation, especially over the past few months. I recognise the leadership of Tom and Adelaide and thank them for all their great work and loyalty. They have been a pleasure to work with and it has been a great time. I also thank Damien Tudehope and Sam Tedeschi for negotiating the passage of bills in the other place. What can I say about the Opposition Whip, Ms Anna Watson?

Ms Anna Watson: So much!

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH: It has been an absolute joy to work with her into the late hours of the night and she has put up with my grumpy moods. Her executive officer, Colleen, who works around the clock, has been an absolute treasure. I thank her very much for all her hard work and I wish her a very Merry Christmas. I thank my Deputy Whip, the member for Heathcote, who comes into the office from time to time with funny dry jokes when we need a pick-me-up. He has been a magnificent support to me. I thank The Nationals Whip, the member for Coffs Harbour, for all his assistance. We have had many lovely conversations in the Chamber during divisions, if only the microphone could pick them up. I thank Viv Lee, the member's assistant. Viv has been glorious in keeping this place going, with community recognition statements and private members' statements going to all hours of the night. She puts up with my John Cleese from *Fawlty Towers* impersonations when things are going wrong or when people are annoying me, which is usually every day.

I thank Asha Towers, who runs the Whip's office. She has done a magnificent job in the role. She has made the office a dream team. Our office is hardworking, organised and efficient, but most of all we have fun. We have formed great relationships. The professional service that Asha has given to this place makes it run well. Everyone is aware of what is happening when, and everyone comes down when a division is called. It has been fantastic. Great work, Asha. It is not just the waft of popcorn that is infectious because the Whip's office has enjoyed a steady stream of visitors, including parliamentary liaison officers watching question time and even late-night sing-a-longs with Minister Anderson and Minister Henskens. There have been fantastic nights of long-running debates, especially when members on the other side of the House repeat speeches hour after hour.

My job is to keep the show running, like an opera, and keep the actors happy and fuelled with copious amounts of lollies. Being the Whip is like being a producer and director of a show—except it is one of most boring shows in town. My biggest achievement as Whip was the installation of Whip cam in the Chamber. Big Brother Nat is watching. I thank my close friend of over 25 years Premier Perrottet for his magnificent leadership throughout this tough year, getting us through the pandemic and giving me this opportunity. I thank his office, including Bran Black, Charis Ombico, Peter Phelps, Taylor Gramoski and the whole team.

I thank the parliamentary liaison officers, Pat Wynne, Rowan Carter, Gab Habibi—Mr Parramatta—Dimitry Palmer, Liam Bowden, Justin Cordi, Angus McCaffrey, Dan Rubenach, Felix Fierro, Ellie Stamatelatos, Aron Mola, Sarah Bird, Kim Preston-Hiney, Prue Middleton, Clayton Hopper, John Abi-Saab, John Brazier, Richard Egan, Millie Burnett, Eliza Cabassi, Michell Coveney, Sally Judson, and Emma Rogers. I thank my electorate office, led by Zoe McInerney, including Jenny, Jacquie, Tina and Isabelle. They do a fantastic job keeping Wollondilly going. On behalf of the Whips, I wish all members and their families a happy and holy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Finally, I thank my wife and my girls, Chloe and Charlotte. Charlotte turned 11 today and I wish my little darling a happy birthday. They make my world a better place. It is not easy to put up with me being away from home.

The SPEAKER: I thank the member for Wollondilly for a wonderful singing performance and speech. I recall his father making a longer musical contribution in this Chamber. It is nice to see fine traditions continuing.

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (17:47): I think it might be time for Nathaniel's pills after that performance. I begin by thanking you, Mr Speaker, for all your hard work. I wish you a happy Christmas and all the best in your retirement. It is that time of the year again. It is the last sitting week for the year and also the end of this four-year term of government. It is a fantastic time to acknowledge all those in Parliament who assist us in our duties as members. I start by thanking the constituents in Shellharbour, who are a truly fantastic part of this great State. I am coming towards the end of my third term as the member for Shellharbour. That is almost 12 years representing my community, but it feels like five minutes. I love representing my community. It is the best electorate in New South Wales. If any member wants to argue that with me, they can go right ahead.

Despite being on this side of the House, we have achieved a lot in those 12 years. I am grateful to the residents of Shellharbour, who have continued to support me. I am lucky to have a great team in my electorate office. I thank Emerson Burke and Louise Hogan. I acknowledge and thank my senior staffer, Sandy Mitrevski, who is currently on maternity leave looking after her babies, Alexia and Olivia. I thank Robert Cummins, my acting senior. He is sitting in the corner of the Chamber and does not want to look up. He is filling in for Sandy while she is on maternity leave. Rob has been an incredible support to me since joining the Shellharbour office. He is highly motivated, intelligent and loyal. I value loyalty the most. I greatly respect and admire him. He is an absolutely rarity. I am pleased that he is part of my team. I also acknowledge his wife, Hetty Cummins, who is in the House tonight. Hetty is a part of the Cummins wheelhouse. She is an incredible woman. From the minute they arrived in Shellharbour they have been of great support to me and to the Labor Party in Shellharbour. They hit everybody like a road train; everybody was talking about them for weeks, wanting to know where they came from. I am pleased that they moved to Shellharbour. I thank them both.

I also acknowledge Lyndsay and his wife, Jan, who are in the Chamber tonight. Lyndsay is a great cartoonist. I welcome them to the Parliament. My office runs like a well-oiled machine. My constituents and I are lucky to have such a great team in Shellharbour. Their relentless work is incredible. I acknowledge my friend the member for Heffron, Opposition Leader of the House. He is an incredible human being. He works so hard, and it is a pleasure to work with him. He and I have known each other for over 30 years. I acknowledge my counterpart, the Government Whip, the member for Wollondilly, who just sang in the Chamber. We hold government seminars together and at every one he cannot help but break out in song. He is the ultimate showman.

I acknowledge the Deputy Whip, the member for Heathcote, and The Nationals Whip, the member for Coffs Harbour. I thank the member for Coffs Harbour for his ongoing support. It has been a pleasure working with him. We have fun along the way but, make no mistake, when the Parliament returns in March or April we will be on the Government side of the House. He will never win another division as long as I am in this place. Those days are over for him. It has been 12 long years on this side of the House, and I look forward to swapping to the other side when we return. I thank Asha Towers and Viv Lee in the Whip's office. They do a great job watching and listening. I give a big shout-out to Mr David Mehan, the Deputy Whip. He works well alongside me. I acknowledge and thank the Hansard team, the Clerks, the special constables, the catering staff, the cleaners and all those who make our lives in this place so much easier.

I turn now to Colleen Symington in the Whip's office. Colleen is caring and loyal. Her work ethic is second to none, her knowledge is incredible and her insight is first rate. She is a bit like Mrs bin Laden—she controls me,

and it is incredible. I do not know who is running whom in this place, but I think that Colleen is my boss. My office simply could not run without her. She looks after every member of Parliament. I wish all members a happy and healthy Christmas. It is hard being married to a politician, so I thank my husband, Gary, who puts up with my rubbish. I thank my two children, Sophia and Joseph, and my three stepchildren, Johanna, Matt and Aaron. I thank them for putting up with me as well. I wish everyone a happy Christmas and new year.

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (17:53): I start by wishing members on both sides of the House a merry Christmas and a wonderful end to 2022. I acknowledge the retiring members, including Minister Brad Hazzard—who has worked extremely hard over the past couple of years, particularly during the COVID pandemic—Ms Shelley Hancock, Mr Rob Stokes, Mr Nick Lulich, Mr Guy Zangari, Mr David Elliott, Mr Geoff Lee, Mr Victor Dominello, Mr Jamie Parker, Mr Kevin Conolly, Ms Gabrielle Upton and the Speaker.

I single out our retiring National Party members. I thank Stephen Bromhead—Brommy, we know you are doing it tough at the moment, mate. Thank you for everything you have done for the party over the past 11½ years of service. I thank you for being a mentor to us younger Nats as we came through. I thank Melinda Pavey, my neighbour to the south, for everything she has done for the people of Oxley over a 20-year parliamentary career. I know she will be sorely missed. I wish her all the very best for her future career. I also thank Chris Gulaptis, the Jerry Seinfeld to Geoff Provest's Kramer. I am going to miss you, mate. You have made Parliament very fun. Thank you for wearing a darker shade of denim to the Chamber today per my request.

I wish a merry Christmas to the attendants, Clerks, Hansard staff and all the committee staff. You all make Parliament run and we could not do it without you. I thank Asha in the Whip's office. Particularly, I thank Viv for everything she has done for the Nats over the last couple of years. I thank Anna and David from the Opposition Whips office for being so decent to work with. I thank Nat, Alistair and Tom Adelaide and say to them: We did it. We went 12 months without losing a single division. Go team!

I say to my electorate office staff—Katie, Craig, Di and Cheryl—that they have done a fantastic job for me over the past couple of years under pretty difficult circumstances during COVID. I hope you all get to enjoy some downtime. To my family, I say it has been a pretty difficult couple of years with COVID and me being away so much. I hope I can enjoy some downtime with you guys over Christmas before the campaign heats up. To our leaders, Tooley and Dom Perrottet, I hope you get to enjoy some downtime because we need to come out fighting. We have been a good government over the past 3½ years and we deserve four more years, as the chant proclaimed at the end of question time today.

I say to the citizens of the Coffs Harbour electorate that we live in a fantastic city. We know that there is so much more work to be done in our city over couple of years. We must count ourselves very lucky when we look at other parts of New South Wales that have struggled through natural disasters this year. I wish all members the chance for reflection and downtime over the Christmas break. It has been a pretty hectic year—a pretty hectic couple of years, actually. With that, I note that we are nearly at six o'clock. I wish all members a merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Debate interrupted.

Members

VALEDICTORY SPEECHES

The SPEAKER: While the member for Pittwater has not asked me to acknowledge any particular visitors to the Chamber, I note three of them. I welcome former Premier Barrie Unsworth; former Opposition leader and Leader of the Liberal Party, John Brogden; and the person who is closest to the member for Pittwater, Sophie Stokes, who is a lovely person too. Without further ado, I call the member for Pittwater, Robert Stokes.

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport) (17:57): Mark Antony declared he came not to praise Caesar but to bury him. Similarly, my purpose tonight is not self-praise but, rather, to administer to myself the parliamentary last rites. As members know, I have decided not to nominate for preselection to stand for the seat of Pittwater—at least not as a Liberal! It is an incredible privilege and responsibility to deliver some of the last words in the last sitting day of the last chapter of the Fifty-Seventh Parliament of New South Wales. It is a privilege because there is no valedictory address after mine, and a responsibility because there is no rebuttal to the claims I now make. For those of you watching the clock, I intend to deliver my speech taking more time than Victor but less than Brad. Tempted to aim for greater brevity than Victor, I composed a haiku. It reads:

Ending, yes, leaving
Parliament later today
Very good summer.

However, it seemed a bit anticlimactic to leave it there. I am partial to a bit of etymology. When presented with the opportunity to provide a valedictory speech my first question was what is a valedictory? Where did the word come from? Valedictory is derived from two Latin words: "valere", to value; and "dicto", to speak. A valedictory is literally a speech about the things that are important—a reflection on values. I value my colleagues. I have some unusual colleagues. Some of the strangest people I have ever met sit in this place. I am quietly amazed any of us have been elected—yet, to quote Jeff Fenech, "I love youse all". I am unsure whether I would vote for any of you, but I do love you.

I recall that in my very first partyroom meeting a jet screamed past the CBD, creating a terrific noise. One MP dived onto the floor, rolled over to the window and declared, "Don't worry, boys. It's one of ours". Then there was the time I received the gift of a plant after delivering a speech to an environmental group. I got into the lift with a bunch of Nationals MPs who looked at me dubiously. One said, "What have you got there?" I said, "It's a baby tree." "What the hell are you going to do with it?" asked another. "I'm going to plant it," I said. Things were getting pretty hostile. Fortunately the doors opened, and I was able to escape as one called out, "Typical Stokes, you greenie!"

I recall the time I went down to the parliamentary prayer fellowship, which at least until this point was a relaxed and supportive nonpartisan group of MPs who would get together to pray for one another and those in crisis. David Elliott had just been elected and turned up to his first fellowship meeting. "Stokes!" he barked at me. "Rome or Canterbury?" I had no idea what he was talking about. "Rome or Canterbury!" he demanded. I finally cottoned on. "Canterbury," I ventured tentatively, uncertain at the reception my answer would receive. "Good," Elliott replied. "We've got the numbers."

Mr David Elliott: We still do!

Mr ROB STOKES: Speaking of religion, I remember once after a Community Cabinet meeting on the South Coast that Mike Baird, Andrew Constance and I agreed to go for an early morning surf at an isolated break before heading back to Sydney. It was pre-dawn, and Andrew pointed to a couple of boiling bait balls in the ocean that were visible despite the dim light. Mike must have known that God was protecting him that morning because, despite big fish literally jumping out of the water to escape from some unseen monster of the deep, he gaily paddled right through the maelstrom of terrified sea life. Aware of the law of averages—and hoping that his aura might protect me too—I just kept up with Mike and left Andrew to serve as a bit of berley, if it came to it. I still remember his small pleading voice: "Stokesy, Stokesy, please don't leave me!"

But I am pleased Andrew left me three of his amazing staff: Melissa Ceccaldi, who—religion, again—I actually think is an angel; infrastructure guru Angus McKenzie-Wills, who turns 30 this Saturday; and Dan Rubenach, whose thirtieth birthday is today, which is extraordinary for a man whose demeanour indicates a birthdate sometime in the early twentieth century. He is the Benjamin Button of the bearpit. Café Quorum is the backdrop to a lot of palace intrigue and serves a double role as the place of business for government drivers. I have been so fortunate to work with some amazing drivers, like Jason Stuttle and Rob Connell, who also serve as critics, political advisers and life coaches. With some trepidation, I look forward to the publication of Jason's autobiography entitled *Chair of the Steering Committee*. There are so many stories I could share—but what happens in the car, stays in the car.

Mr Brad Hazzard: Don't bet on it.

Mr ROB STOKES: There are some poignant memories, too. I share a brotherhood of grief with the member for Lakemba following the death of two little boys, Jihad Darwiche and Andrew Encinas, who were killed in a tragic accident at Banksia Road Public School in the member's electorate when I served as Minister for Education. That tragedy continues to weigh heavily on my soul, as I know it does for the member for Lakemba, who is a strong, talented and deeply ethical man, whom I admire.

On another occasion, I recall being chased by camera crews about the latest culture war in a public school when I was on private leave finishing a uni course at Oxford. I was the subject of a pretty brutal Bill Leak cartoon that depicted me speaking from my freshly severed head next to some apparently quite happy terrorists. My university colleagues were appalled and urged me to consider legal action. Some even offered to fund it. The next morning, they approached me to follow up on their offer. I said, "It's okay. Terrible news—Bill's dead. It was his last cartoon. He passed away overnight." "What happened?" asked a concerned American. "Apparently it was a massive heart attack," I replied. I still remember my classmate Sergio—a Minister for Finance from Mexico—nodding approvingly and saying, "Solid respect".

I value our strong, impartial public service. While I will not name those public service leaders I currently work with, for obvious reasons, I can mention those who have moved on: Professor Mark Scott, AO, Terry Bailey

and Jim Betts. You are giants. The next value that yells at my conscience is gratitude. I am so grateful to those who have sacrificed their freedom to empower me to serve.

First, to my darling wife, Sophie. You have supported me unselfishly. Life has thrown you more headwinds than we anticipated but you have navigated them and adjusted the sails, as a wise, beautiful and elegant mariner. To my children, Edward, Anna and Louisa, collectively you have taught me so much. They challenge my biases and prejudices. They are fine citizens and will make fine ancestors. You are my greatest treasures and my greatest contributions to the world.

To my parents, Toni and Gordon, and outlaws, Tim and Jo. You have been unfailingly supportive, encouraging and generous. One of my enduring childhood memories is of dad returning from work as a doctor on the Thai border following the Cambodian Civil War, sick with typhoid. His example, and mum's sacrifice in raising four kids alone while he used his skills abroad, stood in stark contrast to the prevailing culture of self above service. It still does. To my siblings, nieces, nephews, I love you all. You run businesses, support our economy, support our community. You are all wonderful Australians. And to my community of Pittwater, we share the best bit of the best country on the planet. Thank you for your trust.

To the Liberal Party, the Pittwater Liberals are different. The right wing of the party tends to be economically and socially conservative, the left economically and socially progressive, Pittwater economically progressive and socially conservative. It defies the informal ideological cleavage of the Liberal Party—a nonconformism which I am proud to emulate.

The Pittwater party includes some magnificent Liberals: John and Lucy Brogden, both AM; Jim and Sally Langley and their families; Stu and Deb Cameron; formidable women like Wendy Starkie, Jennifer Harris, Cherry Cordner and of course the indefatigable Bronwyn Bishop, AO; Dr Stephen and Elizabeth Choularton; Dale and Angela Cohen; Phil Richardson and my friend Jason Falinski; Councillor Bianca Crevlin, who badgers effectively for the Narrabeen ward; and Councillor Rory Amon, a veritable mole who digs away in support of community interests. I also acknowledge my great constituent and former Premier Barry Unsworth, who is in the gallery. I also acknowledge the Pittwater Labor Party, with John and Pam Ward who do such an amazing job. I always want the Labor Party to come second in Pittwater, so I certainly support them more than I do The Greens.

To my electorate office team, the aforementioned Melissa Ceccaldi, Jane Zietsman and Andrew Johnston: Jane has incredible compassion and serves with distinction, and Andrew has been my wingman for longer than I care to admit. They are extraordinary servants of the people—quiet Australian heroes. And to my former electorate staff, Jill Dubois, Julie Heggarty, Rob Johnston, Peter Heaton-Jones—who went on to serve in the House of Commons—and Tanya Sandoe: You all served with distinction. You made a difference. I salute you all. I value my ministerial office team.

Being an effective Minister is not about how smart you think you are but rather how ignorant you know you are. The trick is to surround yourself with people with greater capacity than you have and to listen to them. I have been profoundly fortunate to work with talented specialists in policy and in communication. I am grateful to all of my ministerial staff across the portfolios of Central Coast, heritage, environment, planning, public spaces, active transport, education, infrastructure, transport and roads, and cities.

All my current staff not already mentioned—Michael Bishop, Alex Cauchi, Estelle Grech, Claudia Emery, and Thjis Blokker—are an incredible group of talented Australians. I will never forget you. I am thankful for the difference you have made in making people's lives better, in ways they may never appreciate. My staff were led by three amazing chiefs: Tony Chappel, John McCormack, and Katie Stevenson. It is difficult to describe the complexity of their task: to manage high-functioning teams, to wrangle a huge number of competing stakeholders, to operate within a tight budget, to report to ridiculous time frames and to meet unreasonable expectations. If you can function as a chief of staff in a frontline portfolio in New South Wales, you can do anything.

Tony Chappel is the reason a container deposit scheme operates in New South Wales, and will operate across most of Australia. It was his vision and insistence more than anyone that overcame the cynics in Treasury and the Premier's Office, so that today we have radically reduced litter by volume across eastern Australia. John McCormack is a master of messaging. He led the charge to net zero in New South Wales, and it was JMac who led me to call out the distortion that negative gearing—the tax break you get for losing money—has on the capacity of young people and first home buyers to get access to the property market.

And Katie Stevenson. Wow. Her impact has been profound. Next time you wonder whose idea it was to open public school grounds for community use during the holidays, wonder no more. The extraordinary success of Share Our Space is Katie's idea, Katie's vision. The incredible impact that school infrastructure has made on the quality and capacity of the built school environment, Katie led that too. Right up until the finish line, Katie's policy passion is transforming New South Wales. It was Katie who led the current push for organ donation to be

championed on the NSW Service app. It has been an honour to have Katie work for me. She will go far. I suspect I will end up working for her.

I value action. It amazes me when members of Parliament oppose reform and offer no alternative. Parliament must be a place of action, not inertia. One of the most exhausting elements of my political career has been fighting rearguard actions against inaction. It is like punching a sponge. You just end up tuckered out, while the sponge simply resumes its former shape. Yet I have learnt not to give up and not to make the perfect the enemy of the good. Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "To reach a port we must sail, sometimes with the wind, and sometimes against it. But we must not drift or lie at anchor." Never give up. Two steps forward and one step back is still one step forward. Incremental change is better than no change at all. As Charles Lindblom noted, sometimes the job gets done by muddling through. Just ask a koala.

The next value is thrift. William Morris, the founder of the Arts and Craft movement, mused that before contemplating any acquisition, one should ask two questions, "Is it beautiful?" and "Is it useful?" In contemporary Australia we generally ask, "Is it big?" and "Is it cheap?" This week the global population reached eight billion—a billion more than when the Government came to office, and double since I was born. Some 40 per cent of the world's land surface area is dedicated to agriculture, yet 828 million people go to bed hungry. Fossil fuels supply 80 per cent of global energy, yet 1.5 billion people have no electricity. We fail to sustainably meet the basic needs of the present global population, let alone the growing population of tomorrow.

These are gargantuan challenges: how to govern mega cities to fight inequality; how to secure water and food supplies in the face of inevitable and accelerating environmental stresses; how to assist our poorer neighbours whose lives will be even more dramatically affected by a radically changing climate. We need to learn to do more with less, if we are to achieve net zero in time to preserve our society and environment. It is odd how we miss the link between having a strong economy and being economical. We need to think big about thinking small, and we need to learn that the things we share are often more valuable than the things we buy. My fear is that in grasping for what we crave to own, we sacrifice the common inheritance we share.

Leadership is a value that the times require. "Leader" is a word with interesting etymological origins—from the archaic German word "leiden" which meant "to go" or "to travel". As Seneca observed, "If one does not know to which port one is sailing, no wind is favourable". A leader sets the direction, explains the route, and ensures no-one is left behind. It is ironic that the modern German word "leiden" means "to suffer". I have seen the suffering endured by our leaders, and the toll leadership takes.

Mike Baird is a visionary leader. He led breezily—his manner was relaxed but his resolve was iron. Gladys Berejiklian is a leader for tough times. She helped us all traverse a rocky path and taught us to look ahead, not down. Dom is a different kind of leader. If Mike is a thoroughbred and Gladys a workhorse, then Dom is a stallion. I suppose that makes Barra a brumby. If Andrew Constance is Eeyore and David Elliott is Pooh Bear, then Dom is Tigger. He has irrepressible enthusiasm, boundless energy, wild intelligence, curious intellect, little discipline and deep compassion. His ambition is for our society, and his motivation is love. He may look like a stick but he's a good stick, and I implore New South Wales to stick with him. He is our best shot to successfully navigate the stormy times ahead.

The last value is freedom. My time in Parliament has taught me a great deal about freedom—that it is ephemeral, fragile and threatened. Yet freedom is the value that empowers each of us to make the biggest contribution to the lives of others. Freedom is an impossible paradox. The more we seek to enforce it or legislate it, the more enslaved we become. Tyranny might be the antonym of freedom, but bureaucracy is tyranny's expression. All too often our response to probity concerns is to invent regulatory algorithms and machines to replace human discretion—on the mistaken assumption that human agency is always corrupt. We should not be surprised when inhuman regulatory machines produce inhuman regulatory outcomes. We are too eager to train our civil service to become timid and helpless. Replacing rigid and complex rules with flexible and simple principles is the best way to empower wise decisions for uncertain times.

We make other mistakes about freedom too. We have created a society that confuses freedom with choice. Our relative wealth and technological prowess besieges us with so much data, so many opportunities, so many choices, that we can be enslaved by indecision—haunted by the decisions we do not make, by the opportunities we forego. Freedom is not about having choices; it's about making them. We confuse freedom with an absence of constraints, interference, restrictions by society or by others. Ultimately, such negative freedom just leads us to solitude—being completely free is being completely alone, in the dark. We do not protect freedom by non-intervention. Not intervening merely protects privilege.

Freedom is secured by taking action—for others. The more we seek to surrender our freedoms in seeking to pursue the freedoms of others, the more liberated we become. Yet freedom is not transactional. It does not lend itself to instant gratification. As Caecilius Statius declared, we plant trees to benefit another generation. We did

not secure our freedom ourselves. Our freedom was achieved by the actions of others. Our best response is to focus on how we can pass the light of freedom on, even brighter, for those around us and those who will follow us. Freedom is not free time. It is hard work. Freedom is having purpose. It was Voltaire who observed that humans were put in the Garden of Eden to work, not to rest. As Kipling quipped, "Gardens are not made by singing 'Oh, how beautiful,' and sitting in the shade." Free-dom is like king-dom—it does not support itself. It must be sustained, defended, advanced.

Freedom will face resistance. Around the world, the lights of freedom are flickering. Freedom will encounter opposition. Social inertia, technical progress, economic change all gravitate towards reinforcing privilege and entrenching deprivation. The playing field will not level itself, nor will it stay level without constant maintenance. Privilege, prerogative and power are like weeds: they grow faster and more vigorously than equity. They will always outcompete the community interest in equality. The fight for freedom must endure if our civilisation is to endure. My time here is done. Yet, as with all of us, my time is not my own. As C. S. Lewis noted, "We cannot make, nor retain, one moment of time; it comes to us by pure gift." Let us, each one of us, use the time we have to advance the cause of freedom.

The SPEAKER: I join with the members in the House in congratulating the member for Pittwater on his valedictory speech. I also acknowledge in the gallery former Premier Mike Baird.

Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.

Bills

GOVERNMENT SECTOR EMPLOYMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Consideration in Detail

Consideration of Legislative Council amendments.

Schedule of amendments referred to in message of 17 November 2022

No. 1 OPP No. 1 [c2022-221F]

Page 3, Schedule 1[1], proposed section 8A. Insert after line 8—

- (1A) Before adopting a code of ethics and conduct, the Commissioner must consult the industrial organisations that represent government sector employees and the peak body of those industrial organisations about the proposed code or ensure those industrial organisations and the peak body are consulted.

No. 2 OPP No. 2 [c2022-221F]

Page 3, Schedule 1[1], proposed section 8A(3). Insert after line 16—

industrial organisation means—

- (a) an industrial organisation of employees within the meaning of the *Industrial Relations Act 1996*, or
- (b) an association of employees registered as an organisation under the *Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Act 2009* of the Commonwealth.

No. 3 OPP No. 3 [c2022-221F]

Page 6, Schedule 1[9], proposed clause 22, line 21. Insert "under section 52" after "Industrial Relations Secretary".

No. 4 OPP No. 4 [c2022-221F]

Page 7, Schedule 2[1] and [2], lines 4–18. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 5 OPP No. 5 [c2022-221F]

Page 8, Schedule 2[10] and [11], lines 23–43. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 6 OPP No. 6 [c2022-221F]

Page 9, Schedule 2[14], lines 12–26. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 7 OPP No. 7 [c2022-221F]

Page 9, Schedule 2[17], lines 35–42. Omit all words on the lines.

No. 8 OPP No. 8 [c2022-221F]

Page 10, Schedule 3, lines 1–11. Omit all words on the lines.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I move:

That the Legislative Council amendments be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.**NSW RECONSTRUCTION AUTHORITY BILL 2022****Consideration in Detail****Consideration of Legislative Council amendments.***Schedule of amendments referred to in message of 17 November 2022***No. 1 FIELD No. 1 [c2022-237]**

Page 6, clause 12, line 28. Omit "appropriate in the circumstances, or". Insert instead—

appropriate in the circumstances, and

- (iv) the development will not involve clearing native vegetation or will involve clearing native vegetation only to the minimum extent necessary, or

No. 2 FIELD No. 2 [c2022-237]

Page 6, clause 12, line 39. Omit "circumstances.". Insert instead—

circumstances, and

- (iv) the development will not involve clearing native vegetation or will involve clearing native vegetation only to the minimum extent necessary.

No. 3 GRNS No. 12 [c2022-234G]

Page 14, clause 31(2). Insert after line 16—

- (a1) an assessment, and consideration, of the impacts of climate change on disasters,

No. 4 GRNS No. 14 [c2022-234G]

Page 15, clause 36(2)(b). Insert after line 32—

- (iia) an assessment, and consideration, of the impacts of climate change on disasters,

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) (18:27): I move:

That the Legislative Council amendments be agreed to.

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong) (18:28): I support the Legislative Council amendments to the NSW Reconstruction Authority Bill 2022. The bill left this place better than it was when it entered this place, and it returns to this place better than it was when it left this place. We are all the better for it. I also acknowledge the Government's cooperative approach in dealing with the bill, particularly the departmental staff who have made themselves available to me and the Minister's staff and his office.

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

Motion agreed to.**MOTOR ACCIDENT INJURIES AMENDMENT BILL 2022****Consideration in Detail****Consideration of Legislative Council amendments.***Schedule of amendments referred to in message of 17 November 2022***No. 1 OPP No. 4 [c2022-205A]**

Page 4, Schedule 1[18], lines 25–33. Omit all words on the lines. Insert instead—

[18] Section 3.11, note

Omit "26 weeks". Insert instead "52 weeks".

No. 2 OPP No. 5 [c2022-205A]

Page 5, Schedule 1. Insert after line 19—

[25A] Section 3.38, heading

Omit "6 months". Insert instead "12 months".

[25B] Section 3.38(1)

Omit "26 weeks". Insert instead "52 weeks".

No. 3 **OPP No. 6 [c2022-205A]**

Page 8, Schedule 1. Insert after line 18—

[48A] Schedule 2, clause 3(g)

Omit "6 months". Insert instead "12 months".

No. 4 **OPP No. 7 [c2022-205A]**

Page 9, Schedule 1[50], line 3. Omit "[21] or [23]". Insert instead "[21], [23], [25A], [25B] or [48A] or Schedule 2[6A]".

No. 5 **OPP No. 8 [c2022-205A]**

Page 10, Schedule 2. Insert after line 16—

[6A] Schedule 1, Part 1, clause 3(2)(g)

Omit "6 months". Insert instead "12 months".

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I move:

That the Legislative Council amendments be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Motions

CHRISTMAS FELICITATIONS

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (18:30): In the same way that Independent members have been bringing adversaries together in this Chamber for some years, so too does the harmonious joy of the Christmas period. Before I go on, I send the best of wishes to our communities in regional New South Wales, who are doing things particularly tough right now. We stand with you, and we stand with your representatives in this House to do whatever we can to assist, as we have always done as a community. In particular, I mention the member for Barwon, the member for Murray, the member for Orange and the member for Wagga Wagga on the crossbench, whose communities are doing it particularly tough at this time.

I also acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and member for Cootamundra, Steph Cooke, who I believe has seen more flood-stricken communities around New South Wales this year than any of us can believe or would like her to have to. You have been a credit to this Parliament in your ministerial role, and I thank you. I also acknowledge the larger-than-life Minister for Health, and member for Wakehurst, Brad Hazzard. We will not forget your efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic and the decisions you have made that undoubtedly saved thousands of lives. Brad, you will be missed. I thank and acknowledge the member for Balmain, Jamie Parker, who will be leaving this Parliament. I have enjoyed our friendship and collaboration, and I know that is a common, if not unanimous, sentiment across this House. Jamie, congratulations on all that you have been able to achieve during your time here. You have left this place much better than it was.

The past year has been an extraordinary one for me and the crossbench—which has grown remarkably, I must say. We just draw people like moths to a flame; the crossbench just grows. I must thank the many people who are critical to our ability to represent our communities. In my case, I start with the people of Lake Macquarie, who by definition make my job what it is. I am sure that goes also for the communities in the electorates of Sydney, Wagga Wagga, Murray, Balmain, Newtown, Ballina, Orange and Barwon. We are proud of our communities and all strive to serve them as best we can. I am not here to speak for my friends in The Greens, and I will be listening to the member for Newtown soon as she gives her felicitations.

On that note, we thank the Government and the Opposition for working with us on various endeavours, and we look forward to continuing that when we hopefully return in the Fifty-Eighth Parliament next year. To Premier Dom Perrottet and Opposition leader Chris Minns, I thank you and wish you well for your respective campaigns over the next months. I personally thank my friend and colleague the member for Sydney, Alex Greenwich—he was not expecting this—who, with our staff Jason Gordon and Tammie Nardone headed significant reform this year, most notably the voluntary assisted dying legislation. I thank the many Ministers and members who assisted us with that important reform in New South Wales. I also thank those Ministers and their staff who have helped us meet numerous challenges, as we progressed through the past four years. I must also thank the Government Whip's office, including former Whip Adam Crouch and now Nathaniel Smith. I put a big call-out to Vivienne. I know everybody benefits from Vivienne's assistance.

Leader of the House Alister Henskens and his Opposition counterpart, Ron Hoenig, have been excellent to work with, and they have worked together with us very honourably. However, we all know that the heavy lifting in the leader's office is done by Thomas Ryan and the lovely Adelaide Cuneo. If they are still keeping their list, they can give themselves another tick each, and one extra for you, Adelaide. To you all, thank you so much.

Nothing here works without the Clerks: Helen Minnican, Carly Maxwell, Simon, Jonathon and John, along with all their staff, including Ian Delahunty, Chris, Peter, Monica, Haley, April and Lubo. I thank Mr Speaker for his leadership and the opportunity to serve as part of the Speaker's team, first as a Temporary Speaker then as Assistant Speaker. I wish you all the best in future. Deputy Speaker Leslie Williams, along with the Temporary Speakers—the member for Sydney, the good member for Upper Hunter who is in the chair, David Layzell, the member for Wallsend and the member for Heathcote—have been exceptional to work with. I thank you. I thank Paul Blanche, who is the Speaker's Chief of Staff, Shu-Feng, and Jodie, who are members of the Speaker's staff. I also wish to acknowledge, of course, the Hansard staff, who do an amazing job and who are just always there, helping us look so much better in the printed record. I wish to thank all our committee staff. I wish to thank security and catering—with a special call-out to Kylie Cook in Café Quorum.

It was brought to my attention earlier that this is in fact my 800th speech to Parliament—not as many as others because I am not as loquacious as others, but I wish to place on record again that, like all my colleagues when dealing with complex issues, my team do a fantastic job, without the resources of a big party machine. I again thank Jason Gordon, Belinda Pevey, Kim Williamson and Alex Freeland, along with Madeleine Mckell and Trudy Craig, who assist, and Dianne Sykes, who retired earlier this year after serving as my senior electorate officer for 15 years. As this year has again shown us, we face some very difficult challenges in coming years, and no doubt unexpected challenges will also emerge. It is indeed my hope that the Fifty-Eighth Parliament is up to meeting those challenges and continuing the spirit of cooperation between the new Government and members of the crossbench. I thank everybody for your friendship.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General) (18:36): By leave: This year has been challenging for many of our citizens. While we hope that the worst of COVID is behind us, let us remember those who have lost loved ones to COVID and those who are still suffering ongoing symptoms. I acknowledge the resilience of the many impacted by the floods and storms that have battered our State this year. I thank the people of the Cronulla electorate, who for nearly 12 years have placed their trust in me to represent them. Public life can be brutal, but to serve as an elected representative of a community is a privilege bestowed on comparatively few.

I thank my dedicated, highly capable electorate staff: my office manager, Michelle Lawson; Pete Leate; Claudia Talon; and Joel Johnson. All have my back and dedicate themselves to serving the people of Cronulla. The people of New South Wales and I have been blessed by an extraordinary ministerial office team, who are committed to serving the State, increasing access to justice and strengthening support for the vulnerable who come into contact with our justice system. My chief of staff, Cheryl Gwilliam, provides exceptional wisdom and sage advice, informed by her distinguished career across both Federal and State governments. Liz Pearson is my policy director extraordinaire, fearless and frank in her advice, and an expert in leading and directing my policy platform. Katie Ellison is a much-needed calming and steady presence in what is always a busy office. She is a true quiet achiever.

Nick Johnston brings energy and laughter to the office alongside diligent advice in policy. Michal Solecki is my excellent guiding associate, knowledgeable on legal intricacies. Ellyse Matterson is a tireless hardworking adviser who manages stakeholders with care and empathy. Natalie Hissey is down-to-earth and direct in advice. Patrick Wynne deals empathetically with parliamentary inquiries from nearly all members of this place. Tina Daniels, my office manager, efficiently manages my tight schedule. Sue Finn, my newish director of communications, brings valuable experience to the fast-paced and constantly frenetic role, keeping me in the media when I want to be, and hopefully out when I do not want to be. Daniel Rindfleish joined my ministerial office this year after two years in the electorate office and brings his youthful perspective and shire expertise to all issues.

I also thank my driver, Steve O'Keefe, and apologise for making him drive what is probably the worst car in the fleet. I thank my Departmental Liaison Officer team from time to time, including current principal DLO, Athrey Chandran, and DLOs Brendon Stubbs, Nush Sharifi and Amy Shipgood. To all the parliamentary staff, including the Clerk, thank you for your patience and goodwill. To Speaker Jonathan O'Dea, you have been a beacon of civility, fairness and integrity. To the Premier, you have guided and led this State with a steady hand and good heart, full of ideas and determined to drive this State forward. Thank you.

To my ministerial colleagues, it has been a pleasure working with you over this year through thick and thin. I thank you for all your contributions. To members from all sides of the House who are leaving the Parliament, I thank you for your service to the State. We all come from different perspectives but we genuinely share a passion to make this State a better place. I thank also my shadow Attorney General, the member for

Maroubra. It is his role to hold me to account, to scrutinise the work of Government and I thank him for his robust and diligent contributions. I just hope he stays as the shadow Attorney General!

To the Department of Communities and Justice staff—from Secretary Michael Tidball all the way through to the Sheriff's Officers and court teams around New South Wales each day, you contribute to this State and make it a safer and fairer community. That is not an easy task, but I am extremely grateful. To all our judicial officers and tribunal members, thank you for administering justice, the bedrock of civil society, and for your dedicated service to this State. The angel of the Lord, who appeared before terrified shepherds living out in the fields near Bethlehem, told them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people." I wish everyone in this place and across New South Wales the joy which Christmas brings.

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (18:40): By leave: At this time, which is the last sitting day of the year and also the last sitting day of the Fifty-Seventh Parliament, I acknowledge what an honour it is to represent the people of The Entrance electorate. I thank my community for the support and the trust they have put in me. I wish all my community a happy Christmas and a wonderful holiday break. I want to let them know how much I have enjoyed working with them over the past eight years to do all I could to make The Entrance electorate a better place for all its citizens—whether it has been big important matters of public policy, such as stopping the attempted privatisation of our public hospitals, or the more local concerns of lifts at Tuggerah station, I have relied on my community to see the matter through.

The great challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic showed that the State could protect and support the community in its hour of need. I acknowledge and thank all the public servants who served during this time. The pandemic showed all of us that we could work from home with the same effectiveness as working from a common workplace. This is a societal change that we should seek to support and continue. It also showed that we could provide shelter to all our citizens. It is to our great shame that now that society has returned to what is called "normal", it has meant that those we sheltered have returned to sleeping on the street. Our broken housing system remains for a future government to address.

The parliamentary staff in this space do a fantastic job. I recognise the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Helen Minnican, Carly Maxwell, Simon Johnston and all the staff who support them. I also want to record my special thanks and appreciation to the Department of Parliamentary Services, which supports the New South Wales Parliament and provides a fine example of socialist professionalism. I also acknowledge and thank the cheerful operators of the post office in this place, for their work and the help they provide in getting my clothes cleaned between sittings. They all serve our democracy and this State.

To you, Speaker, I wish all the very best on your retirement from politics. You have left a real legacy of a more democratic and professional Parliament than when you started in the role. To the crossbench, I want to acknowledge your role in working here as well. I think the operation of this House has been strengthened by the greater involvement the crossbenchers have taken up in the operation of the Parliament over the last term. I acknowledge particularly The Greens and the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party and the Independents for the work they do in progressing the democracy of this State. As I have noted before, the role of Opposition in a parliamentary democracy is a tough one. As Deputy Opposition Whip, I thank my caucus comrades for their work on behalf of Labor and for the support they have shown me. The Opposition's office would not work without the Whips' assistant, Colleen Symington. She is completely focused and on top of things in this place. I give her my thanks and the thanks of the whole Labor caucus. My staff do a marvellous job. They are a great team and represent Labor in the community well. I thank senior electoral officer Catherine Wall and my staff Alfat Karnib, Danielle Atherden and Bridget. I thank them from the bottom of my heart.

I thank my Central Coast Labor Party colleagues David Harris, Yasmin Catley and Liesl Tesch. We work well together as a team. We have a sense of purpose and a determination to do better for the Central Coast. I look forward to serving with them in a future Labor Government. Being a member of the oldest political party in the State and the nation is both a burden and privilege. We are now led in this State on the Opposition side by a leader and deputy who understand their place in Labor history. I think they will write a new and successful chapter in the history of Labor and this State at the next election. A light on the hill beckons Opposition members, and I will do all I can to see that we attain it at the next election.

I thank my partner, Deanne, for her support over the past four years and my children, Tom, Lily and Charlie. I love them all and I look forward to spending more time with them over the break. Deanne has built a comfortable home for us at Ourimbah in the heart of The Entrance electorate. I particularly thank her for the work she does when I am in Sydney, caring for Frankie, Gram and our dog Gruff. I thank my children's mother, Melissa, for the care and love she has heaped upon our children since they were born. I finish by once again wishing everyone a merry Christmas. I look forward to returning to Parliament with more colleagues after the next election. I look forward to seeing fewer Liberal and Nationals members. I wish those who do not return all the very best and my personal goodwill. It has been wonderful serving with all members. Merry Christmas.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (18:46): By leave: On behalf of The Greens, I wish everyone a safe, enjoyable and merry festive season. I join with others on behalf of The Greens in thanking all of those who work to ensure that the Parliament works and that representative democracy happens, including those in the Hansard team, the Clerks, the special constables, the cleaners, the maintenance staff, everyone in catering, the Department of Parliamentary Services staff, the committee staff, the library team and the Chamber and Legislative Assembly staff. They all make a significant contribution to the people of New South Wales in the work they do. I acknowledge my colleagues in the Legislative Assembly, Jamie and Tamara, and in the Legislative Council, Abigail, Cate and Sue, and their teams who are generous with their time and expertise and who provide information to my lower House colleagues and me.

We are nothing without our teams. They are the first line of support to people who contact our offices with complex and often stressful needs and ensure that we are prepared and on top of everything we do. I particularly thank everyone who has worked in the Newtown, Ballina and Balmain electorate offices on projects with us over the past year, including Asha, Chandi, Cathy, Charlotte, Lydia, Mithra, Patricia, Jacqui, Siobhan, Mary-Jane, Digby, Violet, Eleanor, Ned, Anastasia and David. I am sure all members will agree that our electorate office staff do an amazing job supporting us and assisting our communities. Today is the last sitting day for my Greens colleague and friend Jamie Parker, the member for Balmain.

Mr Jamie Parker: Excellent member.

Ms JENNY LEONG: I acknowledge that interjection. Jamie was the first Green to ever win a lower House electorate in New South Wales. He has been a role model to me and so many other Greens on what it means to be a dedicated, caring and hardworking community representative. Jamie understands the power we hold as members of Parliament, and he is always willing to offer solidarity and support to any in our local or global communities who are struggling to be heard. He generously shares his power with them and us and uses his voice to amplify the calls from those communities. I have so much respect for him.

Tamara and I cannot fathom being in the Legislative Assembly without Jamie. We are slightly terrified by the idea, but we can imagine all the wonderful things he will be able to contribute to the people and communities he cares about once he is free of this place. We wish him and his loved ones well, my friend. I acknowledge our collective appreciation for Eleanor Nurse, Jamie's adviser extraordinaire, whose enthusiasm, intelligence, wise counsel and support is something we have all benefited from. I promise to keep noodle Thursdays going if Eleanor promises to keep sharing pics of Beans on Instagram. Eleanor is wonderful and will be deeply missed. I wish her good luck for her next adventures.

We often talk about two sides in this Parliament, but there are a lot of sides. On behalf of The Greens, I thank fellow members of the crossbench. It has been exciting to see the crossbench grow in influence and for us to show just how much we can get done together. I particularly shout-out Independents Helen, Greg, Alex, Joe and Tania. We hope for an even bigger crossbench when we return after March 2023. I acknowledge the contribution that all members of the House make. I particularly thank their staff for all they do to help us Greens navigate things behind the scenes. There are some great ministerial and Opposition staff, many of whom are powerful, intelligent and committed women who make this place tick. They know who they are, but, following Jamie's lead in his valedictory, we will not risk undermining their career prospects by naming them.

We would not be in Parliament without our party. I thank the members of The Greens and our local groups who are living the principle of grassroots democracy. We are so excited to be campaigning with our thousands of members who volunteer their time and skills. I particularly shout-out to the NSW Greens convenor, Damiya Hayden, for her contribution and work. In conclusion, on behalf of The Greens, I thank all the New South Wales public sector workers, including teachers, nurses, public transport workers and all those who respond on the front lines and behind the scenes to keep the State running. May they all get a pay rise for Christmas.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (18:51): By leave: I acknowledge that the public servants across New South Wales will be getting pay rises because the Government has managed the books and built infrastructure at the same time. Cheers to that, member for Newtown. I wish the electorate of Oxley a happy Christmas. It is a very special time of year. The past four years have been particularly brutal to many of our communities—whether it be because of fire, flood or drought. This Christmas will hopefully be a lovely time but we still have some pretty difficult predictions in terms of the east coast low. Everyone will be holding their breath.

I thank my staff. I acknowledged them during my valedictory speech this week, but I did not go into detail of the great work they have done, and continue to do, through the community. As I said, we kept our doors open during COVID. We were united with the supermarket workers, and they did an incredible job. Jodie Griffiths and Susan Ramke are also justices of the peace, and every day we would have at least 10 or 15 justices of the peace signatures going through our office because we are near the post office. The time they spend helping those particular constituents is very valuable.

Susan Ramke works for me a few days a week and the rest of the time she is working for Resilience NSW. In recent times she has been dealing with a terrifically ferocious hailstorm that struck the village and community of Toormina north of the Oxley electorate, and also helping people fill out the forms. She was telling me she had to go to Wauchope the other day for a lady who was really struggling to talk to some of the staff on the phone. The staff were thinking that something was not quite right, but once Susan got to her, she saw that her house was immaculate and tidy, and realised that it was a simple lack of communication between those on the phone and this woman. Susan was able to fix that. I thank all people working in that area.

My heart goes out to communities in the Central West of New South Wales. A lot of Resilience NSW workers will be going to those communities over the next few months. People in communities like Eugowra have had their lives turned upside down. We have to stand beside them, and I know the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, Steph Cooke, is doing that. We must think of those communities. There might be a miracle in Monaro this Christmas—they might have a white Christmas. We have all been a bit chilly in the Parliament today and yesterday. I was talking to the member for Monaro about this. There was snow up the top in Cooma in the past 48 hours, so, who knows, there might be a white Christmas. Wouldn't that be an amazing thing to experience? Out of the corner of my eye I can see my daughter in the Chamber. Hello, Emily. Happy Christmas to you. I expect lots of wonderful presents this year.

Ms Felicity Wilson: On your credit card. She's got the credit card, Mel.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: She has.

Ms Trish Doyle: And not a netball.

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY: I acknowledge that interjection. Another staff member, Holly Gaddes, has had a tough couple of years, but she has soldiered on. She is an important person, along with her amazing children, at South West Rocks Surf Life Saving Club and in other areas. I thank Benn Farrawell. He is sort of new to politics—it is coming up to 12 months—but he has taken it all in his stride and he is doing a great job. I wish all the staff of my electorate office a merry Christmas, including Alice Burnet, who resides in the Bellingen end. Her advocacy on behalf of the whole community and her eloquence in her writing are very important to our communities. I recognise Kylie Cook from Café Quorum. Catering is really important. She makes a great coffee and always makes me feel incredibly welcome. I also thank the cleaners and everyone who makes this place tick. In my last felicitation in this place, I wish everybody a happy Christmas.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Lakemba) (18:56): By leave: It is wonderful to get the opportunity to pay thanks at the end of the year because we did not get the chance to do it last year. The State has had a pretty difficult couple of years. I know that I will forget people, but I will start by thanking the community that I am proud to represent for its support. The work that we have done over the past couple of years in particular has been phenomenal. We have been through a really difficult time—all the charities, religious groups, community centres and schools. Every one of them is a piece of the jigsaw puzzle that makes our community better. I disagree with one of my colleagues—mine is the best community in the State.

I could not do my job without my fantastic team. Opposition members do not have many resources, but the team in my electorate office, which doubles up as my shadow ministry team, is absolutely brilliant. I thank my senior electorate officer, James Connolly; Dilan Bogdanovski; Taghred Kabalan; Beryl Segers; and Ahmed Ferkh for getting the best out of me all the time and for covering for me when I am not at my very best. My wife, Erin, is just phenomenal. She puts up with my irregular hours. I am probably away from her too often. My kids Amal, Yasmin and Ali are the inspiration for the work I do. I pay tribute to and acknowledge Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery, with whom I have done a lot of work this year. She has done an extraordinary job.

The State has gone through something we never thought it would go through. I have to say, she has been incredibly bipartisan. We have worked together where we can and we have sparred when we have needed to. It is important to recognise everyone who has helped during the floods, the fires and everything that we are going through—not only the responders but also the community members who are still helping out now and the Minister's team. I have worked a lot with the emergency services. I thank them for their contributions. I also thank the Fire Brigade Employees Union and the Public Service Association of NSW for the terrific work that we have done together.

I had better start talking about the Parliament. I have been going through a bit of a rough time in the past week or so, but yesterday the member for Blue Mountains and the member for Swansea presented me with the most beautiful bunch of flowers to take home, which was just incredible. We have great friendships in the Parliament and our colleagues help us when we go through difficult times. My family and I thank the member for Blue Mountains and the member for Swansea for their kindness. It meant much more to me than they could

imagine. I thank all of my other colleagues across the aisles, whichever party they represent. I have often said that we are all here for the same reason: to make this State the best it can be. We might get into arguments and nitpick, but I believe we all come here with the right sense.

Helen Minnican and her team are absolutely outstanding—so good. They never say no to any question. I probably annoy them with the amount of complex questions I ask. I am sure that she thinks I have some serious difficulties in understanding, but Helen, Carly and the team are fantastic. I thank Hansard for interpreting my illegible handwriting. My parents wanted me to be a doctor, so when I did not make it I thought I would make them happy by writing like a doctor. Apologies for that. The table office staff and the Chamber attendants are always fantastic. I always ring IT and say, "My computer isn't working." They tell me how to fix it but it still doesn't work. My parliamentary colleagues are so incredibly important.

I acknowledge the members of Parliament who are retiring or leaving. I thank them for their service and contribution that they have made. To that end, I especially thank and acknowledge my friend, the Hon. Rob Stokes. I have had the pleasure of working with him in our capacity as opposing members. He is one of the most decent and genuine people I have ever met. The Parliament will be worse for his loss, but I look forward to seeing him again. He is an outstanding human being. I know that Rob is sitting up in his office right now watching this. We will miss you and my other departing colleagues in this Parliament. I conclude by thanking the Opposition Whip, Ms Anna Watson, and her incredible assistant, Colleen Symington. She is a fantastic person who keeps us all together. She gets my MVP for the year. Regardless of how people celebrate Christmas, I hope that everyone has a wonderful and safe Christmas and that we are all back together soon. See you on the campaign trail. Merry Christmas, everyone.

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (19:02): By leave: As we close out the parliamentary year, I take this opportunity to reflect on the year that has been and thank everyone who has made this year so special. As always, we have had to overcome challenges. Although not at the forefront of everyone's minds, the threat of COVID continues, so I thank our frontline workers, particularly in our health system, who are keeping up the fight. I also recognise the many communities across New South Wales who continue to face the threat and destruction of floods. I thank our emergency services personnel and volunteers, who have put their lives on the line to keep those communities safe.

Being the member for North Shore is one of the greatest privileges of my life. I feel great pride in being able to represent my local community, which is one of the best places to live. At its core is a real sense of community and friendship. I thank all of our fantastic sporting, community and volunteering organisations, which give so much and are the lifeblood of the local area. I acknowledge our Premier, Dominic Perrottet, and our Treasurer, Matt Kean, for their leadership and for delivering a budget that has made, and will continue to make, significant transformations when it comes to women's lives and economic opportunities. I have been fortunate to serve as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer and for COVID Recovery. Working alongside the Treasury in delivering those major reforms has been a great privilege. I thank the Treasurer, but I also thank the entire office of the Treasurer, particularly Dimitry Chugg-Palmer.

It is with heartfelt thanks that I acknowledge the many parliamentary colleagues who will be leaving us at the next election: Melinda Pavey, Brad Hazzard, Victor Dominello, Rob Stokes, Shelley Hancock, Gabrielle Upton, Jonathan O'Dea, Geoff Lee, Jamie Parker, David Elliott, Kevin Conolly, Christopher Gulaptis, Steve Bromhead, Nick Lalich and Guy Zangari. They have been an inspiration to me in this place and many of them have been great supports. I acknowledge the hard work they have done on behalf of their communities and in various ministerial and shadow ministerial roles.

I thank the staff of the Parliament, who are instrumental in the organisational running of this place, in particular the Clerk and her team for all their work, as well as the Speaker's office; Hansard; all the front desk staff; the security team; the parliamentary constables, who keep us safe; the catering and cafe staff, who keep us fed and watered; the cleaners; and everybody else who make the Parliament work. I thank my local Liberal Party branch members for all their support and for endorsing me as their local Liberal candidate for the next election. In particular, I acknowledge SEC President Ted Wziontek for all his efforts. I am particularly proud that we have achieved tremendous results in my local community and for my local community. Education—giving our kids the best start in life is particularly dear to me. I am proud that three major upgrades are underway at Mosman High, North Sydney Demonstration and Neutral Bay Public schools.

We have also achieved investment in our local transport infrastructure, upgrading ferry wharves. North Sydney, South Mosman and Taronga Zoo wharves are in different stages of the process. Wollstonecraft station is now completely accessible for all after its upgrade. Major works are continuing on the Sydney Metro, with two stations in my community at Victoria Cross and Crows Nest progressing. I am particularly proud that we are delivering on my commitment to continue increasing green and public space by reclaiming and revitalising Berrys Bay, expanding the Blues Point Reserve foreshore, enabling the St Leonards Over-rail Plaza and upgrading the

walking tracks at Middle Head. I am going to keep fighting to see that we can get the Lavender Bay rail line turned into a highline. Many more great things are happening in my community, and many more great things that I hope to be returned to deliver in the coming years.

I thank my staff in my electorate office who manage me and do so much to assist my local community, particularly in recent trying times. Lisa Forrest—the boss of us all—Chris McDermott, Niamh Cronin and Emily Pavey are wonderful people. I rely on them quite heavily. I thank my family for their love and support, my sisters Alexia and Christiana and their families, my mum, Lesley, and my two beautiful children Eleanor and Henry, who are the best things that have ever happened to me in my existence. Thank you for your love and support. I also thank and acknowledge my children's father, Sam, who works very close to ensure that I can continue to do this job in his love for our children. I wish everyone a merry Christmas and best wishes to everyone for a relaxing break with your families and friends. It is a privilege to be here. Felicitations to everyone.

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

Motion agreed to.

Community Recognition Statements

STOCKMAN JOHN PERRY

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro) (19:06): For 150 years stock men and women have been lining up to prove theirs is the "top dog". These local events have become the sheepdog trials of today. Part of our rich pastoral heritage, sheepdog trials showcase the very best of regional Australia and help keep the genetic base of stock dogs strong. Sheep dog trials are a unique, inclusive, heritage sport where sheep, dog and person work together to complete a course of three obstacles in 15 minutes. Today I recognise Bredbo's John Perry who, on the eve of his 83rd birthday, is the epitome of all that endears us to the bond between a man and his dog, working side by side on the land and reliant upon one another to get the job done. John and two of his dogs recently topped the table on the National Sheep Dog Trial Championships held in Canberra. Delrio Gem claimed the podium's third spot, while Bredbo Ash finished in first place, taking the title of 2022 National Open Champion. I congratulate John and his clever canines. Happy birthday for 18 November.

MARANDO REAL ESTATE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield) (19:08): I take this opportunity to congratulate the Marando family on celebrating 50 years of Marando Real Estate in the Fairfield area. Patriarch Joe Marando and his wife, Elizabeth, established Marando Real Estate in 1972 in the Fairfield area and the office, now under the careful guidance of son Roy Marando, has been going strong ever since. Roy has also been instrumental in humanitarian efforts here in Fairfield, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic when he made sure that no vulnerable person in Fairfield went without and was ably assisted by the wonderful Julie Bishop. Together they worked through that challenging time. Marando Real Estate has since expanded to more locations in New South Wales, a testament to the trust placed in them by the greater community. I congratulate Joe, Roy and the Marando family on this wonderful achievement of 50 years in Fairfield and I wish them all the very best for the future.

MIRANDA RSL SUB-BRANCH REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (19:09): Remembrance Day marks the moment on 11 November 1918 when the guns on the Western Front fell silent after more than four years of continuous warfare. Since then, this moment has become universally associated with the remembrance of those who have died in all wars in service of Australia. I was pleased to join the Miranda RSL Sub-Branch at the Remembrance Day Service at the Miranda War Memorial on 11 November. The service provided our community with the opportunity to come together and pay tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for the freedom that we enjoy today. I commend the Miranda RSL Sub-Branch committee members who facilitated the service. I acknowledge Alan Lark, Brian Senior, Barry Fletcher, John Goodger and Arie Havenaar. I also recognise the contributions of the community representatives involved in the service, including Daniel Cvestanovski, Amadene Edwards, Meghan Hollingsworth, Reverend Jennie Everist, Jessop Hartley and Joan Thorp and the 318 Squadron air cadets. I thank the Miranda RSL Sub-Branch for their efforts in hosting this Remembrance Day Service for our community. Lest we forget!

FUNDRAISER JAY STEWART

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (19:10): The date 3 December marks the International Day of Disabled Persons. This year Mogo resident and proud Walbunja man Mr Jay Stewart has decided to mark the occasion by undertaking a personal challenge and helping raise funds to end homelessness. Mr Stewart has started preparation for his fundraising walk, JJ's Walk to End Homelessness, which will see him cover 3.4 kilometres from JJ's at the Marina to Corrigan's Cove in Batemans Bay. Jay hopes to raise \$5,000 to help support Moruya's specialist support service, The Family Place, which has been integral in helping local families who have found

themselves without a home in the Eurobodalla. Although Jay has an inoperable brain injury, he says he does not look at himself as being disabled and it does not slow him down at all. I congratulate Jay on his initiative and fundraising efforts to help support our homeless. I hope you enjoy your post-walk rewarding swim. To finish, I wish peace on earth and good will to all at this time of year.

HAWKESBURY ELECTORATE REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICES

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (19:11): I pay my respects to the fallen members of the Australian armed forces. On Friday 11 November I attended a Remembrance Day ceremony at Richmond RSL Sub-Branch to commemorate the brave men and women who lost their lives in the line of duty, protecting our country and the freedom we value today. At the eleventh hour we took a minute's silence to remember and honour the sacrifice that so many thousands of Australians made in the First World War. I extend my thanks to the Richmond RSL Sub-Branch for hosting such a moving ceremony. I also acknowledge and thank Windsor RSL Sub-Branch, Glenorie RSL Sub-Branch and Glenorie Public School for hosting ceremonies to commemorate this special day. RSL sub-branches play an important role in the veteran community and provide a safe and supportive environment for veterans and their families.

TEACHER JANET CAMPBELL

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier) (19:12): I pay special tribute to an unsung hero of the Epping community. Janet Campbell has served our local area as a teacher and director at Cherrybrook Community Preschool for 27 years. Over that time she has nurtured and cared for generations of children. After almost three decades of service, Janet has now called time on her extraordinary career. Recently, I spoke to a mother from Cherrybrook Community Preschool, who described Janet as a person of great warmth and dedication, with unwavering care for every child she met. That sort of character reference explains Janet Campbell better than I ever could. She leaves an immense professional legacy, but her greatest achievement is surely the many young men and women she, and the many wonderful staff at Cherrybrook Community Preschool, have helped mould. So, after 27 years, I say thank you to Janet Campbell and wish her all the very best for the future. I thank her, not only as a local MP but as a local father.

TRIBUTE TO ANTOINETTE GERGES MORCOS

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (19:13): I was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of the late Antoinette Gerges Morcos, who passed away on 31 October 2022 aged 57 from cancer. I was fortunate enough to meet Antoinette when she was working with her brother, Imad Gerges, business owner of La Galette Patisserie in Merrylands, which specialises in handcrafted Lebanese cakes and sweets. La Galette was based in Merrylands before relocating to North Parramatta. Imad has been presented with many distinguished international and local achievement business awards and is a master pastry chef. Antoinette was born in Lebanon on 1 February 1965. She worked at her family patisserie shop Al-Arz in Beirut until she arrived in Australia in 2008. Antoinette commenced working at La Galette as soon as she arrived. Her family meant everything to her. She married late in life and had no children. I offer my sincerest condolences to her brother, Imad, his other siblings and the Gerges' extended family.

TRIBUTE TO IAN BROWN

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (19:14): The Coffs Coast has farewelled Ian Raymond Brown—known to all as Brownie—who is fondly remembered for helping his community. Ian passed away on 15 October at 74 years old. Ian was always up for a chat and would help anyone at any time, such as his kindness and generosity. Ian was passionate about the Coffs Coast, a sentiment shared by his wife, Robyn, and their family. He was a former ambulance officer, who drew on his medical background to volunteer at hospitals in Fiji. Ian was an active Rotarian in Coffs Harbour for many years. He played rugby league with the Comets, and he was a basketballer in his younger years. Ian was a Karting New South Wales senior official and a devoted Coffs Harbour Kart Racing Club life member. He was also a Coffs Harbour Golf Club board member, a local businessman and a keen supporter of local musical theatre. Ian adored his family, and he was a friend to many on the Coffs Coast. Vale, Brownie.

MULGOA RURAL FIRE BRIGADE

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (19:15): On the final sitting day of this term of Parliament, I congratulate the Mulgoa Rural Fire Brigade team. They are an incredible group of volunteers, as well as paid firefighters. Recently, I had the wonderful pleasure of visiting the construction of the new fire station with the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, Ms Steph Cooke. It reminded me of the need to reflect and promote the work of our tireless and brave firefighters. They have endured the worst natural disasters and, as we enter the summer season, they will again face the risks of fires that threaten lives and homes right across our State. I especially thank the firefighters of the Mulgoa Rural Fire Brigade for their bravery, tireless service and protection.

that they provide to the community. I wish them and their families and friends a safe festive season as we approach Christmas and extend that to all rural fire brigades across the State.

MAITLAND ELECTORATE FARMERS

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (19:16): I pay respect to my local farmers, particularly those who had their fresh produce on display at the Slow Food Hunter Valley Earth Market, Maitland, at Levee Central Maitland. There is always an abundance of fresh fruit, vegetables and other produce, like honey and jam, at the market. I am so proud of them. Today is Agriculture Day. I was unable to attend a function earlier today because there were so many things on in Parliament this morning, but I am a strong supporter of our agriculture industry. Locally, the industry has been doing it tough, with droughts, fires, floods and the varroa mite. It has been a struggle for farmers. I give a special shout-out to Agriculture Day and thank all the work our agriculture farmers do to keep our houses and homes filled with great fresh produce.

STUDIO A

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (19:17): The electorate of Willoughby boasts a rich cultural life and I take great pride in the contribution that Studio A in Crows Nest makes to fostering artistic talent. Studio A is a supported studio that tackles the barriers artists with intellectual disability face in accessing conventional education, professional development pathways and opportunities needed to excel. The enterprise paves pathways for those remarkable artists so that they can achieve their artistic and economic aspirations. Studio A provides its artists with a working studio space, equipped with specialist materials and support staff.

As well as nurturing artistic talent, I am particularly grateful for the work of Studio A in advancing the wellbeing of artists through increased self-esteem, aspirations for the future, social networks, financial security and mental health. I recently had the pleasure of visiting Studio A. It was one of the most enriching and valuable experiences I have enjoyed in almost nine months of public life. I commend Studio A for the work it does in unleashing the potential of artists and giving them that ever-important sense of self-worth and personal achievement.

VOLUNTEER PEREE WATSON

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland) (19:18): Peree Watson is a lifelong resident of the Hunter and a passionate and determined individual, who never shies away from a challenge. Peree has worked as a small business operator and extensively for local charities. She is a great mum and is very artistic. She has generously volunteered countless hours at her local playgroup, children's schools and sporting organisations. For the past 15 years, Peree has worked in a number of charities supporting some of the State's most vulnerable people across the Hunter, including the Leukaemia Foundation, Hunter Medical Research Institute, Got Your Back Sista and the Mark Hughes Foundation. Peree is a strong voice and advocate, who never steps back from a challenge. She is in the Chamber tonight because she has been working with the Federal member for Hunter, Dan Repacholi, and looking at our road issues. She is a strong advocate for health as well. Her next challenge is to join us in this place at the March 2023 election. The communities of the Upper Hunter have been ignored for too long. Peree will get them loud and get them going.

PENRITH ELECTORATE OFFICE STAFF

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith) (19:19): I take this opportunity at the end of the Parliament to thank the people in my electorate office, who have done an outstanding job over the past four years. Rhonda Hanbury heads the Penrith electorate team and does an outstanding job in keeping the office ticking over and making sure it runs like clockwork. I acknowledge Elizabeth Drysdale, the champion of making sure that all communications activity happens across Penrith. I could not do this job without her. I acknowledge Sue Connolly and Karen Hamilton, who do a great job sharing the third role in the office keeping all of our correspondence ticking over and talking to many people. We work as members of Parliament and it is our name on the outside of the office, but there is a team behind us. I give a shout-out to those four people who have really made the Penrith thing work. To everyone who is going into battle over the next election, goodnight and good luck.

GOSFORD ELECTORATE OFFICE STAFF

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (19:20): I thank the fabulous team at the Gosford electorate office. Our chief of staff, Rhys Zorro, and the team have done an amazing job supporting the residents of the Gosford electorate and the broader Central Coast community during 2022. We have an amazing team of highly talented and passionate human beings, who offer solutions, compassion, opportunities and life-changing actions when people come to us seeking solutions and answers to their problems.

I sincerely thank Rhys Zorro, Joely Langmaid, Nat Mallia, Peyton Roberts-Garnsey, Emily Dasan, Nathan Goslett and Jayden Delbridge for their amazing efforts in 2022. I also thank Megan Connor and Kyra Sumner for

filling in when we need them. They are much appreciated. I send a special shout-out and congratulations to Jo Lloyd and Jesse Cora, who were part of our team. They were part of Gordon Reid's campaign and are now foundation members of the team at Gordon Reid's Robertson office. The Central Coast electorate office admin are beautifully connected, share resources and passions to support the community and I wish them all a lovely holiday break.

ART THERAPIST JODIE MCGUREN

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (19:22): I acknowledge and thank Jodie McGuren, who runs a small business in Gregory Hills. Jodie is an NDIS provider of art therapy. It is easy to see the kind of care and compassion with which Jodie operates. She has taken great effort and time to curate an environment that is rewarding and flexible, ensuring that clients receive the most they can from the therapy they partake in. I truly commend Jodie for that amazing feat. Jodie and her team recently won a grant from Camden Council to launch the inaugural art exhibition for NDIS participants, which is great for the community as well as the participants. Jodie, awarded Camden woman of the year in 2020, represents the high calibre of women in the Camden community.

EMPIRE BAY BOATSHED

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (19:22): I sincerely congratulate Errol Baker and the Empire Bay community for their incredible efforts to save the heritage boatshed on the Empire Bay waterfront. The boatshed is possibly the last remaining boatshed on the waterfront in the Brisbane Water. It is over 100 years old and is a memory of the boatbuilding heritage of our waterways from days gone by. It was fantastic to see so many community members turn out on Saturday 5 November to express their concerns and celebrate the fabulous sense of community that exists in Empire Bay. There were kids running around; snags on the barbie; plenty of dogs; a passionate speech from the local barber, Errol, who is coordinating the voice of the community; a representative from the Australian National Maritime Museum; and the important voice of Central Coast Ferries communicating its interest in maintaining the boatshed and securing a home on the Empire Bay waterfront. The Empire Bay community is fired up. The boatshed is a great resource. It is important heritage, and it is a place for community to get together and connect to the beautiful waterways of the Central Coast. Let us save the boatshed.

TRIBUTE TO ALISON MEGARRITY

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (19:24): It is with great sadness that I pay tribute to my predecessor, and former member for Menai, Alison Megarrity. I know it was stated before question time yesterday that time would be set aside on a future date to honour her legacy but seeing that probably will not be until May next year, after the election, I thought it would be fitting to pay tribute to her today. Although from different parties, I know we both shared a strong love and commitment for our local community. Elected in 1999 and serving until her retirement in 2011, Alison helped to deliver much-needed infrastructure for our region, including the construction of the Woronora Bridge, Bangor Bypass and the Alford's Point Bridge duplication.

I know her love for her family. She did not contest the 2011 election so she could support her husband, Robert, when he was unwell, and she was always so proud of her sons. When she handed over her office, she had the grace to leave me a beautiful note with her contact details and offering her assistance. I took up that offer, and she was very helpful even in her retirement. I pass on my thoughts and prayers, as well as I am sure those of everyone in the Chamber and of the Holsworthy and Menai electorates, to her family during this time. Vale, Alison Megarrity.

BLUE MOUNTAINS ELECTORATE OFFICE STAFF

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (19:25): In the last moments of the Fifty-Seventh Parliament, I acknowledge and thank my fabulous team in the Blue Mountains electorate, Camille, Donna, Ilsa, Kate and Michelle. They are incredible in the work they do for, with and on behalf of our community. Their diligence, communication skills and loyalty should be acknowledged in this place, not just on the last day of the parliamentary year but every day. We could not do our jobs without our fabulous teams. It is incumbent on me and each one of us to stop and reflect on the important work we do each and every day and each year. I wish them all a nice break because next year will be a busy one. From the bottom of my heart, many thanks.

THE SHEPHERD CENTRE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (19:26): As chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Hearing, Health and Wellness, I have worked closely with The Shepherd Centre and other hearing organisations to raise awareness of the importance of hearing health, along with my deputy chair, the member for Blue Mountains. Hearing affects not only the person with the loss but also those with whom they communicate. Hearing loss causes connections with loved ones to suffer, placing strain on relationships. I acknowledge and thank Dr Jim

Hungerford, the outgoing CEO of The Shepherd Centre, for his enormous contribution to supporting young people who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families. Jim was at the helm of this not-for-profit organisation for 12 years and has been instrumental in making it a leading specialist service provider in New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania. I welcome incoming CEO Dr Aleisha Davis, who comes into this new role in January 2023 after almost 20 years with The Shepherd Centre. I know the organisation is in good hands and will continue its success in helping young people with hearing loss to develop listening and spoken language, literacy and social skills, ensuring they achieve their full potential. On behalf of the parliamentary friendship group, I thank Jim and wish him all the best as he starts on his next journey.

GOSFORD BOWLING CLUB

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (19:27): I wish all of those members, friends and participants at the Gosford Bowling Club a very merry Christmas season. I thank them for their passion and determined efforts to save their club in 2022. The Gosford Bowling Club is a fabulous community resource and is so much more than a bowling club. It is a community built of deep friendships and a shared interest in bowls over years and years, and provides great support for everyone involved, through good times and bad times and even when members are no longer able to bowl. The Gosford Bowling Club is a fantastic resource that supports Coastlink, House with No Steps, Life Without Barriers and Vision Australia, and provides the opportunity for inclusive sport for people with disabilities. Six local high schools and large numbers of local businesses and community groups enjoy the opportunity to play barefoot bowls in Gosford. As the City of Gosford increases its population density, our public spaces become more and more important. I commend the members of Gosford Bowling Club for their efforts to save the club as an important community resource for the City of Gosford.

STORY WRITER ROBYN SCHIRALLI

Ms ELENI PETINOS (Miranda) (19:28): I acknowledge Robyn Schiralli of Miranda, who shared her parents-in-law's touching story of coming to Australia in *Seniors' Stories Volume 8*. Our seniors hold remarkable lived experiences, and the seniors' stories book provides a fantastic opportunity for our local community to learn from their fellow residents. The theme of this edition is celebrating diversity, as writers such as Robyn beautifully reflected upon their life experiences to impart their wisdom to the reader. Robyn's story, titled "Teresa and Aldo's Story", tells the heartwarming story of her husband's parents, who moved to Australia in 1950. The story tells of some of their early challenges as they settled into their new home as well as their journey to attain their Australian citizenship, buy a home and raise three sons. In her story Robyn encourages readers to reflect on our diversity as a nation and recognise the significant role that diversity has played in enriching Australia. I congratulate Robyn on having her story published, and commend her for sharing the story of her parents-in-law's story.

PENRITH LOCAL BUSINESS AWARDS

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (19:29): I congratulate Orchard Hills Veterinary Hospital on being the 2022 finalist in the Penrith local business awards in the pet care category. The Orchard Hills Veterinary Hospital is a well-known, well-loved and important business in the local community. It has carried out the business with excellent customer care and attention to detail and dedication. I also congratulate MediAdvice Pharmacy in Glenmore Park on being the 2022 finalist in the Penrith local business awards category, pharmacy. Pharmacies are an essential business in our local communities, supporting our seniors and families when in need of health and wellbeing support. To be a finalist in the local business awards is a great achievement. I commend all the staff and small business owners in these businesses who have helped to achieve this outstanding result. I look forward to visiting MediAdvice Pharmacy in Glenmore Park tomorrow to actually focus on and speak about the good work that the Liberal-Nationals Government is doing in extending the services that pharmacies offer across our communities to people in need.

GRANDPARENT OF THE YEAR LILY GUBBAY

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (19:30): I acknowledge the 2022 North Shore Grandparent of the Year, Lily Gubbay. Many in my local community would know and love Lily through her work with the Cancer Council NSW as a Community Ambassador. Lily has worked tirelessly across our community, raising awareness among others about the real impact of cancer in our everyday lives. She provides support to those who are currently undertaking their cancer journey and to their families. Lily is a survivor of cancer and a grandparent to seven grandchildren. She is also the shared parent of one of those grandchildren. Lily has said that she became an ambassador to make people with cancer aware of all the support available, so they do not have to face cancer isolated and alone. In 2019, Lily was recognised for her work and named the Community Ambassador of the Year. Lily said this demonstrated how the Cancer Council NSW had embraced and empowered her to become a better person and an active volunteer. I congratulate Lily on being recognised as this year's North Shore Grandparent of the Year, and I wish her every success in the future.

ST CLAIR FAMILY DENTAL

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (19:31): I extend my heartfelt congratulations to St Clair Family Dental on being a 2022 finalist in the St Marys and Mt Druitt local business awards in the health improvement services category. St Clair Family Dental is a well-known, well-loved and vital business in our local community. To be a finalist in the local business awards is a great achievement, and I commend all the staff who have helped to achieve this outcome. To be a successful business at this stage, particularly going through the global pandemic, the challenges of natural disasters and the increasing challenges in our economy, is an outstanding achievement. I congratulate the workers and the people who started this business and led it on to this award. St Clair Family Dental deserves this award, and I look forward to hearing more about its success in the months and years ahead.

MIRANDA ELECTORATE OFFICE STAFF

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (19:32): I believe the Miranda electorate is certainly the best place to live, work and raise a family. It is my absolute privilege to represent the people in Miranda. I absolutely could not do the job to serve my community without my incredible team in the Miranda electorate office. Heading into the end of another parliamentary year, I want to take a moment to place on record my appreciation for the work my team do, day in, day out, to support the community in the Miranda electorate, to make sure that their needs are attended to and the work is prepared so that we can advance their causes to the various Ministers and departments and ensure that my community is truly represented by the best government in this country. I put on record my appreciation for Travis Russell, William Lyall, Bianca Bowler, Tia Kamelin, Temia Jardini and of course Domenica Barilaro, who has assisted throughout the year. I thank my incredible team and I look forward to hitting the campaign trail running with all of them.

MOSMAN ROWERS CLUB

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (19:33): I recognise Mosman Rowers, a local and much-loved community club that last night hosted a fundraising dinner event for the people of Ukraine. The evening aimed to spread awareness, show solidarity and support of Ukraine, which is still being devastated by war, and raise vital funding to help support the suffering Ukrainian community. The event featured distinguished guest speakers and local artists, including UNICEF Australia representatives, Ukrainian artist Leon Stejko and vocalist Julia Shved. Guests enjoyed a three-course Ukrainian-inspired dinner, art, music and conversation. Fifty dollars from each and every ticket and all funds raised from the evening will go directly to UNICEF. This money will provide families with emergency water, sanitation and hygiene kits, psychosocial support to those impacted by the conflict, supplies to meet the children's basic nutrition and medical needs, and essential education supplies. I thank Mosman Rowers, led by president Kathrina Doran, for hosting this fantastic initiative and our local businesses that supported this event. I especially thank my community, who are always ready to give their time, money and support to those less fortunate.

MULGOA ELECTORATE OFFICE STAFF

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa) (19:34): In my final contribution in this parliamentary term, I extend my sincere thanks and appreciation to my electorate office staff, including Pasquale Turano, who is in the gallery. I congratulate Pasquale on finishing his university degree. He has been extremely enthusiastic and is a very strong conservative. I am very pleased to have him in my electorate office. I also acknowledge Tiana Dandan, who is also a university student. She works in my office part-time. I thank Lyndal Skinner, who assists me part-time and also works as a professional in another sector of our community. She is brilliant. I thank my faithful, loyal, hardworking and long-term senior electorate officer, Angela Maltese. She has my back every day. The team does an amazing job and has a great reputation in the community. I extend my sincere thanks to all of them for how hard they work for the community.

DR PETER HON JUNG WONG, AM

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield) (19:35): I recognise Dr Peter Wong, AM, a long-time resident of Strathfield. I congratulate him on his eightieth birthday and acknowledge his many contributions to public life and the community. Peter is a prominent and respected member of the Australian Chinese community. In the late 1990s Peter, together with Professor Mary Kalantzis and Professor Bill Cope, founded the Unity Party as a direct response to racism and attacks on Australian multiculturalism. The Unity Party would field candidates in 72 electorates in the 1998 Federal election. Peter's goal was to ensure that migrant communities and those who supported Australian multiculturalism had a voice. That pioneering movement at a watershed time in Australian history inspired many people, including me. Peter was elected to the New South Wales Legislative Council in March 1999. He was a staunch advocate for multiculturalism and a critic of anti-migrant policies. He was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 1996. I congratulate Peter on being a pioneer and role model for Asian-Australian political representation in New South Wales.

MAY GIBBS GUMNUT FAIR

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (19:37): May Gibbs' Nutcote is a much loved institution in my electorate. It was once the harbourside home of Australia's foremost children's author and illustrator—best known for her iconic story *Snugglypot and Cuddlepig*—and is now a museum surrounded by beautiful cottage gardens, visited and enjoyed by locals and the broader community. Nutcote was honoured as the first site in this State to receive a commemorative New South Wales Blue Plaque in recognition of the site's contribution to local heritage. This year the annual Gumnut Fair was bigger than ever. The rain dampened the ground but it did not dampen the spirits of those involved. There was much to savour, including food stalls, a sausage sizzle, Devonshire tea, face painting, craft and a range of fun activities for the young and old to enjoy. Entry to the fair was free, and a special May Gibbs raffle was held as part of the fundraiser, with special prize packs containing May Gibbs products up for grabs. I thank manager and curator Megan Sadler and all the wonderful volunteers who helped to make it a special day for everyone to enjoy. I thank Nutcote for continuing May Gibbs' incredible legacy.

Private Members' Statements

MEMBER FOR HOLSWORTHY

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy) (19:38): All members know we cannot do this job alone, and the end of the year is a good time to reflect on that. I am blessed to have my family in the gallery tonight. First, I acknowledge our fabulous locals and community groups. They tell me what we need to make our area better. I love securing infrastructure for my electorate. I am proud to have taken part in delivering over 5,000 commuter car parking spaces, billions of dollars in hospital upgrades, upgrades to schools and funding for organisations such as the Shepherd Centre, Autism Advisory & Support Service and Miracle Babies. That work was made possible because of the team of campaign volunteers who helped me to get a seat in the first place. I will be forever grateful to them for giving me this opportunity. We also have phenomenally talented staff working for our other MPs and Ministers, and I am grateful for them. I am also grateful for the Ministers and the Premier, who strive to make a difference.

Many of those members and staff have become my friends. When times were tough, I was lucky to be able to reach out to them, along with my tears and fears. I hope they feel that I have been there for them too. I am thankful that some of those friends are in the Chamber. I will single one of them out, Shelley Hancock, who is retiring after 20 years. Shelley, Parliament will miss you. Shelley is tough, smart and witty, and one of the most loving people I know. I will share an example of who she is. When I was pregnant with my first baby, she offered to put a cot in the Speaker's office to help me out. While I am not sure how well that would have worked, a baby boom soon hit our Chamber, so Shelley built a parents' room for members of Parliament with children. That enabled us to continue to represent our electorates and be with our babies at the same time. While we argue about quotas and the like, that kind of support really helps to make politics a career choice for women.

My team makes everything possible. To everyone who has helped in a casual role over the years, it has been a privilege to have been a part of your life while you studied or were in between other roles. A very special mention to Marc Landrigan, who helped me at the very start and recently came back for a while; and Zac Mitchell, who is helping us at the moment and is an absolute asset. Faith Perryman came to help two days a week for a couple of months, but stayed for nine years. Faith is amazing at helping people who need intensive attention and she always makes a difference for them—and for me too. Sophie Carlton is off on her next overseas adventure. I cannot believe I was so excited for her—until she told me that that meant she was actually leaving. I love her "Sophisms", humour and the fact that she is so empathetic. She comes to Parliament with me each sitting day and puts up with the good and the not-so good. She helps me but, even more importantly, truly wants to help people. I will miss her.

Dan Nicholls is really one of the best. He is my own Radar O'Reilly in the office, my adviser and sounding board. He is one of my best mates. Politically we make a great team, but he has basically become family and I hope that continues. I thank him for being Ellie's godfather. No matter what happens with the election, the fact that they have all said they would work with me again means that I know we are a true team. My kids want me to thank their Uncle Dan, who would like to be called Super Dan, as well as Princess Sophie. My parents, Scott and Rhonda Gibbons, are the most phenomenal, loving and energetic people I know. They have stood by me the whole way. They regularly pick up the slack or do the school run or babysitting when needed. I thank them for being the best G'ma and G'pa their granddaughters could ever hope for. They have also been great role models and the best parents to me.

This is the hard bit. Since last year's end-of-year speech, we are now missing my Uncle Bourke, who passed away in April. He taught me compassion for others and gave me the drive to make a difference. Some of my favourite photos of him were taken in this building. He was here for my inaugural speech. He loved politics and always made sure I was okay. I thank Ray and Helen Johns for welcoming me into their family. I also thank

Kenny, Matthew, Luke and Tess. Their love for their dad and little sisters is beautiful to watch. I love knowing they are always there for them.

I started this journey with a best mate and I end it with a true partner. Together we have added two little girls, Audrey Freda and Elizabeth Donna—or Ellie Doughnut, as she calls herself. Our girls are now 4½ and just turned six and have practically grown up in this Parliament. Little Ellie was here at just 12 days old. Now they do cartwheels and ride their scooters down the corridors—look out, world, if either of them decide to run. They are pretty comfortable here. They know their minds and the commitment needed to serve the community—although right now their focus is on getting a pet. Kent, you have a brilliant mind and an unstoppable drive to help people. You are my biggest supporter, though you challenge me like crazy, and you strive to make me better and push me to go the extra mile. I appreciate that. I love working through issues and ideas with you. We are a team. We help each other with our careers while keeping our girls safe and happy. Trying to find time for each other is a priority as well. So what is next for me? Well, that is a good question. I look forward to finding out soon.

KEIRA ELECTORATE

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira) (19:43): In my final speech for this term of Parliament—it will not be my last—I will thank a number of people who have supported me over the past 12 years. The past four years have been a very challenging period, particularly in the Health portfolio, given the enormous challenges of the global pandemic. It was very difficult in Opposition because, although we are ideas-rich, we are resource-poor. So I will spend some time thanking and acknowledging a number of people. First, I thank the community that elected me to this place and who have given me the privilege of representing them in this place since 2011. The past four years have been tough. They have been tough on working people, on those most vulnerable in our community, on small business and industry, and young people as well as the elderly. I say to the community that there has not been a single day when I have not thought about the enormous impact that the global pandemic has had on our community.

I have lived it every single day since becoming the shadow health Minister. I know that it devastated businesses, workers and employment opportunities for young people. It forced people who were full-time to go part-time or, if already part-time, they went without work. That challenging pandemic ripped through the community and caused untold damage to people's health and wellbeing. I want the community at large to know that I thank them for their support. Their views shape my views. If given the privilege in a few months' time, I hope we can have a better term of Parliament, working together.

Having been a ministerial staffer—not a parliamentary staffer—I know the job can be challenging. In Opposition it feels doubly challenging because under a Westminster system resources are pretty bare. I thank my staff from the bottom of my heart. Mel Haskew has been with me for a number of years. She is an incredibly hard worker who is very passionate, and great with local community members and groups. Lynden Bartrim works diligently and tirelessly across all areas but particularly in looking after my diary, which is a work of art in itself. Richard Martin is a tireless advocate and it is great to see him working as a local counsellor at Wollongong council.

Jenelle Rimmer has been with me from the very beginning, since 2011. She has taken on many roles and stepped up in so many ways, helping run our electorate office and helping with the multiple portfolios I have been responsible for over the past 12 years. I thank her for her leadership, her loyalty and her hard work. If we are honest, we on this side of the House know that our staff make an enormous contribution and help us so very much. Often their work goes unacknowledged. We understand that it is our name on display, but I understand that Jenelle has really driven our office and our community is better because of the contribution that she makes to our electorate every day.

I thank my family for their support—my wife and two children, my parents and, of course, my in-laws. None of us could be here without that support. It is not the most challenging job, but it is a challenging job. Lots of people do challenging jobs in our community, and this is one of them, and we could not do it without support. I wish everybody a merry Christmas and all the very best. I hope to see you all from the other side.

LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL

Mr PAUL LYNCH (Liverpool) (19:48): I express concerns, as I have previously, about governance and transparency at Liverpool council. The entirety of the electorate that I represent is located within the Liverpool council area. The matters that I raise have been raised with me by constituents and are of interests to many others. Transparency is a critical factor in government and governance. Attempts to improve the transparencies surrounding lobbying at Liverpool council have recently been unsuccessful, with a recent majority decision at council refusing to adopt a code on lobbying. Some councillors do seem to have problematic attitudes to transparency.

I have recently come across an interesting document from the Australian Securities and Investments Commission [ASIC]. It is a change to company details document lodged—and one assumes prepared by—Kayal Partners Pty Limited. The part of the form relevant for present purposes deals with the appointment of company office holders. The form reveals one particular office holder of a particular company has changed his name. His previous name was Mohammad Melham Hussein. In what seems to have been a comparatively recent change, he changed his name to Melham Goodman. That name, of course, is the name of one of the Liverpool councillors voting against increasing transparency in the regulation of lobbying at Liverpool council. It is one of the more extreme instances I have seen of elected councillors avoiding transparency—just change your name. I note that I asked a question on notice to the Minister for Local Government about this practice but was unable to obtain useful advice. The answer merely referred vaguely to the Electoral Commissioner.

The concerns do not end there. It was recently reported in an issue of the Herald, among other papers, that a former employee of Liverpool council had lost his job because he had failed to declare that he was an undischarged bankrupt. The paper further reported this employee sued for unfair dismissal. That apparently resulted in six years of litigation that was settled in 2020. Not surprisingly, that led to several issues for elected councillors of Liverpool council. There had been no previous media reporting of the settlement of the case, of which they were aware. There were no reports to council which councillors could recall about the issue. It prompted a not unreasonable inquiry by Councillor Hagarty to council staff. He asked, "What was the result and what costs, if any, did council incur?"

That prompted what I would regard as a rather silly response from council staff. They wanted the councillor to explain how this relates to his civic duties. I would think the answer to that is blindingly obvious. Councillors must obviously be entitled to know how council money is spent, and they must surely know if council made a mistake in employing a person or sacking him. The officer concerned was employed under the first mayoral term of the current mayor. It is outrageous that a councillor cannot be told the outcome of litigation in which the council was involved and how much ratepayers' money was spent on six years of litigation.

The situation is made worse by further detail provided on the public record. The Liverpool council employee concerned had previously been described in the media as a former property developer and controversial mover and shaker. He was a previous Sutherland Shire councillor who had also worked in the Department of Planning. His name is Matt Daniel. Trying to prohibit councillors' access to this type of information is a blatant breach of any concept of transparency. It is characteristic of a council leadership out of control. That is reflected in the council having sacked its CEO in early February and not yet appointing a replacement. The acting CEO has now been on unscheduled indefinite leave for almost three weeks. The CEO has gone and so has the acting CEO. In less than 12 months this council has quickly got to the state it was in after the four years of the mayor's previous term.

In practical terms, these governance problems lead to a decline in service levels. For example, the time taken for the development applications has blown out dramatically, despite the mayor's pre-election promises. A dangerous piece of pathway connecting Laing Place and Carmichael Drive at West Hoxton was complained about by me in August this year to the council. No proper remedial work has as yet been carried out, and I only got a substantive reply several days ago from the council. Then there is the highly questionable determination of the council to use public funds to buy out the privately owned stranded assets of an old bus depot on Cowpasture Road for constantly changing purposes. It is a great pity that the Minister for Local Government does not pay as much attention to Liverpool council as she does to Canterbury-Bankstown council. Governance and transparency at Liverpool council are profoundly serious matters and raise profoundly serious concerns. With that, I am happy to conclude by saying that I finished as I commenced.

HOMELESSNESS

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (19:52): The face of homelessness is changing. The number of people over 55 who are experiencing homelessness is increasing, with older women being disproportionately affected. The lack of social and affordable housing stock and the escalating cost of living is making it more difficult for older people to have a safe and secure place to call home. Facing housing insecurity or homelessness is challenging at any age but for older citizens the impact can be severe and directly affect health. High rents and low incomes force older people into temporary, substandard conditions and into forgoing necessities like food and even medication.

An increasing number of vulnerable older constituents and support service providers are contacting me about unaffordable and unsustainable housing costs, and the very long wait for social housing approvals and allocations. People are in financial distress, and facing administrative and eligibility barriers that exclude them from secure housing at the very time when they have limited income and increased costs associated with aging. Older tenants in the private market are reporting exorbitant rent rises or evictions to make way for higher paying tenants. I have advocated for many people over 55 who have been unable to secure affordable rental

accommodation—people who have used all their savings and superannuation to supplement their rent until they face eviction.

I have heard the fear and distress of people who feel they have nowhere to turn, no options, and that the fight and struggle to simply survive is too much. Our older people should not feel that way. They should not be facing or experiencing homelessness or falling through gaps in support and service provision. I share two stories with the House. Marie is a 69-year-old woman who was made redundant in 2015 and who has been unable to find a job due to age discrimination. She drew down on her superannuation to cover medical expenses and now relies on the age pension. She cannot afford private rental, food, medication and basic living necessities, and had to leave Sydney due to housing costs.

She now moves between caravan parks, where the length of stays is strictly limited, and she occasionally house-sits. With no home base, she feels unsafe and stressed. Her applications for priority social housing have been denied, despite complying with departmental requests for updated evidence of her unsustainable situation. But unless she is diagnosed with a significant disability or health impairment, Marie will have to wait 11 years to be eligible for priority housing. If she is lucky, she will be offered a property through the standard social housing register, where the average wait time is 10 years.

Michael is an 81-year-old man who has been on the housing register for several years but was ineligible for priority social housing when he first applied. He has been a long-term resident in a small, modest boarding house where he has a bedroom and shares access to a bathroom and kitchen with a diverse range of short-term tenants. In the past year he was subjected to threats, abuse, assaults, antisocial behaviour and fraudulent withdrawals from his bank account. He was recently sent an eviction notice via text message, despite telling his real estate agent that he cannot manage a smartphone. Michael came to my office because he had nowhere to go, he did not know where he could get help and he felt like he could not fight anymore. Marie's and Michael's heartbreaking circumstances are alarmingly common. Our current approach and service provisions for older people do not provide the support that is needed.

The parliamentary inquiry into homelessness amongst older people aged over 55 in New South Wales was welcomed by the sector and captured the complexity of homelessness among older people. Recommendations identified the need for a one-stop shop model to help older people facing housing insecurity before they reach crisis point. A model of early intervention with tailored support has been proven successful by Victoria's Home at Last program. I have repeatedly called on the Government to introduce a specialist model and to lower the current age for priority social housing from 80 years to ensure people get the support they need to prevent homelessness. New South Wales has the economic resources and a committed sector capable of reversing the trend in homelessness among older people, and other States have shown us how it can be done. It is our moral responsibility to do better.

Secure housing is the first line of defence in ensuring the health and wellbeing of older people. I call on the Government to urgently adopt all the recommendations of the parliamentary inquiry into homelessness among older people by urgently creating a specialist service similar to the Victorian Home at Last model, lowering the priority age for social housing from 80 to 55, and increasing affordable housing stock. Immediate action is vital to provide safe homes for our older members of our society. I thank Donna Brooks in my electorate office for working on this private member's statement and for the support she provides to so many who are facing homelessness within the Sydney community.

MATER DEI FOUNDATION

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden) (19:58): I congratulate the Mater Dei Foundation on its successful and joyous foundation dinner. I often praise and thank it for the continuous work it does in the community. More than \$350,000 was raised, which will be utilised to establish a wellbeing support program at Mater Dei School. The program is pivotal to students at Mater Dei, especially those who may feel anxious and overwhelmed. The program involves the introduction of a four-legged friend, which will ensure an environment that is compassionate and calm.

I thank and commend the emcee, Sarah Ryan, and her co-emcee, Wade, who is a student at Mater Dei School. I thank the students who performed on the evening. They truly put on a great show and demonstrated the creativity that flows from the classrooms. I thank choir members Wade, Charbel, Alarna, Rosie, Jack, Nate, Aryan, R-Win, James, Abigail, Tobias, Zachery, Sarah, Ruby, James, Isaac, Joshua, Breeana, Emily, Olivia, Jessica, Maria, Jayden, Nariah and Dylan. I also thank the performers in the community performance: Ally, Cassie, Tracey, Verity, Jacob, Ziad, Claire, Zaylee, Karen, Jane, Charlene, Bec, Lizzy, Christy, Jeremie, Abigail, Aryan, Dylan, Kayla, Isaac, Rosie, Nariah, Riley, Breeana, Jack, Charbel, Nicole, Nathan, Liam, Ben, Leanne and Kristy.

The Mater Dei Foundation is truly worthy of recognition. Organisations like Mater Dei are an attestation of the best qualities present in our great community. The positive impact that Mater Dei has cannot be overstated. The school has been a beacon of light in our community and, indeed, in the wider Macarthur and New South Wales areas. It is a community unlike any other. It is a place that draws out the very best in people. All who are blessed to know the story of Mater Dei are filled with an immeasurable wealth of hope, inspiration, happiness and gratitude—hope, because the level of care and guidance provided to the children and young people reminds us of the goodness ever present in the community. Journeys and stories of the children and young people inspire us to be a force of good in the community.

It is my utmost pleasure and privilege to thank Mater Dei Foundation chairman Jim Marsden, OAM; chair of the board of Mater Dei School Michael Lavorato; and CEO and principal of Mater Dei School Mark Raue. I also thank all the staff, teachers, administrators and volunteers who work tirelessly. For the success of the foundation dinner, I thank platinum sponsor, Bradcorp. I also thank the gold sponsors: Camden Hire, Campbelltown Catholic Club, Ingham Property, Perich Group, Max and Nola Tegel, Wests Group Macarthur and Tony Wolf & Son.

I thank the silver sponsors: 4K Automotive, BP Picton, the Hexton family, Ingleburn RSL Club, JMC Academy, Macarthur Automotive, Fresh Creative Styling, Vitocco Charitable Foundation and Wakeling Automotive. I also thank the corporate sponsors: Camden Council, Campbelltown City Council, Commonwealth Bank, Dartanyon, Ingleburn RSL Club, Kelly+Partners, Shafer Auto, Knapp Property Group, McDonald's, Macarthur Engineering, Marsdens Law Group, the Marten family, My Property Consultants, Macarthur United Real Estate, Office Products Depot, Pan Sport & Corporate Wear, ProLift Trucks, St Johns Park Bowling Club and Wards Accounting Group.

The involvement of so many people and organisations in the success that Mater Dei enjoys is no small feat. It is a testament to the true nature of the Camden and Macarthur community. Once again, I thank all those who contribute to and volunteer for Mater Dei for all the work they do, continuing its success. As a first-term MP, I thank the staff in my office. With 88,000 electors, there is never a dull day in the office. We are always busy, but everything seems to get done. I thank my great staff: Jo, Romel, Caitlin, Josh and Calvin, and former staff member Alison. Without those people, I would be in distress. Behind every member is a fantastic team and the Camden electorate office is no exception.

AMAZON EMPLOYEES

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (20:03): I will speak about the many of my constituents of Canterbury who are Amazon workers. I speak of their distress, particularly over the last little while, that they have only received a 1.5 per cent pay increase after all the hard work that they have done. The race to the bottom on wages and secure jobs is a global problem and Amazon is a prime example. Many of the workers in the electorate of Canterbury, across New South Wales and nationally come from very low socio-economic communities and backgrounds. They face a day-to-day deluge of issues. The cost of living has risen. Rents have risen. Mortgage interest rates have risen. Electricity prices have risen. Petrol has risen. Wages have stagnated and real wages have gone down. I am calling on Amazon to do the right thing. If Amazon wants to operate in Australia as a multinational company, it needs to pay Australians the right wages.

I take that back. I wish billionaire Jeff Bezos good luck in making an extreme amount of money off the back of ripping off Amazon workers. He was in the media the other day talking about how he wants to give his money away while he is alive. That is fair and good, and good luck to him. I know a number of charities and organisations, as do all members, that would love to give him a wish list. For Christmas I wish Amazon would do the right thing and provide a proper pay rise to its workers, whose hard work contributes to an increase in productivity.

I acknowledge the SDA and, in particular, Bernie Smith for their constant advocacy on behalf of workers. As the main union for Amazon workers, the SDA has worked tirelessly to stop the Americanisation of wages and working conditions in Australia. From the day that Amazon opened its first warehouses in Australia, the SDA has worked to enforce and lift safety standards on site. The union has taken legal action to stand up for workers who have faced discrimination at work. We should not in this day and age have multinational companies setting up in Australia, using Australian laws and exploiting Australian workers. The workers are from low-income, low-socio-economic and diverse backgrounds. I am asking that Amazon give them a fair and proper pay rise.

I am happy to have discussions with the Amazon boss. I am happy for Amazon to meet me anywhere at any time. Thousands of workers are working their guts out, doing the right thing and increasing productivity. Australia has seen a massive increase in growth and productivity. Amazon's fulfilment centres across Australia have recorded significant growth in the company's commercial services since 2019. There was massive growth

over the past two years during the pandemic. I urge Amazon to do the right thing and pay wages above what it is paying now. Do the right thing for Australian workers.

MANLY ELECTORATE OFFICE AND MINISTERIAL STAFF

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly—Minister for Environment and Heritage) (20:08): As the parliamentary term comes to a close, I thank some very special people. I acknowledge my chief of staff, Christian Dunk, who is in the Chamber this evening. He said, "I'll give you three months," and here we are 11 months later. Rarely does one get the opportunity to work with professionals in Parliament. Christian is an absolute professional. The little engine that could, the Manly Electorate Office, has been led by my loyal and community-minded Senior Electorate Officer, Adele Heasman, and wonderful team, Maia Edge, Flinders Brogden and Phil Corbett.

Together they blend experience and youth to ensure that Manly is well looked after. My change from being a hardworking backbencher to a Minister has placed them under enormous pressure. I apologise to them for the numerous protests and phone calls on matters totally unrelated to Manly that they have had to endure. Indeed, I understand that this afternoon there was a man at the front of the office with a megaphone and a banner about kangaroos, of which there are not many in Manly. Nonetheless, their love for Manly and the work that they do is valued and I say bring on March.

This has been the most fulfilling and exhilarating year of my professional life. To be a Minister and to have custodianship of our State's environment and heritage is an immense privilege. In New South Wales there are eight million people, 93 MPs and 26 Ministers but there is just one Minister for Environment and Heritage. I place on record my thanks to the Environment and Heritage Group leadership team—professional, driven and passionate public servants who are experts in their fields. I have also had the benefit of equally as passionate department liaison officers. I wish Gavin, Shannon, Ella, Joel, Adam, Tom, Anna Jane, Josh, Sarah and Sarah 2.0 all the best. I thank them for being amazingly intelligent and passionate people.

The work rate this year has matched my enthusiasm. They say that soldiers win battles and generals get the credit. But nothing would be possible without the best ministerial team in the building, and I mean the best. It is a high-performance machine, led by my chief of staff, Christian Dunk, a man who should take credit for some of the most important environmental reforms and initiatives that this State has ever seen. There should be no mistake. In my engagement over many years with industry, professionals, partners, CEOs—you name it—this man has no peer. He has a bright future ahead of him. He has led an amazing team: Imogen Brennan; Honora Campbell; Kim Preston-Hiney, who I particularly acknowledge; Taylor Denny; Emma Campbell; and private secretary of the year, who is on loan from Rishi Sunak, Bethany West.

Those people are loyal, committed, passionate and damn intelligent. They have grabbed an opportunity with both hands and collectively, as a team, delivered a profound and positive impact on the environment and our heritage that will be felt for generations. I thank the team because together we have operated with integrity and passion, and truly delivered results. This has been a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and privilege. We have absolutely made the most of it. Finally, I do this with and for Elissa, Ted and Grace. They are discreet, level-headed, clear, concise and have a view to delivering great outcomes. That is the team that I have had the enormous privilege of working with over the past 12 months. I thank them.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Before I call the next member, I acknowledge in the gallery Matthew Blackmore, the Mayor of Strathfield, and welcome him to the final hours of the Fifty-Seventh Parliament.

CANTERBURY HOSPITAL

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury) (20:13): Tonight I acknowledge the 10,000 people who signed a Canterbury community petition relating to Canterbury Hospital. I also place on record my thanks to thousands of people over many years who have campaigned very hard. The Labor Party made an announcement nearly two weeks ago. I acknowledge the Leader of the Opposition, Chris Minns; our shadow Minister for Health; my colleagues Jason Yat-Sen Li, Jo Haylen and Jihad Dib; Tony Burke and Linda Burney from the Federal Parliament; and many of our councillors, who have been advocating strongly to upgrade the hospital. I have spoken about Canterbury Hospital many times in the House, and this will be the last speech that I will give for this term of Parliament.

Constituents of the electorates of Strathfield—I note that the Mayor of Strathfield is in the public gallery—Summer Hill, Lakemba and Oatley, as well as the residents of Riverwood, Narwee, Beverly Hills and the leader of the Labor Party's electorate, go to Canterbury Hospital. The last significant redevelopment of the hospital was completed in 1998. The announcement of that redevelopment was made in the 1994, prior to the 1995 election. The former member for Hurstville Morris Iemma, the former member for Canterbury Kevin Moss, the former

member for Lakemba Tony Stewart, and former Canterbury mayor Kayee Griffin, alongside many other councillors and amazing community leaders, led a solid campaign. Labor Party branch members, businesspeople, the Health Services Union, nurses, midwives, doctors and community members worked very hard to rally against the Liberal Government's proposal to close Canterbury Hospital. It was democracy in action.

The then Opposition leader Bob Carr and shadow health Minister Andrew Refshauge announced that they would not only keep Canterbury Hospital open but also redevelop it if they won government. Six months later Labor won the 1995 election by a few hundred votes in Badgerys Creek. I hope that result is repeated in 4½ months. Each and every day Labor makes its case for election. This Government has had 12 long years. Its own documents and reports from 2013 stated that there was a plan to redevelop Canterbury Hospital. Despite all the development that has come to Canterbury, Government members will know that there has still been no upgrade to Canterbury Road. A small upgrade was made to the emergency department at the hospital, but it still does not offer angiogram, renal dialysis or cancer treatment services. Palliative care services at the hospital have also been taken away. The hospital has limited services for the very large multicultural community it serves, which includes a lot of elderly people.

We saw what happened during the pandemic. I am eternally grateful to the 900 health workers at the hospital who are represented by the Health Services Union. I acknowledge the nurses, midwives, members of the Australian Salaried Medical Officers' Federation and the 60 doctors who, two years ago on Christmas Eve, put their names to a petition for further investment in Canterbury Hospital. But this Government has not listened. Only Labor will deliver for Canterbury Hospital.

INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (20:18): Those of us who were fortunate enough to win the birth lottery and be born in Australia, or those who have come across the seas to join us, share this country with the oldest continuous living culture in the world. For more than 60,000 years our First Nations people have lived in extraordinarily diverse cultures in an astounding array of environments, speaking many hundreds of languages and dialects. They have a connection to the land and the sea through Dreamtime and an interrelation of all people and all things. They pass down the memory of spirit ancestors through stories, art, ceremony and songs. However, for many, the rich diversity of those origins was brutally ruptured by European settlement and the violent dispossession that marks our common history. While we have made great strides across our country to continue the cause of reconciliation, there is still much to be done. In my first speech in this place, I raised these issues and my commitment to ongoing reconciliation. Today, in my last speech of this term—hopefully I will have a future term—I raise these issues again.

Earlier this year in this place we marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the New South Wales apology to the Aboriginal people of Australia for what was the systematic separation of generations of Aboriginal children from their parents, families, communities and country. In my speech marking the anniversary, I commented that reconciliation is an ongoing journey, and that, while meaningful change has been made, future gains will require just as much, if not more, effort. There are many areas of social policy that we can continue to invest in to make meaningful gains for the advancement of our Indigenous people. We need to close the gap on education, health, domestic and family violence, mental health, incarceration and addiction—we hear so in this place frequently from many advocates across the Chamber. We also need to ensure that our First Nations people are constitutionally recognised with a Voice to Parliament.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart was created after the Referendum Council led a series of regional dialogues with First Nations people from all corners of the country. These dialogues ensured that Aboriginal decision-making was at the heart of the process, and the stories gathered were presented to the First Nations Constitutional Convention at Uluru in May 2017 as *Our Story*. The convention endorsed the work of the dialogues and issued the Uluru Statement from the Heart to the Australian people. The Uluru Statement from the Heart calls for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice will be an independent, representative advisory body for First Nations people. It will provide a permanent means to advise the Australian Parliament and Government on the views of First Nations people on matters that affect them. This is something that is supported by the New South Wales Government.

We need to work in partnership with our First Nations people, their communities and organisations, so that we can truly move forward in reconciliation but also make strong investments into these communities to continue working towards a truly equal society. In my own community of the North Shore, we have a deep and longstanding engagement with different Indigenous communities across New South Wales and across Australia. More than that, we have an investment and a love for social justice and the need to ensure that everybody is equally represented in our country and that everybody has equal opportunities. The rates of incarceration, of violence, of disadvantage are such that that is not currently what we see.

I want to join with all in this place and across New South Wales to support an Indigenous Voice to the Federal Parliament, and to do what we can to ensure that voice is enshrined here in New South Wales. I will finish by quoting the last line in the Uluru Statement from the Heart. It reads:

In 1967 we were counted, in 2017 we seek to be heard. We leave base camp and start our trek across this vast country. We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.

We can all walk together towards a better future, and enshrining an Indigenous voice in the constitution is one of many steps we can take to achieving that future. Let us commit to the Voice, to treaty and to truth.

BANKSTOWN HOSPITAL SITE

Ms WENDY LINDSAY (East Hills) (20:22): I speak further on the location of the new Bankstown Hospital site. On 7 March this year, the intersection of Stacey Street and Macauley Avenue in Bankstown went under water. The canals that divide Stacey Street, the main arterial road to Bankstown from the north and the south, are part of the reason why it is always congested and one of the 10 worst roads in Sydney. Anyone who has the unfortunate circumstance of having to commute along this arterial road knows that it is often gridlocked, particularly at peak hour when it becomes a crawl.

I have spoken in this House before on some of the traffic issues in the Bankstown CBD, but not all of them. With speculation that the new Bankstown Hospital might be placed where Bankstown TAFE currently stands in the Bankstown CBD, I feel it is imperative to address the rest of the traffic problems. The main arterial road, Stacey Street, is diabolical. An ambulance would not have been able to traverse it on 7 March if it was coming from the ambulance superstation on Canterbury Road. I repeat, Stacey Street went under water. I have already spoken about Chapel Road South, Greenwood Avenue, Marion Street, Brandon Avenue and the Olympic Parade choke points. I have not, however, spoken about the Hume Highway, Chapel Road north, Meredith Street and Rickard Road.

Meredith Street currently has numerous high-rise buildings under construction. Once residents move into the apartments being built, this will add further vehicles to the road. The ambulance station was previously on Meredith Street but was moved out of Meredith Street due to the traffic issues. Rickard Road is busy with traffic and will become more so with the completion of the University of Western Sydney multistorey Bankstown campus. Vicinity group also plans to develop 17 multi-storey towers in the Bankstown CBD, further impacting that road. I turn to Chapel Road north. It is not possible to turn right out of Chapel Road north onto the Hume Highway, further limiting traffic ingress and egress points. Chapel Road north comes to an absolute standstill at school pick-up and drop-off times, due to St Felix Catholic Primary School and LaSalle Catholic College.

For Mayor Asfour to state in the *Torch* yesterday that traffic issues in Bankstown are nonsense is completely ludicrous. One would have to wonder why the mayor is so determined to trash the biggest TAFE in our area, when there is a statewide skills and labour shortage. Is it because of his political donors having businesses across the road from TAFE in Little Saigon Plaza, who will therefore benefit from the extra foot traffic that a hospital will bring? Is it because of the controversy over the sale of Bankstown Community College at 457 Chapel Road, 140 metres from the TAFE site, the community college of which Mayor Asfour was a director? To add insult to injury, *The Sydney Morning Herald* article by Kate McClymont on 16 April 2016 stated:

The auction of the Chapel Road building is being handled by—

Ms Anna Watson: Point of order: This is outside the subject matter of private members' statements, which are supposed to be about what is going on in our electorates.

Ms WENDY LINDSAY: It is completely about my electorate. This is about a hospital to service the people of East Hills.

Ms Anna Watson: It is not supposed to be about the mayor. The member stands in the Chamber night after night talking about the Mayor of Canterbury, and she needs to stop.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): I have heard the point of order. I will rule—

Ms Anna Watson: She is talking about things that are outside the private members' statement realm.

Ms WENDY LINDSAY: This is completely to do with my electorate.

Ms Anna Watson: No, it is not.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): The member for East Hills has referenced her electorate and it is relevant to the private member's statement.

Ms WENDY LINDSAY: The article states—

Ms Anna Watson: It is not in her electorate.

Ms WENDY LINDSAY: It is in my electorate. This is servicing the people of East Hills.

Ms Anna Watson: She is not the member for Bankstown; she is the member for East Hills.

Ms WENDY LINDSAY: This hospital will service the people of East Hills.

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

Ms Anna Watson: She is the member for East Hills; she is not the member for Bankstown. It is not relevant for her to be speaking about issues in the electorate of the member for Bankstown.

Ms WENDY LINDSAY: This is to service the people of East Hills and Bankstown. This is about the site of a \$1.3 billion hospital to service Bankstown.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): I have heard the point of order. Reference has been made to the electorate of East Hills in the private member's statement. The member for East Hills will be heard in silence.

Ms WENDY LINDSAY: An article by Kate McClymont states:

The auction of the Chapel Road building is being handled by LJ Hooker Bankstown, which specialises in residential premises. One of its three real estate agents is Gizele Asfour, the mayor's sister.

That also brings into question why the heritage listing on St Paul's Anglican Church was not renewed and was voted down at a council meeting on 26 April 2016. It is a church on what appears to be the popular Chapel Road, next door to the Bankstown Community College, and diagonally opposite the TAFE site. Mayor Asfour said in the *Torch* yesterday that he is "livid at the politics being played around the announcement of the hospital site". I remind him that, when the hospital was announced just prior to the March 2019 State election, he stated in the *Torch* on 11 March:

You can't build a new hospital in the Bankstown CBD, if no-one can get to it.

Labor Councillor Linda Downey is on record at minute 58 of the City of Canterbury-Bankstown council meeting on 27 April 2021 commenting about the location of the hospital within the proposed Bankstown master plan. She states, "I don't necessarily want that hospital to be in the centre of Bankstown. I don't think that's a good thing." Councillor Downey was also the Mayor of Bankstown and is married to the former Labor member for East Hills, Alan Ashton. Glen Brookes, the former Liberal member for East Hills, who represented the Revesby Ward on City of Canterbury-Bankstown council for eight years and then as the State member for a further eight years, also does not believe that the hospital should go into the CBD. The current five Liberal Party councillors in City of Canterbury-Bankstown council do not believe the CBD is a suitable place for the hospital and, of course, the State member for Bankstown also does not believe that the Bankstown CBD is suitable. Many different sides of politics are in agreement that the CBD of Bankstown is a very bad location for a new hospital.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (20:28): Over the past nearly eight years, every time that I have stood up in the Chamber to speak about the destruction of our forests, our koala habitats or our environment, the Liberals and The Nationals on the other side of the House have yelled out all sorts of offensive remarks, insinuating that I do not have a right to talk about those things because the electorate of Newtown does not have forests or koalas. I will be clear: The people of Newtown care deeply about our environment. We might not have beaches, but we love them and we care very deeply about the plastics that are polluting our oceans. We might not have native forests, but we do not want them logged. We are committed to ensuring that koalas and native animals are protected from extinction.

That is right: We may not have beaches and oceans or forests and national parks in our inner-city electorate, but we care about their devastation and the impact that government decisions have in destroying them. People in our local community care deeply about what is happening across the State, across the country and across the world. Our community cares when it sees the mega environmental destruction of massive wildfires in California and flooding in Pakistan. While we have not had floods or fires in our communities, we care that regional and rural communities are suffering. We have felt the grief that has impacted our loved ones who live in those communities. Gas mines, coalmines, logging and land clearing are threatening our water, climate, environment and future. They are threatening our earth.

Our communities know that this climate destruction and devastation is driven by dodgy corporations and coal and gas executives who profit from the destruction of our planet and the extinction of our native animals. We also know that so much of this devastation is linked to colonisation and invasion. There is no environmental justice

without racial justice. Our community sees the devastation and impact that it has on people and on country. It causes great anxiety and stress. It is a disgrace that the Labor Party and the Liberal Party take millions of dollars in donations from coal and gas billionaires and big corporations, while continuing to approve and enable climate bombs in the form of coalmines, gas mines and the fast-tracking of land clearing, which could push koalas to extinction. These actions fuel the climate crisis and threaten the safety of people, our health, our water, our ability to grow food and the air we breathe.

We can stop the downward spiral towards environmental destruction that is further fuelling the massive economic inequality and social insecurity in our communities. It is why our community is doing its bit to tackle the crisis head-on—globally, locally, individually and collectively. Many founding members of the School Strike 4 Climate movement went to school in the electorate of Newtown, demanding protection for our futures, for First Nations land and for our environment. They have inspired tens of thousands of others to take to the streets. Many people who live in the electorate of Newtown are active members of organisations like the Nature Conservation Council of NSW, Landcare and Surf Life Saving NSW, as well as many other community groups, all of which contribute to making our communities and environment a cleaner, greener, safer, healthier and more sustainable place to live.

The people in the electorate of Newtown do their bit every single day by using keep cups and re-usable tote bags, switching energy providers, installing solar, recycling, eating ethically, as well as cycling and catching public transport. Our community is doing its part, but we also know that individual action is not enough. It will never be enough. Governments, corporations and billionaires that aid, abet and profit from the climate crisis are letting us down. We need a total overhaul of the structures and system if we are going to seriously tackle the climate and extinction crisis head-on. That means ending coal and gas, rapidly shifting to renewable energy and putting an end to the billions in tax subsidies and special treatment that goes to big coal, oil and gas corporations.

Wealthy coal corporations must pay the price and compensate communities for the climate crisis they have knowingly fuelled. We can, and must, end the destruction of our forests that our koalas, threatened species and wildlife live in and are dependent on. The Greens are the only party in this place that is serious about protecting the environment, our climate and our future. I thank the people of the electorate of Newtown for the honour of representing them and for their care of our planet and the people who live in it.

UPPER HUNTER ELECTORATE ROADS

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (20:33): I update the House on the state of roads in the Upper Hunter electorate. Firstly, I acknowledge and thank the road workers employed by Transport for NSW and the councils across my electorate: MidCoast Council, Dungog Shire Council, Singleton Council, Muswellbrook Shire Council, Mid-Western Regional Council, Upper Hunter Shire Council and Liverpool Plains Shire Council. Those teams have put in a massive effort to fill all the potholes and repair the roads that were extensively damaged by rain and floods as a result of the weather events of 2022. They have done all that is humanly possible, despite the workload simply outstripping their ability to be everywhere at once when the road damage happened. I am glad I had the opportunity to meet many of them in August during a visit by the Minister for Regional Roads, the Hon. Sam Faraway, to the Upper Hunter.

I also report to the House that work undertaken this week has repaired a section of the New England Highway either side of the Thomas Mitchell Drive intersection between Muswellbrook and Liddell. I thank the motorists who raised with my electorate office the extensive damage to the road surface resulting from the rain earlier this year. As I mentioned a few moments ago, Transport for NSW tried to remedy the potholes but ultimately it required a much more substantial response, and pavement rehabilitation work has been carried out. In several instances this year on the New England Highway between Singleton and Muswellbrook rehabilitation had to be brought forward from next year. The extent of the challenge faced in repairing the flood damage to roads in my electorate is illustrated by the mounting damage bill in the Singleton Council area.

I note the mayoral minute by Mayor of Singleton, Councillor Sue Moore, to this week's council meeting states that, with three floods in the past 12 months, council's preliminary estimated roads repair bill is \$15 million. But this number is expected to continue to grow. The plight of councils in my electorate and across regional areas of New South Wales is on the Government's radar. On 25 October the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, Sam Faraway, announced the new Fixing Local Roads Pothole Repair Round—an emergency injection of \$50 million to help regional and rural councils to fix the increasing number of potholes brought on by this year's extreme wet weather. The repair of potholes on regional and local roads under the Fixing Local Roads Pothole Repair Round is scheduled to be completed between January next year and January 2024. The funding builds on the New South Wales Government's \$500 million invested through the Fixing Local Roads program to help regional councils repair, maintain and seal local roads.

Additionally, a total of \$512.5 million has been made available through the joint Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements to deliver a consistent, whole-of-government approach to betterment. Betterment is about building better assets that are safer, more reliable and better equipped to deal with natural disasters. The Infrastructure Betterment Fund has \$200 million to help rebuild damaged and destroyed infrastructure, such as bridges and stormwater drainage, in a more resilient way. Public assets directly impacted by the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires, the storm and flood events in early 2021 and the flooding in early 2022 will be eligible for the Infrastructure Betterment Fund. A further \$312.5 million is being targeted to road- and transport-related infrastructure in 26 northern New South Wales councils impacted by flooding earlier this year through the Regional Roads and Transport Recovery Package. I hope that package continues throughout the State and includes the Upper Hunter Shire Council areas.

Before I conclude, I provide an update to the House on the residents who have had their property compulsorily acquired for construction of the Singleton bypass. As I have mentioned previously, there are those who feel that the process—it is a process, and those unfamiliar with it should please consult the Transport for NSW website for background information on the many steps involved—has failed those property owners and it has been a very tough, bruising affair. We can never forget what we are asking people to do when they are moved from their properties because of infrastructure needs. There has been a lot of local commentary about the acquisition and the differences in values. The valuations were done under the just terms Act and were completed by an independent valuer. There are many criticisms of the just terms Act, but one of its strengths is that it removes the influence of politicians to set valuations and the possibility for corrupt behaviour to occur. Politicians are not valuers and it is not appropriate to pressure organisations such as the Office of the Valuer General. Nonetheless, we need the bypass and it is going ahead.

WILLOUGHBY ELECTORATE OPEN AND GREEN SPACE

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (20:38): I refer to the natural beauty of the Willoughby electorate and how effective care for our environment begins at the local grassroots level, enhanced by good policymaking in government. Considering its proximity to the Sydney CBD, Willoughby boasts a remarkable amount of green space, with an abundance of parks, reserves, foreshores and natural bushland. The local government area of Willoughby alone features more than 300 hectares of open green space. Add to this the green space on the North Sydney Council side of Willoughby, and we are very fortunate indeed. Bounded by Middle Harbour to the east and Lane Cove River to the west, Willoughby is a place of spectacular natural beauty. Blue gum forests, rainforests and mangroves are just some of the ecosystems that thrive in Willoughby, each of which is home to a plethora of native plant and animal species.

From the sandstone inlets of Middle Harbour to secluded pockets of forest in Chatswood and Artarmon, Willoughby is an ecological treasure trove. As a keen trail walker myself, I would like to see the many bushland areas in our area protected and well maintained. With an approach that is environmentally sensitive, I wish to grow the tracks across our area so even more people can enjoy Willoughby's natural environment. As much as we appreciate and relish this natural beauty in our midst, we can never take it for granted. The responsibility for our natural environment's protection and conservation falls to us all, whether we are private citizens or members of the Government. Our native flora and fauna locally are priceless and irreplaceable. At the individual grassroots level, we can all play our part, whether by taking part in community campaigns like Clean Up Australia, making daily lifestyle decisions that minimise adverse effects on the environment or joining active Bushcare groups dedicated to conservation, bush regeneration and tree planting.

I am grateful for the local Bushcare and environmental groups that contribute to the stewardship of our precious bushland in Willoughby. I will soon be joining a Bushcare session at Castlecrag—it having been rained out the other week—to help and learn more about their work. I am a fierce advocate for the protection of Willoughby's green spaces, such as the magnificent Flat Rock Gully in Northbridge, in which my father played as a child many years ago. As well as acting individually, we must also hold our governments to account on how their policies and decisions impact the environment. I take pride in the record of the Perrottet Government on this front. This is a government with strong environmental credentials and a proven record of acting to protect our natural environment. This Government has taken decisive action on climate change and on broader environmental challenges and opportunities both. It has added substantially to our national parks across New South Wales. Our waterways are cleaner under this Government, thanks to policies and programs, as I read in a major article last weekend. This means a lot to me as a founder 10 years ago of the Friends of Sydney Harbour.

I particularly and more locally applaud this Government's Greening Our City initiative. This program supports local councils across Greater Sydney to enhance our urban tree canopy and green cover. More trees mean more shade, cooler suburbs and more attractive communities. Over one million trees have been planted already, towards the commitment to plant five million trees across Sydney by 2030. I appreciate the importance of trees and green space to Willoughby and have set out a vision to return local green space by connecting Anzac Park

and Cammeray Park with a green canopy over the freeway. This is attracting strong support across my community, including via an online petition, and will be vigorously pursued. It is already the subject of a government commitment to pursue a business case for it.

In other environmentally friendly initiatives, I commend the Return and Earn scheme commenced in 2017 by this Government. Our State recently reached the milestone of eight billion bottles recycled, including 22 million containers in Willoughby. This week I was pleased to join with Minister James Griffin in opening a new recycling collection point in the heart of Willoughby, giving even more local opportunities to recycle and ensure a clean environment.

This Government is investing in alternative transport modes to reduce emissions, first by incentivising public transport with the construction of projects like the Sydney metro through the Willoughby electorate to take more cars off the road, and second by encouraging active transport with investment in cycleways such as the Mowbray Road to St Leonards shared path. At the same time, this Government is working to make motor vehicles more environmentally friendly through its Electric Vehicle Strategy. Many people in Willoughby have taken advantage of these incentives and the number of electric vehicles and chargers on Willoughby's roads is growing. I congratulate the Government on its environmental initiatives and will always work hard to ensure that the great natural splendour of Willoughby and New South Wales at large is preserved for people today and for generations to come.

GRANVILLE ELECTORATE FLOODS

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (20:43): Our State is currently facing yet another flooding crisis. We have been through this many times this year. Earlier this year, many homes in my electorate were flooded when the stormwater drains failed. It took time to get the people affected added to the Commonwealth list of people eligible for disaster recovery, because the rivers did not break their banks but the stormwater drains failed and people's homes were inundated. We also suffer from increasingly hot summers. These are the effects of climate change.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: Raising the Warragamba Dam wall.

Ms JULIA FINN: No. That is not the solution. But we are increasingly facing the predicted effects of climate change: more extreme weather, as well as hotter summers. I grew up in Canowindra in central western New South Wales. Earlier this week Canowindra had its worst flood on record, even higher than the 1952 flood. As we saw, it was even worse in Eugowra, where 150 of its 700 residents were evacuated from their roofs. The waters are now flowing on to Forbes. Wyangala Dam has released enormous amounts of water, which is contributing to flooding in Forbes. It is heartbreaking to see. It is all the more heartbreaking to learn that insurance premiums for people in Eugowra are around \$40,000 a year, yet the average house price in Eugowra is about \$250,000 or \$300,000. No-one who buys a house for that price can afford to pay \$40,000 a year on insurance. Something's got to give. I do not mean to say that Eugowra is a bad place to live. In fact, water has flowed under those homes before—as most of them are built on piers—but this flood was different. It was much worse. It is very challenging.

Mrs Melinda Pavey: Build Wyangala.

Ms JULIA FINN: Nothing has happened with Wyangala. Wyangala is not the only solution. Raising Wyangala Dam would certainly not have protected Eugowra. Eugowra, Canowindra, Molong and other towns flooded because 120 millimetres of rain fell on saturated soil. While 120 millimetres is not a lot of rain, when the soil is soaked the water has nowhere else to go. The water from those towns joins the Lachlan River, which is downstream of Wyangala Dam. But that is the cost of inaction on climate change. It is a worldwide issue and it is felt very keenly in this country.

As bad as it is here, it is even worse in Pakistan. This year glaciers melted and 30 million people were displaced from their homes and farms by floodwaters. I am concerned that, having talked for so long about two degrees of warming—which is the level at which it is thought that climate change may be irreversible—people think that that is the level at which the effects start. But we are at 1.5 degrees of warming and the effects have been very keenly felt. It is not a switch. We must look broader and we must look holistically because the impacts of climate change will get worse rapidly.

I hope this is the last year for a long time that we have extreme and awful weather, but it probably will not be. We must mitigate those effects and we must do so comprehensively. It is disappointing that the Government took a decade to recognise climate change was a problem and put in place the energy road map, but it is an important step. The Carr Government did pioneering work in this area, then it stopped for a while and now it has recommenced, but this must be addressed everywhere, and not just in the energy sector. Many different areas contribute to climate change and where it needs to be addressed.

A lot of the mitigation work will be very challenging because we may not be able to reverse those effects quickly. We must plant more trees in western Sydney to deal with the urban heat effect. That will also help with climate change. Adding more concrete everywhere will mean that the water flows faster and the stormwater system collapses, as happened in my area earlier this year. I am not sure whether or not the stormwater system was well maintained but, either way, it failed and it will need to be maintained more often, and that is going to be very costly.

KEMPSEY DISTRICT HOSPITAL HYDROTHERAPY POOL

Mrs MELINDA PAVEY (Oxley) (20:48): Along with residents of Macleay Valley, I am concerned for the future of the hydrotherapy pool at Kempsey District Hospital, which has remained closed since March 2020. That is simply not acceptable. I have discussed the issue with the Mid North Coast Local Health District chief executive and board members. I was advised that it was reviewing the future viability of the pool. I implore the health district and the Minister for Regional Health to expedite the matter and invest the appropriate resources to reopen the pool. Regional health facilities are one of the most important parts of our communities, yet we know that at times our communities face significant barriers to accessing the health care they need. We simply do not have the medical professionals, and it is not the Government's fault. We must put responsibility on one of the most powerful unions in Australia, the Australian Medical Association.

While bureaucracy discusses expenditure, they often forget to factor in the human cost of closing health facilities. Our local people deserve the same access to health services as those in the city. The lack of services can only be overcome by extensive travel, meaning people incur additional costs to simply access basic care. Kempsey District Hospital's hydrotherapy pool closure has meant patients have had to travel over 50 kilometres to seek hydrotherapy treatment. That is prohibitive for those residents who cannot drive, have medical conditions which prevent driving, and those who cannot afford the cost of travel.

Local public pools are not a substitute for a hydrotherapy pool. Hydrotherapy is significantly different from conventional swimming and aquarobics. Hydrotherapy exercise is performed in water heated to 31 to 35 degrees and provides opportunity for individual progressions within a safe, comfortable and enjoyable environment. The exercises and movements are catered for each individual client to address their discussed goals. Hydrotherapy is often less strenuous than land-based exercises, focusing on guided, controlled, pain-free movements with the ultimate goal of providing pain relief. Pools are selected to ensure that there is appropriate access and ideal depth of water for each client.

For those advocating for the reopening of the local Kempsey hydrotherapy pool, the irony has not been lost that it was the local community who first raised the funds needed to have this facility built. The Kempsey hydrotherapy pool was installed through fundraising in 1986. More than 30 local businesses and organisations donated to the hydrotherapy pool project, raising \$150,000 for the service. For more than 30 years the pool has been valued and used by a range of residents. As members of this House know, I am leaving the Parliament in March, but I can assure the Macleay Valley I will not stop advocating for the facility. I can also report that Michael Kemp, who was preselected as The Nationals candidate for the Oxley electorate, has the hydrotherapy pool reopening firmly in his sights too.

Michael is currently the director and principal physiotherapist at Keystone Health. He is well known to the Kempsey community. This Macleay-based healthcare service has a number of patients who were using the pool regularly before the closure. Michael knows hydrotherapy is really important for a multitude of patients. He says aquatic physiotherapy is physical exercise conducted within a specially designed heated pool to target and treat a wide spectrum of conditions. This may include, but is not limited to, osteoarthritis, general joint pain, pre- and post-operational rehabilitation, neurological conditions, fibromyalgia, or general fitness and wellbeing. He knows hydrotherapy is really important for a multitude of patients. Michael has said:

You can take up to 70 per cent of your weight in the water and that allows people to move their joints through a range of motion that is unencumbered by weight.

People get such joy and freedom of movement in the pool with one-on-one treatment that it's really a shame to not be able to offer those services.

About 12 months ago repairs to upgrade the hydrotherapy pool were quoted to be in the vicinity of \$100,000. I obtained that quote and provided it to the local health district. It is a small price tag for the wellbeing of our community. Kempsey District Hospital is a magnificent place. It is a new hospital that we opened in 2016—one of the many hospitals that this Government has built across New South Wales—with the adjunct of the community facilities in the old hospital. But we really need to support the community by getting this hydrotherapy pool fixed. I thank everyone in the community who raised this issue with me. We are fighting on your behalf. Thank you, Mr Temporary Speaker—the most handsome Temporary Speaker the House has ever had.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Thank you very much. I will not tell the member for Heathcote you said that. For one final time—to close the night out—I call my neighbouring member of Parliament, the member for Vacluse.

REMEMBRANCE DAY COMMEMORATIONS

CHRISTMAS FELICITATIONS

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vacluse) (20:52): Thank you very much, Mr Temporary Speaker, the member for Sydney. It has been a pleasure to work with you over a number of terms of Parliament. I wish you well in your political future. This is my last address to the Parliament, so let me focus on something that is very important in my community—our Remembrance Day commemorations. Remembrance Day is an opportunity for my community and all Australians to come together to remember that 104 years ago, at 11.00 a.m. on 11 November, fighting was ended and the whole world united to mark the end of the Great War.

As in previous years, this year I joined my community at Waverley Park. We were reminded, through the speeches and the solemn moments of silence, of the enormous cost of war and the unimaginable sacrifices that have been made not only by families and communities across the world but also by our local communities. I thank the Bondi Junction Waverley RSL Sub-Branch and Waverley Council for hosting the ceremony, the student volunteers from Waverley College who formed the catafalque party, the flag orderlies, the band and, of course, the wonderful young women from St Catherine's School.

The commemoration was led by Bondi Junction Waverley RSL sub-branch president Bill Harrigan, who took us through the Ode from *For the Fallen*, the *Last Post* and one minute's silence in tribute of the service men and women who sacrificed their lives for our freedom, both nationally and locally. Father Bernie Thomas from the Mary Immaculate church, Waverley, led us in the Lord's Prayer. It was a community event, with local residents and our community leaders in attendance—including North Bondi RSL sub-Branch president Rob de Graaf, Eastern Suburbs Police Area Command Superintendent Jodi Radmore, and Waverley councillors Sally Betts and Angela Burrill—and we each laid tributes on the Cenotaph.

This year's Remembrance Day Service was hosted by the NSW Association of Jewish Service and Ex-Service Men and Women [NAJEX] on Sunday 6 November at the Sydney Jewish Museum. It was hosted by NAJEX and NAJEX president Roger Selby. Her Excellency the Hon. Margaret Beazley, AC, QC, Governor of New South Wales, attended and the keynote address was given by Kevin Sumption, PSM, CEO of the Sydney Jewish Museum and previous CEO of the Australian National Maritime Museum. I regret that I was not able to attend the ceremony, but I have done so in many years prior in my role as the local member for Vacluse.

In the electorate, we have a number of war memorials erected in honour of our heroic military men and women who lived locally. During my time in Parliament, I have been proud to support the applications and the investment of over \$30,000 to restore those memorials. The 100-year-old Double Bay War Memorial in Steyne Park, Double Bay, received about \$15,000 to install lighting, and there was a pathway upgrade and there are other restoration works to the memorial. Rose Bay War Memorial in Lyne Park, Rose Bay, received about \$7,000 to repair the copper and brass gates as well as to rebuild the concrete kerbing around the side of the garden beds. That is where we hold one of our many amazing Anzac ceremonies each year, hosted by the Rose Bay RSL sub-branch. In 2020 the Vacluse War Memorial on Fitzwilliam Road, Vacluse, got \$10,000 to conserve the memorial's commemorative plaque and frame. That memorial is not well known, except to locals, but it serves as a reminder in the quiet streets of Vacluse of the sacrifices that the local constituents made on our behalf.

Our war memorials are a source of great community pride. These important local restoration projects help preserve our local history so that our future generations can understand the loss and the freedom won through that loss. I have worked closely with my two local RSL sub-branches, which have done a tremendous job over the many years I have served as the local member in paying tribute to our veterans. I thank the North Bondi RSL sub-Branch led by president Rob de Graaf and founded by original members of the Rats of Tobruk, and the Rose Bay RSL sub-branch led for many years by my good friends Lee and Rosemary Stockley—both OAMs—and now by president Charles Gallagher, vice-president William Close, secretary Peter Hickson and treasurer Gary McFarlane, AFC. It has been a pleasure joining them over the years at the many commemorative ceremonies they have hosted for our community. They have always done a wonderful job.

With the indulgence of the House, lastly, I extend my felicitations to all members of this Parliament. God bless. It is time for rest and reflection before we enter into the campaign period early next year. I have the greatest of respect for this institution of the Parliament, our processes and the work that we do here. It is the foundation of our vibrant, diverse democracy. I will miss this place enormously, but I know it will continue beyond my time. With that, I commend my private member's statement to the House.

HAWKESBURY ELECTORATE

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (20:58): As we approach the final hours of the final day of the parliamentary term of this Fifty-Seventh Parliament, I take a moment to reflect on Hawkesbury and what we have been through in what was my maiden term in Parliament. I quickly touch on my electorate staff. They have been outstanding in supporting me and our community. I put on record my appreciation of my team: Virginia Ellis, my office manager; Thera Hobbs; and Dominica Funnell. They have gone out of their way to look after Hawkesbury residents, volunteers and businesses, and our farmers and primary producers.

We have had some tough times between 2019 and 2022—droughts, the Black Summer bushfires of December 2019 and January 2020, six floods in 20 months and a pandemic thrown in. We did not have a mouse plague—thank you, God, for that! Throughout those challenges, my team has stepped up to deliver a service well beyond the normal. I cannot do my job without a great team behind me. I know that all MPs feel passionate about their teams. Today we take a moment to thank them for the time they give, which goes beyond a regular nine-to-five job. I recognise that at times we push them so we can deliver for our community. I thank those who have worked in my office in the past on a casual basis: Mark, Adam, David, Josh, Brooke and Nathan.

I also recognise the community beyond my office in the RSL sub-branches, which I have grown to love. The Hawkesbury area has a large community of veterans and RSLs. People in the Hawkesbury have a volunteer mindset. The Country Women's Association gave me the best-ever scone recipe. I have got to know some wonderful people at Richmond Uniting Church and at St Matthew's Anglican and St Matthew's Catholic churches in Windsor. That is an interesting story. There are two St Matthew's churches in Windsor. One is Anglican and one is Catholic. Apparently in years gone by a person could not worship unless they went to "St Matthew's" church. So the Catholics said, "We'll call ours St Matthew's Catholic Church, Windsor."

I recognise the RFS crews, the SES, the Hawkesbury District Agricultural Association, all the school principals throughout our area, the veterans, the university, St John of God hospital and Richmond Club, which has been great during times of peril. I also recognise council staff and councillors from The Hills Shire Council and Hawkesbury City Council, and teams from Resilience NSW, Fire and Rescue NSW, Hawkesbury Police Area Command, St Albans village, Kurrajong, Bilpin and Glenorie. I could go on. I have a community that I love and care for. I recognise my community and my people and wish everyone going forward happiness in the future.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Private members' statements have concluded. Before I hand over to the Speaker of the Fifty-Seventh Parliament to close proceedings, as the member who introduced into this House the only bills that were subject to conscience votes in this Parliament, I thank all members—whether they supported or opposed those bills—for the courage and thoughtfulness of their approaches. I acknowledge that the issues dealt with in those bills were very hard on members and took a toll on them and their staff.

In a number of valedictory speeches, members remarked on how important votes on those bills were for them and for this Parliament. When a member is not bound by a party vote, they are challenged to vote with their heart, head and faith, and for the community. I believe we are all the better for that. As we look forward to the next New South Wales Parliament, it is my hope that we will have more conscience votes and more members will be supported to bring important and challenging issues to the floor of the Parliament. I thank all members and congratulate them on getting through what has been a very challenging but impactful term of this Parliament.

Members

FINAL WORDS TO THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

The SPEAKER (21:02): I thank the member for Sydney for his contribution in this place and for being part of the Speaker's panel. Yesterday at a Christmas function I thanked various contributors to the smooth running of this place. I will not repeat that speech or my valedictory speech. However, I take this opportunity, in my final words to the Fifty-Seventh Parliament, to again thank all members for being so productive, harmonious and constructive in the interests of the people of New South Wales. I think that flows largely from what the member for Sydney said. Again, I thank in particular all the officers of this Parliament. I will not name again all the various stakeholders who were acknowledged in members' Christmas felicitations. I echo all the thanks that were given today by all contributors to the Christmas felicitations debate.

I look forward to the Fifty-Eighth Parliament being even better than the Fifty-Seventh Parliament. Thank you, Helen Minnican, the Clerk of this House, and thank you everyone else. That's it for the signing off. Before I say goodnight until the next Parliament I will say two things. Firstly, you cannot clap. Secondly, I acknowledge Peter McNamara and his family, who are in the Speaker's gallery, and who are now in *Hansard*—but they will not be recorded as clapping! Thank you. Good night.

*Christmas Felicitations***CHRISTMAS FELICITATIONS**

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—I wish all my colleagues and staff of the Parliament a very Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year. I take this opportunity to thank Members from all sides of the House for their warm and generous support of me personally throughout the last twelve months. I have been overwhelmed by those colleagues and former colleagues from across the political divide that have made the time to call and keep in contact. The media enjoy painting a popular perception of our profession and whilst it's fair to say that some enjoy propounding an adversarial image, I have come to learn that the overwhelming majority of my colleagues are fair-minded people, dedicated to their communities and driven by their beliefs. The longer I've served, the more I have realised that our communities want bipartisan solutions. People are moving away from political 'brands' and moving towards those who are prepared to exercise a blend of courage, consensus and character.

But these traits shouldn't be confused with weakness. Local people do want a fighter as their local MP. More importantly, local communities want people who know how to get outcomes, people who work hard and get results. In my inaugural speech in this place I said I would fight hard to deliver much needed upgrades to our Princes Highway. Since delivering that speech, I am incredibly proud to have secured the largest ever investments in the history of the Princes Highway. In dollar terms, these investments total more than \$2 billion of NSW Government funds. In human terms, these investments have saved an incalculable number of lives with upgrades now delivered at Gerringong, Foxground, Berry to Bomaderry and South Nowra not to mention the Berry Bypass, the Albion Park Rail Bypass and the replacement Shoalhaven River Bridge which is under construction and the Jervis Bay Road interchange will commence construction shortly.

These investments have also created thousands of jobs and given many local young people the opportunity to develop their skills on projects that people once dismissed as something that would simply 'never happen'. In my inaugural speech, I talked about improving our local hospitals. Since becoming the local MP, I've worked hard to deliver upgrades to everything from paediatric to geriatric services. I am particularly proud of the improvements secured for cancer patients. My mother's own story gave me a very personal appreciation of why these investments were so desperately needed. When it comes to local health services, I am proud to have secured over a billion dollars in capital funding for Shoalhaven and Shellharbour hospitals. These projects are about to commence and will be complete with more doctors, nurses and staff.

Three of the Premier's I've served in Government have all seen fit to promote me. To date, more than half of my time in this place I've served as part of the executive in some form. From Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra, South Coast and Education to the Cabinet as Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services. I have previously reflected on the achievements in these portfolios of which I'm incredibly proud and I won't waste time by repeating them here; only to say that I believe the FACS portfolio to be one of the most important in government. I'm proud to hold the mantle as the first Minister for Disability Services to have lived experience of disability and I hope my service will encourage other people with disabilities to chase their dreams and live life to the full. My thanks to all my Parliamentary Secretary and Ministerial staff. We were a great team and we made a real difference.

To all my volunteers, campaign directors and supporters. Thank you. Thank you to my team in the Kiama Electorate office. James Vernon, Sam Branch, Paula Turnbull, Ben Blackburn and Bryan Fishpool. Our community is so lucky to have you in our service. I wish to thank my dog, Oscar, who is the most loyal friend any politician could ask for. However, I do have a host of incredibly loyal and very wonderful friends. I won't start naming you all but you know who you are. To my parents Malcom and Margaret who were there at my first speech, my swearing in as a Cabinet Minister and who have been there for the highs and lows, thank you for your unconditional love and support. I hope I make you proud. Finally, to the Kiama Electorate. Thank you for the incredible honour and privilege of being your local representative. You are the most remarkable and wonderful local community. You backed a boy from Bomaderry, a kid with a disability, a then Shoalhaven Councillor, in his late twenties, to be your representative and your voice. Many may have considered me a gamble, but I hope you believe it's paid off.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—Our community has been a through a lot together and has become stronger because of this. People have risen to the challenges time and time again, to work hand in hand and to support those in need, those who are the most vulnerable. Once again we find ourselves, at the end of another year, pummelled by natural disaster. Flooding at historic levels has worked its way across the state, and combined with record rainfall to swell the rivers, creeks and dams of the southern regions, including the Albury Electorate. Homes and businesses have been sandbagging to save their premises from inundation. My heart goes out to impacted families and businesses such as Albury's River Deck café who had to close their doors many weeks ago

and who must watch the Murray River as it surrounds the restaurant. I have been speaking with farmers who have lost their crops; this is a tragic outcome for all their hard work.

We can all reach out to someone who has been impacted by flooding. Whether it be to prepare a meal, to buy a meal at their café, restaurant, pub. To check in on a neighbour and see how they are faring. I think of Federation Council which has had to shift some operations and open ways for residents to get in contact. Let's be respectful and supportive of those who are working to deliver services while impacted themselves by the floods. Christmas reminds us it is a time for kindness, a time to spread joy and tolerance. I believe this is a hallmark of our community and it is one of the reasons people enjoy living and working here. I have enjoyed much support this year from my colleagues in this place. I single out and thank the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Health and the Minister for Regional Health for their support over our hospital needs.

The Minister for Planning has initiated a program which will do much for my community to confront issues of homelessness and affordability. I appreciate everyone who has made the trip to the Albury Electorate, who have listened to our businesses and residents and have made efforts to address their concerns and needs. I thank the Speaker, all my parliamentary colleagues, and all who work in Parliament. In particular, I thank my electorate office staff. I thank my family: my wife, Tabitha, and our three children, Xavier, Seamus and Natalie. I thank my community for their resilience through challenge upon challenge, for staying strong and supporting each other. May this Christmas be a time when joy is generous, when hope is renewed. This is our journey together and we find more fulfilment when we think most of each other. I wish all a happy Christmas from my family to yours.

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills)—Mr Speaker, I discuss the fantastic Electorate of Seven Hills and wish its many wonderful community organisations, sporting groups, parents and friends' committees and constituents a very Merry Christmas. Over the past four years as the member for Seven Hills I have been fortunate enough to represent these groups' many interests in this place and advocate for their needs. I begin by acknowledging a number of community organisations and their executive members who serve the community across a number of roles. Some of these include the Northmead Bowling Club who hold regular fundraising events, community engagement days and its well-known bowling tournament. I particularly thank Northmead Bowling Club President, Trevor Oldfield, Director Peter Kindleysides and Dilys Kindleysides who I have acknowledged previously as the first female Chairperson of Bowls New South Wales.

I also acknowledge a number of other clubs and their executive teams for the community work they do throughout the Seven Hills Electorate. Some of these are the Toongabbie Bowling Club executive, Director John Burgess and Chairman David Nugent, the Seven Hills/Toongabbie/Wentworthville Returned and Services League executive and President Barry Wilson and also the many individuals participating in the Kings Langley Neighbourhood Watch. Over the past year I have had the pleasure of visiting organisations like the Toongabbie Anglican Church to inspect a number of projects funded by NSW Government grant programs. Some of these include a brand-new carpark, new playground spaces and an electronic sign. The Church has been at the heart of our community for longer than I remember and will continue to prosper under the leadership of their new head pastor - Mike Hastie.

I also thank the Northmead Men's Shed and the great work they do connecting local men and women to woodworking activities. The Shed is run by a number of community members, but I particularly acknowledge Chairperson Geoff Holgate, Secretary Peter Gibbons and Organiser Kevin Weik. Speaker, the Seven Hills Electorate is home to a huge number of locally based sporting groups who represent their suburbs proudly. Over the last year I have been able to visit a number of these clubs and even help deliver upgrades and funding to improve their facilities. I was fortunate enough to visit the Pendle Hill Football Club with NSW Premier, Dominic Perrottet, to deliver a small grant which went towards new club equipment and uniforms. Pendle Hill Football Club is run by several passionate locals, including President Vanessa Carrett and Todd Douglas, I wish them a Merry Christmas.

I also pass on my best wishes to the Baulkham Hills Baseball Club executive, President Don Beileiter and Tim McCallum, Winston Hills Little Athletics President Steven Pospischil, Kings Langley Little Athletics President Daniel Giffney, and finally the Lalor Park Kooka's executive, President Julian Tuigamala and Secretary Sonia Smart. These local sporting groups make up a vital part of our community spirit and I am always happy to advocate and support their interests. I am fortunate as the member for Seven Hills to have fantastic schools with active Parents and Citizens Associations. I would like to pass on my best wishes to Sarah Irani of Toongabbie East, Matt Chalmers of Toongabbie West, Sambhavi Garg of Darcy Road, Roseanne Simms of Winston Heights, Belinda Schuster of Winston Hills, Geanette Saad of Seven Hills North, Jannelle Bowerman of Vardys Road, Kristen Bayliss of Northmead and Rachel Beecham of Kings Langley. I thank these many individuals and all those not named today who involve themselves with their local schools throughout the year.

Speaker, the constituents of Seven Hills are admirably serviced by outstanding Electorate Staff and I take this opportunity to sincerely thank them and wish them the very best of Christmas wishes. Thank you Alison

Sievwright, Eamon Marlow and Flynn Broom for all your dedicated hard work this year. This year two of our team, both very well known to the Seven Hills Community, moved on to further their careers, I wish both Jackson Newell and Alex Fitton the very best for the future. Finally, Speaker, as many in the Chamber know, the role of an effective local member can only be performed with much sacrifice and support of one's family. On that note I save my biggest heartfelt thanks to Petrina, Seronique and Finnley and of course my number one supporter, Oakley. I again thank the many individuals, clubs, organisations and volunteers in the Seven Hills Electorate for their relentless advocacy this last year and wish you all a very Merry Christmas.

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—After a long and challenging year, we have reached the wonderful Christmas season. With the end of Covid-19 restrictions, we can take joy in reuniting and embracing our family and loved ones. Making this time of year more special than ever. Throughout the year, our Western Sydney community has shown strength and resilience. Following on from the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, floods, and the ongoing cost of living crisis, our community has demonstrated strong endurance through tough times. I encourage you to continue checking in with your family and friends. Christmas is a time for family and for showing community spirit. I would like to express my sincere gratitude and acknowledge the community groups and charities in the Electorate of Prospect that have worked tirelessly to provide assistance to our community during this year's floods and during the cost of living crisis.

Your efforts are a testament to the strength of our Western Sydney community. I hope you all enjoy a very safe and joyful Christmas surrounded by your family and loved ones. It is an immense privilege to stand in this Chamber and represent the wonderful Electorate of Prospect. I'd like to thank my constituents for placing your trust in me as your State Member of Parliament. I am so proud to represent our community and look forward to continue working with you at the next election in March to ensure that Western Sydney is put first. With the myriad of challenges faced in our community this year, my Electorate staff have worked around the clock to ensure the concerns for individuals, families and business in Prospect were met. To my hardworking Electorate staff, Mary Azar, Annie Wang, Brandon Hale, Isaac Husarek, Brooke Unsworth, Michael Kolokossian, and Akano Amuda – thank you for your dedication to the Prospect Electorate Office and our community.

I thank Chris Minns' fantastic team at the NSW Labor Leader's Office, especially James Cullen, Chief of Staff, the Strategy Team including Matthew Shaw, Councillor Chloe Smith, Ellyse Harding, Jananie Janarthana, Daryl Beige, the Policy Team including Edward Ovadia, Bill Hawker, and Sachin Saxena, the Digital Media team including Zack Solomon and Jack Begbie, and Councillor Veronica Ficarra in Reception and Admin. I also thank my parliamentary colleagues, from all sides of politics. Despite political differences, we all care for our communities and have pledged to serve New South Wales. We should be proud of our bipartisan achievements, and must take this energy into 2023 to best serve our community. To the fantastic team at the Department of Parliamentary Services, including Clerks, Deputy Clerks, Hansard staff, NSW Police Force Special Constables, IT, cleaners, maintenance, cleaners and kitchen team – thank you for providing exceptional service and dedication throughout the year. Parliament sitting days can be lengthy and rigorous, but you have made the process seamless.

Finally, I thank my beautiful family—my wife, Bettina, and our three daughters, Geneva, Camille and Olivia. Your support means everything to me. Every action I take in this place I do to ensure you are proud of me. You are my greatest motivation. I pray that everyone has a great holiday, surrounded by family, friends and loved ones. Merry Christmas and God bless.

Dr JOE MCGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—As 2022 draws to a close and Christmas approaches, I reflect not just on another extraordinary year, but on four extraordinary years. We struggled out of the pandemic, only to see so many communities confronted by floods. As the devastating scenes unfolded in Lismore in February, we were not to know that it was only the beginning of many months of heartache and loss for so many communities across the state. The Wagga Wagga electorate has not been spared and my heart goes out to those affected. In the past four years, the people of NSW have endured drought, bushfires, pandemic and floods. I thank the community for their patience during this often-difficult time and for looking after each other. As we reflect on the past four years, we must also acknowledge that fresh challenges lie ahead, including the rising cost of living, housing and labour shortages and unrest overseas.

We will continue to meet these challenges with courage, trust in our community and in each other, and openness to finding new solutions. And we should leave no-one behind. It has been a great privilege to represent our communities for the past four years and I am thankful to all those who have helped us to do that. In particular, I thank the parliamentary staff: the Hansard staff; the catering staff; the library, police and security staff; and especially Elspeth Dyer, who has helped the crossbench. I thank the Clerk and her team for their support this year. I also wish to thank the Department of Parliamentary Services staff. A special acknowledgement goes to the cleaners, maintenance workers, caterers and support staff who keep this parliament working safely. I wish to thank my office staff: Jennie Burns, Jody Lindbeck, Daniela Gooden, Stephanie Plane and Sarah Cudmore. I also thank Rachelle Kell and Marlo Olsen.

I also wish to thank all those members of the community who have helped me through the last four years with support, wise counsel, practical help and most important of all - feedback - the "breakfast of champions". I thank the press gallery, and particularly thank our local journalists. The past four years have shown the importance of local reliable information through our journalists. Accountability is critical to public life and to ensuring the integrity of our governing institutions. The media plays a vital role in making sure we have that accountability. Thank you. I wish to thank my parliamentary colleagues: the Speaker, the Deputy Speaker and the Speakers Panel. I particularly wish to acknowledge the leadership of the Speaker in working to increase the openness of the parliament and developing the skills and knowledge of members. I thank the Premier, the Deputy Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the House, the manager of Opposition business, and the Whips for their work. For all those members who have given valedictories I wish them all the very best for their futures.

I thank my colleagues on the crossbench for their help and support throughout the year. We do not always agree - but that is the strength of a robust democracy. I acknowledge the departmental staff and the staff of Ministers and shadow Ministers, who help us to have the information we need to do our jobs. My very special thanks go to the emergency workers and volunteers across the State, who have continued to put their lives on the line to help others this year. Finally, I wish to deeply thank my wife, Kerin Fielding, for her love and support: despite her critically important professional work, especially for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, and her leadership in advancing rural surgery, she has continued to help and support me. I think we are a great team and I do not believe I could serve this community without her.

I also want to acknowledge my children and their partners for their love and support: Lara and Duncan and their daughter Rachel; Natasha; Dylan and Bel; and Anna. We cannot do this job without family. The valedictory speeches this year have really brought home to me how demanding being a member of Parliament can be on family life and how important is the support we receive. Finally, thank you to everyone in my community for their trust and support over the past four years. I hope this year Christmas will be one when we can thankfully spend precious time with our loved ones, while we reflect on the year that has been and look to the new year with a feeling of hope and belief in our future and love for one another.

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—I would like to take this opportunity to wish all Members of my community and their loved ones, a happy, safe and restorative holiday season. It has been a year full of challenges, but we have overcome with a lot of tenacity and grit. Many thanks to the people who make up the Ballina electorate you have rallied to look after all members of our community during the floods. Your resilience has been remarkable, and it is an honour to serve you. To the Bundjalung people I wish to pay my respects and acknowledge their ongoing custodianship and care they provide to the land. I particularly want to wish the residents of Cabbage tree island a wonderful Christmas in their new temporary homes at Wardell. I thank Jali land council, Bunjum Aboriginal corporation and Bullinah Health service for all they have done to support the community in recent times.

To my Fellow Greens MPs and their staff, thank you for the wisdom, patience and constant push for positive change. As my dear friend and colleague, the Member for Balmain, Jamie Parker retires from parliament I thank him for 8 years of magnificent mentorship to me personally and for all that he has done for his community and communities all over the state, nation and his global work as well. To the staff at the clerks' desk who prepare Hansard I say thank you and merry Christmas – your team does an amazing job recognising and recording everything that happens within the House. All errors remain mine. My sincere thanks to the Legislative Assembly attendants, front desk staff, the IT staff and Security Officers, Human Resources and Payroll. Thank you to the cleaning staff who have kept us all safe. It has been a reassurance to know that we are in your capable hands. I, and all Members, are incredibly thankful and grateful for the work you do. I wish each one of you a happy Christmas.

To all the people who will be working over the Christmas period I extend my gratitude. The NSW Police Force, the NSW Ambulance Service, the Rural Fire Service, SES, Marine Rescue, Air services, Surf Lifesaving, doctors and our amazing nursing staff. I wish you and your loved ones best wishes for Happy Holidays and a magnificent New Year. I would like to show my appreciation to all the organisations and business that have supported our community through the year and those organisations that are doing everything they can to conserve our precious biodiversity and species, our oceans and soils, and our forests and waterways. I want to wish my incredibly hard-working staff in the Ballina Electorate office who have served our community with compassion and dignity through the last year a Happy Christmas - Jacqui Alinaitwe, Siobhan Foley, Digby Hildreth, Mary-Jane Heenan and Violet Innes. Without you we would not have helped so many during this incredibly challenging time. Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a wonderful time with family and loved ones.

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—On this last sitting day of 2022, we look back at what a challenging year it has been for

so many, particularly our flood-affected communities across regional, rural and remote NSW. I want to start by thanking the Speaker, the Member for Davidson, for maintaining order in this place. To the many staff members who keep the wheels turning to ensure our days here in NSW Parliament run smoothly and ensure the workings and integrity of the House are kept in high regard, thank you for your commitment. To my National and Liberal colleagues, your passion is clear to see when we look at how much has already been delivered, and continues to be delivered, and I thank you all for your hard work to support the people of New South Wales.

I would like to thank our Deputy Premier, Paul Toole and Premier, Dominic Perrottet for their continued leadership and dedication to the State of New South Wales and I would like to acknowledge the much-needed support the NSW Government has provided so that our regional towns keep them flourishing. This year marks my fifth year as the Member for Cootamundra in the place I call home, a seat of small communities that I am very proud to serve. Whether it's when visiting a local country show or sitting to have a cuppa or a chat with the CWA or Men's Shed, I am always interested to hear how our communities are travelling and what issues concern them. I will always stand up and be a voice and fight for what is needed as these are the people who spend countless hours farming and producing the products that many of us enjoy when we sit down to eat our Christmas lunch this year.

I would like to acknowledge the dedication and continuous efforts of the members who make up the communities across the electorate. Along with their supporting councils including their Mayors, Councillors and staff who work behind the scenes to help and support their communities. This is also my first year as Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience and Minister for Flood Recovery. Wow, what a year to be in this position. I am deeply honoured by the trust placed in me by the Deputy Premier and Premier to take on these very sensitive and challenging responsibilities. I would like to acknowledge the patience and understanding of so many across the State after we have all experienced a number of flooding events. I have travelled quite literally tens of thousands of kilometres and visited many areas, spoken to many people who have lost their homes, their businesses and it is just heartbreaking. I will continue to work hard to ensure sure affected communities bounce back as soon as possible.

The efforts of our SES Units and supporting emergency services organisations, who are always ready to roll up your sleeves and get the job done, whether it be attending to calls for assistance or getting into the clean-up to begin the recovery process, I think I speak for everyone in this room and across many communities and say 'Thank You' we are so very grateful to you all. Like many of us in this space, we are only as good as the team we have that supports us, and I am very thankful for the team around me. Thank you to my drivers John Cook and Sean Connell who have driven me thousands of kms around the state. To my ministerial staff Kaycie Bradford, Clare Taylor, Jack Douglas, Ben Sheath, Kit Hale, Alicja Rudz, Bianca Gorgis, Easter Palelei and Lisa Vlahakis who have always understood the importance and sensitivity of this portfolio. This is a forever-changing and demanding space and you have all raised to the challenge and you have all contributed to helping get information out and making a difference in the lives of many people across the State.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to my staff back home at both my Young and Junee offices, Cath Sheridan, Frances Crowley, Brianah Griffin, Daniel Lloyd, Amelia Baker and Kim Hill, I am grateful for your constant updates and ensuring that I have everything I need when I am on the road. For the number of calls, messages and emails no matter what time of the day or day of the week you are always there when I need you. I am so proud of the dedication you all have in your role and the passion you have for the communities of the Cootamundra electorate. I hope that everyone has a relaxing and safe holiday break with their family and friends. I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and look forward to what the New Year brings for us all.

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—This year I must begin my Christmas felicitation by acknowledging the strength, resilience, and tenacity of my community. They have endured through some of the greatest challenges that we have faced in recent history. We've experienced it all, floods, fire and disease. Despite the challenges, families and individuals in my community always put their best foot forward and I thank them for having placed their trust in me for nearly 12 years as their Member of Parliament. I hope that I will be entrusted with another four years as we still have so much more to accomplish. I want to extend my thanks to a number of people and organisations in this speech. Firstly, to all the good work done by community organisations like Nepean Food Services and Anowah Disability Services, thank you for your invaluable support for our vulnerable in our community. You have made a significant impact to ensure that they can live with dignity and with care.

To all the sporting clubs in my electorate that help to keep our community connected and active I thank you also. Without you, our children would find it difficult to make friends, be active, and enjoy a sport that they can grow up loving. Sport strengthens an individual's mental and physical health which is an immensely valuable contribution to the community. I also thank all our volunteers in the emergency services who have faced some significant challenges this past year. To the church and religious leaders who offer people a safe and welcome place to receive support and hope, thank you. To the charities, refugees, men's sheds, women's groups, school

principals and P&Cs who all work so hard to build a better society – thank you. To all the Parliamentary staff from the cleaners, special constables, chamber staff, administrative and catering staff that help keep the cogs of democracy moving and on track, I especially thank you. Despite the challenges of a pandemic, you all continued to carry out your duties and responsibilities with a great deal of skill and diligence.

To our Premier, the Honourable Dominic Perrottet, I want to thank you for your service, guiding our State forward and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. The challenges of being Premier are significant and great. On behalf of my community, I thank you for your leadership and contribution to the betterment of Western Sydney. I know that there is still more great things to achieve. You have already successfully helped first home buyers have a choice, helped families with the cost of living, supported our seniors through difficult economic circumstances, created a brighter beginning for the state's children and lifted women up to a position where they can achieve a brighter future for themselves and their families. My electorate of Mulgoa in Western Sydney will build a brighter future for themselves as we continue to work for them in the greatest capacity possible. To my electorate staff who serve the people of Mulgoa with kindness, diligence, and respect – thank you.

To the public servants living and working across western Sydney from health, family and community services, education, police, emergency services, planning, transport, environment and more thank you for putting the best interests of the people first. It is not always easy to plan and build for a growing population happening in western Sydney but when you have the best interests of my community at heart, I know we will achieve the best outcome that is possible. To my family husband Mark and children Laura and Harry and our new puppy Benny thank you for all your support, love, humour and especially your tolerance on my absences when my role takes me away from you. I am a Member of Parliament to make our community a better place for you and the future generations. Lastly, I would like to wish everybody a Merry Christmas.

The birth of our saviour Jesus Christ is the reason for this season, and it is his message of love that must be remembered throughout this period. "Love one another as I have loved you" John 13:34-35. By adhering to this message, no matter your faith or background we will always be kinder to one another and respectful to one another. Especially in a place like this where some of the greatest ideas are championed, debated, agreed, and disagreed upon. No matter our differences we must always be able to respect each other and set the example for our communities to follow. To everyone I extend the joy that filled the world at the birth of Jesus Christ be found in your home. May you create happy memories with family and friends, and may the Spirit of Christmas, a spirit of giving and forgiving, be yours throughout the New Year.

Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt)—I wish all my parliamentary colleagues from both sides of the House a very Merry Christmas and a happy and safe New Year. I hope that you are able to take this time to be with your families and loved ones during this festive season. As always, there are many to thank and acknowledge. I take this opportunity to thank the Leader of the Opposition, Chris Minns MP, the Shadow Cabinet Members and my parliamentary colleagues for their incredible efforts in keeping the Government accountable, it is a privilege to be your colleague and for those colleagues that are leaving this place, I wish you all well in your future endeavours. I acknowledge the work done by the Opposition Whip and the Whip's Office, in particular, Colleen Symington who works so hard in keeping us all so well informed and disciplined. Thank you Colleen, you are a font of knowledge and I can't thank you enough for all your help and assistance.

I thank the Legislative Assembly Clerks office and Table staff, who are always helpful, particularly in relation to procedures and guidance. I thank the Hansard staff, who work tirelessly in this place and who often make our speeches look better in print than when we presented them. I thank the security staff for keeping us safe and keeping us updated on suggested security measures. I also wish to acknowledge and thank the Parliamentary Library in providing research information in a very timely manner. That service is even more crucial when we are in opposition and without the support of government resources. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the facilities staff, the catering staff, the cleaners and the information technology staff for the competent and professional service they provide to all members of Parliament and their staff.

I acknowledge the parliamentary press gallery for keeping the public informed of the many issues raised in this place. I say a special thank you to my Labor branch members who tirelessly support our work in the community. I acknowledge and thank the New South Wales Labor Party General Secretary, Bob Nanva, the Assistant Secretary, Dom Ofner and all the staff in the Party Office for their ongoing support and assistance. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my local community groups, who have continually worked through the most difficult of times, with recent floods, fires and pandemic, often putting themselves at risk, to assist those most vulnerable members of my community. I cannot thank you enough for your hard work and dedication. I acknowledge the ongoing efforts of our volunteers from the NSW Rural Fire Service and our Local Emergency Service who often work in extreme conditions to keep us all safe.

I acknowledge the many people who will be working over this Christmas break to look after our health, safety and wellbeing. In particular, I thank the Mount Druitt Hospital staff for their outstanding work and I thank

the Mount Druitt police for continuing to keep us safe. I take this opportunity to thank my office staff for their hard work and ongoing commitment to the Mount Druitt Community. They make my office run smoothly and serve my constituents in a very professional manner. In particular I thank my office manager, Sarah Hatch, and my electorate staff, Phil, Yvonne, Norma and Maddie. Your hard work does not go without notice. Thank you all. Lastly, as my colleagues already know, our job cannot be done effectively without family support. I thank my family, in particular, my wife, Dimyana; my daughters, Natalie and Eustina; my son-in-law, John; my Grandkids Elise and Nicholas and my mother-in-law, Mary. I thank them for their understanding and tolerance of my regular absences and often late nights. I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I am delighted and grateful to offer many thanks and good wishes at this special time of the year. As the 2022 parliamentary year draws to a close, it is a time to reflect on the year, acknowledge and thank the contribution of many extraordinary people and look forward to the future. Representing the people of Willoughby in this Parliament is a true honour and privilege. I will never take it for granted. To the Willoughby community, thank you again for the faith and trust you placed in me earlier this year to be your representative. I hope I have faithfully represented Willoughby and been a champion for our community's interests. I believe my team and I have hit the ground running to pursue many issues and improvements for local people and community. Willoughby is truly a wonderful place to live, and I want to see our community continue to excel. I thank every resident for contributing to the rich, dynamic fabric of our area.

To all those I met or who wrote to me, whether it be on a street corner, out doorknocking, in my office, or at a local café or weekend fair, I appreciated the invaluable feedback you provided on how we can make Willoughby even better still. In my time here, my first year as the Member for Willoughby, I have found a collegial atmosphere with Members of all persuasions genuinely wanting to make a positive impact for the benefit of their communities. I record my appreciation to my colleagues across the Parliament, Liberal, National, Labor and the crossbenches for welcoming me so generously to your ranks. I'm honoured to be a member of a Government that has such a strong track record of delivering for our state and my community. In particular, I recognise the Premier for his leadership as the state has emerged from the pandemic over the course of the year and returned to normality. I also want to single out the Leader of the House, Alister Henskens, for his invaluable support and counsel to me.

To the Speaker, my neighbour in the Davidson electorate, I recognise your great service to Parliament and people both. As chair of the Transport and Infrastructure Committee I am grateful to my colleagues on the committee, Deputy Chair Mark Taylor, and Members Jo Haylen, Marjorie O'Neill and Melinda Pavey for working so effectively together on the enquiry into emissions free modes of public transport. The dedicated and professional support of the committee's staff is much appreciated too. I was privileged to be involved in much of the great work of the various Parliamentary Friends Groups. Whether it be as Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Nature, leading efforts to form a Friends of Heart Health, or being an inaugural member of the Parliamentary Friends of Chinese Australians, I have seen the value cross party cooperation has in advancing important causes for our state.

I am proud to have joined so many events here in support of small business, war widows, Israel, Armenia and many more. Thank you to all involved. My thanks also to the army of staff behind the scenes without which this Parliament would not function. To the Clerks, Hansard, the media, cooks, cleaners, catering staff, Library, IT, Electorate Office Services and all, thank you for your work and service to this place. A special thank you to my Electorate Office team, Margie Malouf, James Mount, David Furse-Roberts, Aiden Brennan, Alexandra Rafael and Martin Schuitema for their dedicated service to the Willoughby community. It is still a young team after eight months and working incredibly hard and well for Willoughby. I also wish to thank the many volunteers, interns and supporters who provide me and us with their assistance. It's a great team effort! But most of all I acknowledge my family. My wife Nikki, daughters Chloe and Madeleine and recent arrival our baby boy Xavier. He arrived six days after the by-election!

My young family has given a lot this year to enable me to serve Willoughby and I'm ever grateful. Likewise, I thank my parents Bruce and Trish James for their inspiration and support, and my extended family too. Christmas is a wonderful time for family and friends. I hope all have the opportunity to recuperate and connect with loved ones over the summer and festive period. I'm delighted to now announce the winner of the first Willoughby Christmas Card competition. Congratulations and thank you to Artarmon Public School year three student Tianna Hung – a beautiful and colourful entry! Thank you to everyone who got involved across local schools. I wish everyone in this Parliament, in the Willoughby community and across our great state a wonderful Christmas and a happy and successful 2023.

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—Felicitations can be described as words expressing praise or extending good wishes on a special occasion. I am not sure Mr Speaker whether mere words can capture the extent of my gratitude for this past year. Gratitude that flows because of my family, friends, colleagues, and of course the community I represent. The resilience, strength and character of Camden has been demonstrated time and time

again. Repeated floods have wreaked havoc on our community, but they have not dampened our spirit. Each time, the Camden community rallied together and offered each other support and moved forward. This year's events have shown the strong and unbreakable community spirit, living up to Camden's high standard. The past year, whilst borne in difficulty, has become the people's glory, adding to the rich history and heritage of Camden. Such community compels the greatest character in their representative, a position I am honoured to have.

I am always grateful to the community for their trust in knowing that I continuously advocate, with tender ferocity, to ensure that Camden receives the very best. To all the residents of my community, I thank you. Indeed, Camden has had many great achievements this year, however I would not have been able to do it without the community's support. The support given to me by the community has been the light in difficult times and the strength to continue in times of pure prosperity. It is truly my honour and privilege to serve the great community of Camden. I would also like to thank the Premier. His strong and compassionate leadership is a fantastic example of a leader who draws forth the very best in us. I also take this time to acknowledge yourself Mr Speaker. I thank your work in this place especially your dedication in the refining of skills and talents of members. I also thank the Deputy Speaker, the Assistant Speaker and the Temporary Speakers for the work that they do keeping us in order.

I thank the Government whips for the work that you do organising Government Members and ensuring we're all doing what we should be doing. I thank the Ministers for their time in listening to and consistently actioning my advocacy for Camden residents, organisations, community groups, and businesses. I also thank their office staff for the briefings and support they have provided to me. Their expertise and advice is always greatly appreciated not only by me but also the team in the Camden electoral office. I thank my Liberal friends and colleagues whose advice and support are always welcomed. I also take this time to thank the Clerk and her office and the committee secretariats who support the Committee work that we do, your contribution cannot be overstated. I also thank all the parliamentary staff who work incredibly hard in ensuring parliament operates as the people of NSW expect it to.

I thank all the local sports groups and organisations, the local charities, cultural groups, and local businesses. You are the essence of our community, and you all continuously play a significant role in why Camden is a great community to live, work, and play in. I am honoured for the opportunity of ensuring that Camden continuously improves whilst protecting its long and rich history and heritage. It is my utmost mission to preserve the history, heritage and natural beauty of Camden, building more schools, improving local transport and roads, easing the cost of living, and creating more local and diverse jobs. A special and heartfelt thanks to my staff who have support me and the community. They have continuously advocated alongside myself and have been relentless in our pursuit and helping the community. Jo, thank you for always providing sound and trusted advice, your dedication to the residents and local organisations is always appreciated. Thank you to Romel, Kalvin, Caitlin, and Josh. Your dedication to the community is inspiring and appreciated.

My most sincere thanks to my family. To my wife and 4 daughters, you are greatest inspiration and source of strength and joy. Thank you for always supporting me, I would not be standing here without you all. I love you all with every fibre of my being. I wish everyone in the greater Camden community a Merry and blessed Christmas and happy and safe New Year.

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy)—The end of the year allows us to take the time to thank and acknowledge those who played a role in helping and supporting the running of our great State. 2022 has been a big year – as we moved out of COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions and life somewhat returned to normality. However, this does not mean we weren't presented with difficult times – some of which those in NSW are still experiencing. Flooding has no doubt impacted our State significantly this year and we have had to learn how to support the towns and cities that have been hit persistently. I start by thanking Premier, Dominic Perrottet, and Deputy Premier, Paul Toole and Treasurer, Matt Kean, for their leadership and provision during this year. They have continued to ensure the people of New South Wales are put first and supported during every opportunity.

Mr Speaker, we have had a talented and dedicated Ministerial Cabinet this year and I thank them all for their service and hard work supporting communities and sectors right across the State. I would particularly like to acknowledge Brad Hazzard who has been a stoic leader throughout the challenges that came with the COVID-19 pandemic and continued to acknowledge my community's concerns during this time. Mr Speaker, there is no doubt that the Government would not be able to function without the hardworking and reliable support of our Ministerial Staff – especially their Parliamentary Advisers. I would like to thank all of our PLO's and our Ministerial Staff for their assistance to me and the Holsworthy Electorate over the past year. Mr Speaker, this place would not run without our Leader of the House, the Hon. Alister Henskens SC MP, and the Whips team including the Member for Wollondilly, Nat Smith MP, Member for Coffs Harbour, Gurmeh Singh MP, the Liberal Party Whips Advisor, Asha Towers; and the National Party Whips Adviser, Viv Lee.

This team ensures that we are ready to speak, and that laws continue to be passed efficiently and effectively in this House, during what can be a busy time. Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you for your steady and fair

leadership this year, as well as members of the Speaker's Panel, including Deputy Speaker, Hon. Leslie Williams, Assistant Speaker, Mr Greg Piper, Temporary Speakers, Mr Lee Evans, Mr Alex Greenwich, Ms Sonia Hornery and Mr Dave Layzell. I would also like to thank important people who also allow our Parliament to run smoothly and debate legislation including our Clerk, Helen Minnican; Deputy Clerk, Carly Maxwell; Sergeant-at-arms, Rohan Tyler; the Security Team (including our Special Constables); Hansard; the LA Attendants Team; the audio-visual team, our catering and café staff – particularly the amazing Kylie; and all of the cleaners in this place.

I would also like to thank all of the staff who work within the committees. I have worked closely with them this year and I am always amazed at the extent of their knowledge and am grateful for the information and assistance they provide. Our IT Team is another pivotal part of this place, they are always helpful and supportive, and I thank them for this. My team has all my gratitude. They work tirelessly for our community and to assist me to be a better member. They make me laugh, help when I'm stressed or need assistance and more than anything else, they are motivated by helping others. I'm proud to say we are yet to say no to someone who requests an appointment and then work hard to fix their concerns. So to Daniel Nicholls, Sophie Carlton, Faith Perryman, Zac Mitchell and Marc Landrigan – thank you for all you do.

My family have again given up so much for me to do this role. It is a form of public service as we work to help others, but it means that we give up time with our family and friends. Thank you to Kent, Audrey, Elizabeth and my parents Scott and Rhonda Gibbons for helping to keep things running smoothly at home. Finally, a huge thank you to the Holsworthy community for their support. I love working together as we achieve the goals of helping people to access great jobs that are close to home or easier to get to, great recreation facilities and world class health care. We also have a focus on accessibility, safety, and our environment, and importantly supporting each other to make Holsworthy a place we can all be proud to call ours.

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—As 2022 begins to draw to an end, I have taken the time to reflect on the year that's been. I take this opportunity to thank all the Heathcote community groups and constituents I've had the pleasure of working with this year. You've trusted me to deliver for our community and for this I am truly honoured. I look forward to continuing representing and delivering for our community, it is the greatest privilege. I wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a safe and happy holiday.

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)—It is a great privilege and honour to represent the Tweed in Australia's oldest Parliament. This will be my sixteenth consecutive Christmas as a Member of the Legislative Assembly. Christmas is a time for family and relaxation of course, but it is also a time for reflection and gratitude. I am most thankful to the people of the Tweed for trusting me to look after their interests at a State Government level. I could not do this job without the cooperation and support of the entire team that make Parliament work. From the Clerk to the cleaners, from the Secretary to security, the attitude has always been professional, courteous and friendly. Thank you for your service, thank you for your support. May you and your families have a wonderful Christmas.

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn—Minister for Local Government)—It would be remiss of me not to express my appreciation and gratitude to the many people who have helped me get through what has been a challenging year both professionally and personally. At the outset, I thank my electorate office, led superbly by Cheryl Callanan, as well as the wonderful Paige Penning, Amy Gann and Maret Rebane. My team are the bedrock of the community and go above and beyond to serve the electorate of Goulburn. I cannot thank them enough for their support and unwavering commitment. Thank you so much. I am so proud and honoured to represent the electorate of Goulburn, which I have had the privilege to be the local Member for over the past four years. It has certainly been a journey, not just on the long drives each Sitting Week, but also across my beautiful electorate. It is hard to express in a few words how meaningful it is to contribute and give back to my community – a community which has given me so much.

We have seen some of the hardest and most trying of years, with the bushfires, health pandemic, mice plague and the floods. I take the opportunity to recognise and thank all emergency services personnel who have so capably supported not only my electorate, but the entire state. Every day I admire your unselfish and generous service to the community. To my husband and soulmate Michael, my sons, their families, thank you for your support over the many years, from my time as a Councillor to then a Mayor and Administrator, before becoming a Member of Parliament to now a Minister of the Crown. You provide a safe harbour on the home front. Thank you also to my ministerial team, who have been so helpful and without whom we could not have achieved so much. I thank my Chief of Staff, Damien Jones, and his amazing team: Amy, Brendan, Damien, Aron, Carla, Julianna, Kara, Scott and Jess. I also extend my gratitude to Melanie Hawyes, Ally Dench and the Office of Local Government, in addition to Sharon Molloy, Michelle Fletcher and the Environment and Heritage Group. I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and hope and pray for us to find the strength to get through the challenging times before us.

*Community Recognition Notices***MACEDONIAN ORTHODOX COMMUNITY OF AUSTRALIA**

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—I am proud to recognise the amazing contribution made to our state by the Macedonian Orthodox Community of Australia (MOCA). MOCA was founded in 1969 and the organisation is the custodian for the St Kiril i Metodi Macedonian Orthodox Church in Roseberry and St Nikola Macedonian Orthodox Church in Cabramatta. These two churches hold a great deal of importance to the large Macedonian community in my electorate of Bankstown and to every single Macedonian in NSW. MOCA does outstanding work in not only promoting the Orthodox Christian faith, but in also maintaining cherished Macedonian culture and traditions through its sister organisations the Makedonka of Cabramatta Macedonian folk dancing group, the Dame Gruev group in Arncliffe, and the Macedonian Pensioners Association Metodija Andonov Chento. I acknowledge the President of the MOCA Committee, Mr Robert Despotovski, the CEO of MOCA Mr Igor Avramovski Aleksandrov, Very Rev Father Naum Despotovski from the St Kiril I Metodi Church in Roseberry, and Rev Father Igor Mladenovski from the St Nikola Church in Cabramatta and thank them for their work in promoting the Macedonian Orthodox faith in NSW.

NSW FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—The NSW Federation of Community Language Schools held their Annual Gala Dinner on Saturday 19th November 2022 at the Grand Ballroom Bankstown Sports Club. This dinner has become a major annual event for community language schools, and it celebrates the wonderful achievements of the students. The theme for this year is inspired by World Children's Day, which is on 20 November. The NSW Federation of Community Language Schools was established in Sydney in 1978 as a not-for-profit organisation. The aim of the Federation is to unite all community language schools and work together to sustain community languages and contribute to the multicultural assets of New South Wales. The NSW Federation of Community Language Schools represents 230 member schools in 435 locations with approximately 28,000 students who can choose to learn one or more from the 70 different languages available. For decades various cultural communities and their families have benefited from the support of the NSW Federation of Community Language School. I acknowledge President Lucia Johns and Chief Executive Officer Michael Christodoulou AM on their achievements and thank them for their work in promoting community language education across NSW.

TAHMOOR LOCAL POST OFFICE AWARDED

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—The Tahmoor Post Office has been recognised for its commitment to the community, in two recent award ceremonies. Impressively, the Tahmoor Post Office won first place in the Australia Post Retail Rewards Program in the Metro-South West Region in 2022. The post office was also recognised as a finalist in the Specialised Retail Business category at the 2022 Wollondilly Local Business Awards. This was no easy feat, as the judging criteria included the assessment of business information, online presence and involved the anonymous visitation by a judge on site to assess customer service. Congratulations to the team at Tahmoor Post Office. The award is a testament to the excellent customer service provided by the team at the post office, under the leadership of its licensee, Phillip Magennis. The importance of our local post offices cannot be understated, as they provide invaluable services that keep our community connected. The past few years have been particularly challenging for Australia Post due to the Pandemic. Well done to Tahmoor Post Office and post offices across the state for demonstrating great resilience in challenging times.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS CYCLING CLUB

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—The Southern Highlands Cycling Club [SHCC] consists of passionate cyclists that unite to ride through the beautiful roads throughout the Southern Highlands. The SHCC has been busy cycling away, with many of its cyclists making great achievements in competitions across the state in the past few months. August was a particularly exciting month for the SHCC, as they participated at the round one Battle of the Bridges Para Time Trial 20 km race, held at Heffron Park in Maroubra. The team also participated in the AusCycling u19, u23, Elite and Para Road and ITT Championships, held in Gunning. My congratulations are given to the tandem team riders, Kevin O'Meley (the stoker) and Richard Vollebregt (the pilot), who placed first in various events at both competitions. The pair also finished in first place as a tandem team in Round two of the Battle of the Bridges Para Time Trial 20km that was held in Maroubra in September. Congratulations also to SHCC members, Nick Smith and Angus Tye, who placed fourth and 16th respectively in events at the Auscycling Cyclo Cross State Championship at the Dunc Gray Veleldome, held in Bankstown last August.

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS WRITERS' FESTIVAL

Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly)—After two years, the Southern Highlands Writers' Festival finally returned on the 15th-16th of October, across three locations in Bowral. This year's festival had two themes,

'Monumental Women' and 'From the heart', which framed the festival's exploration of Australian literature by exploring and celebrating women writers, particularly writers who are Indigenous Australian. The festival began with a panel of esteemed women writers discussing the importance of empowering women's voices within the literary space. The panel included Clare Wright OAM, Dr Kate Forsyth, Belinda Murrell, Paula McLean, Jaclyn Booton and Tracey Spicer AM. The festival also showcased the recent work of Professor Larissa Behrendt, who is a well-known writer, Indigenous legal academic and Indigenous rights advocate. The Wingecarribee Women's Writers launched the Charlotte Appeal at the festival, aiming to raise the funds to create and erect a statue of Charlotte Atkinson- the author of the first children's book published in Australia whose legacy has been forgotten.

PORT HACKING CROQUET CLUB 40TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I was delighted to attend the morning tea celebration on 29 October of the 40th anniversary of the Port Hacking Croquet Club and open a new shelter funded by a NSW Government Local Sport Grant. The anniversary cake was cut by members Wal Gaskell, a member since 1991, and previous president Floyd White. Originally established as an offshoot of the South Caringbah Women's Bowling Club, the club has been giving local community members the opportunity to connect and be active for the last 40 years. Most games at the club are social events and include a wide range of ages. Some of the club members have been playing for decades, while others are relatively new. The club says croquet is played by both men and women on equal terms and provides and promotes social, physical and mental wellbeing and the additional benefits of being outside in the fresh air. I wish the club the best for their future endeavours and thank among others the following committee members for their dedication to creating an active environment for local seniors: president Susie Yule, vice president Pamela Markwell, secretary Ann Harden, and treasurer Anne Cullen.

VALE CARL ROBINSON

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I pay tribute to Carl Robinson, late of Gymea Bay, who passed away in July. Carl was a well-known figure in the Sutherland Shire. Carl had been a valued member of Caringbah Rotary. He served as club director and president. He oversaw fundraising for projects such as the monthly Caringbah Rotary markets and the Lunch for Blokes initiative among others. Carl worked as an engraver. He engraved many sporting trophies for local kids and clubs, including Gymea United Football Club where he was an active member. He had also worked in the Sutherland Shire as a real estate agent. Carl was also a passionate body-boarder and well-loved member of Cronulla's surfing community. He is remembered for his big personality, honesty, and compassion both in and out of the surf. For those that knew Carl, he always exemplified the Rotary motto of 'Service Above Self'. I extend my sincere sympathy to his wife Amy and his two children, Maya and Louie.

INDOOR ROWERS FROM JAMBEROO'S SWAN ATHLETIC SETTING RECORDS AT PAN PACIFIC MASTERS GAMES

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the New South Wales Parliament congratulates local indoor rowers from Jamberoo's Swan Athletic have come home from the Pan Pacific Masters Games held in Queensland with gold medals, broken records and set new personal bests. Nardia Guillaumier (who also runs her own small business NEG Photography) and rower Michelle Brennan competed across the five main rowing events and Nardia in the relay. Nardia brought home an outstanding five gold medals, one silver medal and broke the 2019 Australian record in the 40-49 age group with 326 metres rowed in one minute. Nardia said it was a bit of a shock but without Alan Swan's coaching, she would not have been able to row anywhere near like she did. Michelle received one silver medal in the 100-metre row, beating her personal best, two bronze medals and placed fourth in two events. Michelle says she will try to improve and attend next year's competition while Nardia has her eyes set on beating another record.

APPRENTICE BOILERMAKER JAXON LAVENDER SELECTED IN RUGBY LEAGUE REP SIDE

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the New South Wales Parliament congratulates local Kiama resident Jaxon Lavender who was selected for the Australian Universities rugby league side to take on the Australian Police and Australian Defence Forces sides in a tri-series which was held from 17th-21st October 2022. Jaxon is an apprentice boilermaker with Kiama Municipal Council and has already represented NSW Universities against Queensland, and when not on representative duties plays for his long-time club the Dapto Canaries. Now in the third year of his apprenticeship, Jaxon says he enjoys the variety of work and challenges he gets at Kiama Council. He also credits his works depot mates for always having time to help him to improve his skills and experience. A huge congratulations and well done to Jaxon Lavender.

KIAMA ROTARY CLUB ON PATHWAY TO SAVING LIVES

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the New South Wales Parliament congratulates the Rotary Club of Kiama and a project that aims to give people an easy way to find a defibrillator in an emergency and install

defibrillators where needed. The project leader Graham Tweedie who has had his life saved twice by a defibrillator, has compiled a list of the locations of all public, 24-hour defibrillators in the LGA. The Rotary Club of Kiama has already donated a defibrillator for the Sebel Harbourside carpark entrance off Shoalhaven Street. The machine now sits in clear view from Black Beach which often holds community markets. I acknowledge Kiama Rotary Club President Carol Jagger, project leader Graham Tweedie and General Manager of the Sebel, Mr Craig Hardy. This is only a start with their goal to launch a fundraising project that will see the installation of defibrillators to all sites in the Kiama LGA that are in need. Kiama Rotary is urging business owners to explore ways of making their defibrillator available 24 hours a day or place signage revealing they have one available during opening hours.

MISSION TO SEAFARERS NEWCASTLE

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle)—Congratulations to the Newcastle branch of the Mission to Seafarers, who are marking 150 years of service to the people who spend much of their lives at sea. From a ministry established at St James Church in Wickham, to institutes at Carrington and Stockton, before settling permanently back in Wickham, Mission to Seafarers has gone from strength to strength growing in size, its employee and volunteer base, and the people it serves. Collaborating with local organisations has seen the Mission be able to provide seafarers with fresh meals, trips around the city and connections to home, all well-deserved comforts after months at sea. Even the pandemic did not put a stop to the Mission's work, delivering care packages portside and playing a pivotal role in arranging COVID-19 vaccinations. The number of seafarers who have benefited from the Mission's work cannot be quantified, but there's no doubt tens of thousands of people have had a tough job at sea made better.

MATT STAPLES

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla—Attorney General)—I congratulate Matt Staples of Gympsea Bay on winning an inaugural Football NSW Future Leader Award. The award recognises an individual, aged 16 to 25, who has demonstrated exceptional leadership and commitment to football at any level of the game. The Football NSW citation reads: "... He [is] ... Referee's Coordinator at Blacktown District Soccer Football Association ... [He] deals with all the administration, emails, and the huge role of doing appointments for the whole branch... [H]e has also ran all the new referee courses (Level 4), as well as the upgrade courses for Level 3 Referees... Within Sutherland Shire Football Referees Association, he was a member of the Technical Sub-Committee and Equipment Officer in 2021... [H]e assisted ... in getting all the equipment that was required, as well as developed and coached younger referees... [H]e is also one of our Premier League referees... Within Football NSW competitions, he is an Assistant Referee on NPL NSW ..., as well as the Waratah Cup, League One, and NPL Women's Grand Finals as an Assistant referee... He was a coach on the Referee Development Program... [H]e is constantly trying to further the progress of the development of referees.

ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE FOR GIRLS DEBATING TEAM

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown)—I have been fortunate to have worked with the school community at St Patrick's College for Girls, Campbelltown on various occasions since first being elected the Member for Campbelltown in 2015. Whether it be the students and teachers dedication to preserving our military history and stories, or the school's general willingness to continually strive for excellence, there is much to be proud of at St Pats. One of the things that can now be added to the list is the school's 8A Macarthur Independent Schools Association debating team. The team recently competed against St Francis Catholic College from Edmondson Park in the MISA semi-finals. The topic was 'computers will replace teachers' and the students from St Pat's thankfully took the side of the negative and won. As someone who has seen the great work teachers do – including those at St Pats – it would be inconceivable to think that AI would replace the hard working and dedicated teachers in our schools. Congratulations to the 8A St Patrick's College for Girls debating team on your semi-final win. Good luck in the final.

LEBANON CARNIVAL 2022

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—I was delighted attend the Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group's Lebanon Carnival on 13 November at Darling Harbour. The 45th anniversary carnival was an especially important occasion which brought together young artists from the Australian Lebanese community. The many performers included musician Ibrahim Sarofin; singers Samir Merheb, Hamid Maroun, Ihsan Haddara, Damien Haifa, Mohamad El Asmar, Raymond Boutros, Ibtisam Ezzo, Alaa Mousselmani, Michel Haifa, Malek & Ghazi El Rifai, Fadi Assaf, Mariam Anjoul, Youssef Karam, Belly dancers Leticia & Melissa and Sahara & Eleni. Also performing were the Welfare Association Antiochian Dabki Group, Tierra Bolivarina group, Vibz Performing Arts and The Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group. The Cedars of Lebanon Folkloric Group was established in March 1977 by Mr Elie Akouri, teacher and choreographer of the Lebanese Dabki dance in Australia. Thank you to Elie for the invitation to join them at the Lebanon Carnival.

PARRAMATTA INTER-CLUB CUP SWIM MEET

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—I was delighted attend the Parramatta Inter-Club Cup swim meet at Merrylands Swimming Centre on 12 November. The meet was contested by the Parramatta City, Parramatta Memorial and Merrylands swimming clubs and rotates between the 3 clubs' home pools of Granville Swimming Centre, Parramatta Swimming Centre and Merryland Swimming Centre. The annual competition was first held in the 2013/2014 season at Granville Swimming Centre. The meet is contested by the Parramatta City, Parramatta Memorial and Merrylands swimming clubs and Merrylands Amateur Swimming Club is the second largest swimming club in the Cumberland LGA and the 8th largest swimming club in the South Western Area of the Sydney Metropolitan Area (Metro South West). Last summer the club had over 150 members registered. The club caters for swimmers of all ages and abilities from beginners to champions in a fun, family orientated atmosphere from the Merrylands, Greystanes, Wentworthville, Holroyd, South Wentworthville, Mays Hill, Westmead, Merrylands West and surrounding areas. I am delighted that Merrylands successfully reclaimed the Inter-Club cup for 2022, after last winning in 2016. My thanks go to Mr Graham Edwards, from Merrylands Amateur Swimming Club for the invitation to attend.

JAMISONTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith)—My congratulations to the students, staff and families of Jamisontown Public School for their recent fundraising efforts through Bandana Day. A special thank you to the generous students of the School Representative Council who I understand made sure this day was a success by giving up their recess and lunchtime. The school were able to raise an impressive \$1,500 for Canteen. Canteen is the charity who supports 12-25 year-olds dealing with their own cancer diagnosis, a close family member's cancer or the death of a loved one. This is a tremendous effort by the Jamisontown Public School community.

ANDREW (ANDY) HEATON

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith)—Congratulations to Andrew (Andy) Heaton of the Lions Club of Emu Plains who was awarded the top honour for a Lion, the Melvin Jones Fellow Award. This award acknowledges the 25 years of dedicated service that Andy has put into Lions. I understand that Andy has also put in many years of service to Scouts where, as a Rover Scout Leader, he led a contingent off to Australia's first international Jamboree with over 15 thousand youth attending from around world. Andy's commitment to scouting has seen him awarded with the Scout Medal of Merit and the Scout Wood Badge.

PENRITH HOSPITAL AUXILIARY

Mr STUART AYRES (Penrith)—It is my pleasure to congratulate the Penrith Hospital Auxiliary as they celebrate their 90th anniversary this year. Since its inception, the Auxiliary members have donated and continue to donate countless hours of their time to raising funds from stalls they hold at Nepean Hospital and Southlands Shopping Centre. They have approximately 21 volunteers who bake cakes and make craft items to sell with the proceeds going to Nepean Hospital. Their hand knitted baby items are in particularly high demand and sell out very quickly as do their crochet top tea towels. Over the years they have donated in excess of \$450,000 along with equipment including foetal monitors, observation machines, a chest compression system and a tonometer. Some of the auxiliaries longest serving members include Pat Bills 37 years, Jean Clarke 23 years, June Hewett 32 years, Barbara Payne 44 years, Nan Simpson 48 years and Betty Sutherland 29 years. I thank the current executive team, Michele Parish, Helen Rann and June Peacock along all the volunteers of the auxiliary for their hard work and commitment to our community.

PIANO CONCERT IN SUMMER HILL

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—Thank you to Summer Hill's resident Piano Teacher, Justin McKee, at MJ Piano Lessons for hosting an excellent concert on Tuesday. Held at our Summer Hill Plaza, the concert displayed the brilliant musical talent of Justin's pupils. Students aged five to seventy-one played a range of classical, pop, contemporary and jazz piano tunes. With student skills ranging from beginner to University level, the concert was a true triumph for the Inner West's brightest, aspiring pianists. I was proud to see our budding musicians put themselves out there and show off their quickly developing skills. Needless to say, the afternoon was a musical masterclass. Locals came out and stopped by to enjoy the show and support the courageous performers in their musical journeys. For putting on a wonderful show, thank you to Easton, Intra, Krishaan, Reuben, Tallulah, Eddie, Louis, Eimear, Maria, Minato, Susan, Rose, Hugo, Audrey, Eleanor, Gwen, Genevieve, Gabriel, and Rohan. I also extend thanks to their renowned teacher, Justin McKee, for helping to build these skills and for organising such a fantastic live music event in Summer Hill.

SUMMER HILL COMMUNITY CHOIR

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—At long last, our Summer Hill Community Choir is back for its weekly in-person rehearsals! From the 10th of October, the choir has been meeting on Monday nights to prepare for the fast-approaching holiday season. The Summer Hill Community Choir was founded in late 2014 by director and accompanist, Luke Sweeting. Following a fantastic eight years, the choir has become a cornerstone community group within the local area. They provide a safe and fun space for local singers at all skill levels to work collaboratively and embrace the joys of group song. With their many years exploring different genres and sounds, the choir are well-equipped to deliver some of the most beautiful harmonies at their renowned end-of-season performance. The Summer Hill Community Choir plays an especially iconic role over Christmas Time in the Inner West. I am pleased to acknowledge the work of: conductor, Caely Stevens; admin, Catherine Paix; and treasurer, Jenny Rattray. I would also like to wish farewell to founder, Luke Sweeting who will be retiring from his director position at the end of this year. Your vision for the Summer Hill Community Choir has brought so many people together.

MARRICKVILLE WEST SECOND HAND WONDERLAND

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill)—Marrickville West Second Hand Wonderland is exactly what its name implies: one of the best preloved markets and garage sales in the Inner West. Last Saturday 12 November, the Marrickville West Public School P&C once again took part in the Garage Sale Trail. The Second Hand Wonderland has become a famous addition to the annual, nation-wide trail, even claiming the title of the 'King of Garage Sales' in 2017. This year, the school was host to over forty stalls offering a huge range of second hand bargains. Stalls were selling preloved goods in every category under the sun: from brand-name clothing, to extraordinary knick-knacks, and everything in between! Market-goers could also celebrate their thrifty finds over a sizzling BBQ, as well as an assortment of delightful flavours to choose from at their gelato cart by Pure Gelato Sydney. Thank you very much to the Marrickville West Public School P&C for organising the Second Hand Wonderland and putting our suburb on the map as one of the best garage sales on the trail!

AGNES READER 100TH BIRTHDAY

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—It is with great pleasure that today I acknowledge Mrs Agnes Reader of Engadine on her 100th birthday on 29th November 2022. I trust Agnes will celebrate this special occasion accompanied by her closest family and friends. I take this opportunity to again extend my sincere congratulations to Agnes and wish her good health and happiness for the future.

ILLAWARRA SPORTS AWARDS

Mr LEE EVANS (Heathcote)—The Illawarra Sports Awards were held last week at the Fraternity Club in Fairy Meadow. These awards celebrate sport in our community, recognising achievements of athletes at a grassroots and professional level, as well as the hardworking volunteers at Illawarra clubs and associations. Sport is at the heart of our community, so I'm thrilled these awards have returned after a 10-year hiatus.

Congratulations to the 2022 Illawarra Sports Award winners: Female Athlete of the Year: Emma McKeon, Male Athlete of the Year: Alex Volkanovski, Team of the Year: Wollongong Roller Hawks, Coach of the Year: Brendan Dowler (Roller Hawks), Geoff Phillips Local Hero of the Year: Debra Banks (Special Olympics), Illawarra Mercury People's Choice Award: Luke Pople (Roller Hawks), Illawarra Academy of Sport Junior Athlete of the Year: Keira Buckpitt, Sporting Moment of the Year: Annemiek van Vleuten at the Wollongong 2022 UCI World Road Championships. It's an honour to commend recipients on this outstanding achievement. They are extremely deserving of the accolade and should be incredibly proud their accomplishments.

BANDFEST NEWCASTLE

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—Music is such an important part of life, and it's always great for young people to get the chance to create and express themselves through music. It's especially good to see young people working together as a band. Bandfest Newcastle celebrates the performance development of primary and secondary public school bands, and this year was held at Warners Bay Theatre and on Friday 21 October. It was an opportunity for fantastic school bands from around the area to showcase their talents to one another in a friendly, music-filled environment. A number of Charlestown electorate schools competed and came away with commendations and awards. Eleebana Public School was named primary novice winner and primary premier winner. Charlestown South Public School was named primary preliminary winner. Kotara High School's band was highly commended, and Warners Bay High School came away with a commendation. It's so great to see local musical talent fostered in our school communities, and I want to send my congratulations to all the students involved and a special thanks to all the music teachers for helping them pursue their musical studies.

ELSIE LEASK

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown)—Congratulations to Kotara High School English teacher, Elsie Leask, on being awarded not one but two prestigious awards from the University of Newcastle. Elsie was awarded the Margaret Auchmuty Prize for Education, awarded to the person with the highest grade point average in their fourth year of an education degree, and the Douglas Ashworth Memorial Prize for Classical Civilisation, which is awarded to the student with the highest achievement across 3000 level courses in Ancient History. This achievement comes after Elsie received the University College Medal for the College of Human and Social Futures earlier this year. The recognition for the Margaret Auchmuty Prize includes the work Elsie undertook as an intern at Kotara High, where she is currently working. I am always inspired by the passion that our teachers have for teaching and engendering a love of learning in our students, and particularly so in Elsie's case. It is fantastic to see such a high-achieving scholar in one of our fantastic public schools. Congratulations, Elsie!

BAY FM

Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)—Today I recognise the amazing contribution of BayFM to journalism, broadcasting and our communities on the occasion of winning three national tributes at the Community Broadcasting Association of Australia Annual Awards ceremony. Two of the awards in particular were of major significance. BayFM won the Tony Staley Award, which is the highest accolade for a community radio station in Australia. It recognises excellence in upholding the values of democracy, diversity, access and independence. They also won the Michael Law Award, which recognises a sustained and outstanding contribution to community broadcasting and was presented to Station Manager Philip Shine. The Bay FM Community Newsroom further won the Award for Excellence in News & Current Affairs Programming for its reporting of and response to the Northern Rivers flood disaster in 2022. I commend BayFM on their outstanding achievement and wish them every success in the future.

CLARITY PRECISE MEDICAL IMAGING DIAGNOSIS

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—As a locally owned radiology provider, Waratah-based Clarity: Precise Imaging and Diagnosis is an invaluable resource for the community in the Wallsend electorate and across Newcastle and the Hunter region. They place emphasis on how we work with GPs, medical specialists and patients. This dedication has been recognised by the Hunter Local Business Awards, with the Outstanding Health Improvement Services Award. My congratulations to Dr Virgil Chan and his team on this win. Dr Chan grew up in Newcastle, achieving Honours in his medical degree at the University of Newcastle, and completing his specialist training at the John Hunter Hospital. He qualified as a consultant radiologist, and has continued his training, including during his time in Canada. Dr Chan has a great interest in all facets of radiology, but is most valued for his skills in advanced musculoskeletal, sports and spinal imaging and intervention. Once again, my congratulations to Dr Chan and the Clarity team.

LIFESTYLE PERFORMANCE

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—The team at Lifestyle Performance has been honoured at the 2022 Hunter Local Business Awards for their positive contributions to the fitness of countless Wallsend locals and others from around the local area. The company, which operates out of Maryland Scout Hall as well as other locations, was awarded the 2022 Hunter Local Business Award for Outstanding Fitness Services. Founder and director Chad O'Donnell started his career as a personal trainer in Sydney at the age of eighteen, and his journey has gone from height to height. He now leads a committed, friendly team including area manager Courtney Jones, coaches Connor-Rose Cook and Travhon Lemelama, and Aleisha Lewis, who doubles as a coach and a nutritionist. Their mission is to be the most positive part of their clients' days, and were also recognised as finalists in the Australian Small Business Champion Awards 2022. If their awards success is any indication, they are absolutely achieving their mission—and helping their clients achieve goals as well. Congratulations to the team at Lifestyle Performance. Great work!

DR BILL COOREY

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence)—I offer my congratulations to Dr Bill Coorey of the Queen Street Clinic in Grafton who was recently named GP Synergy Supervisor of the Year for the North Coast Training Region. Dr Bill, as he is affectionately known, sees his role as mentor and this is another opportunity for him to continue his own learning. He has described being a GP as the "ultimate challenge of being a human all-rounder". When so many rural and regional areas are struggling to find GPs it is imperative that there are doctors like Dr Bill who are prepared to assist the next generation of GPs develop their skills. Congratulations Dr Bill and thank you for your commitment and dedication.

REGIONAL SCHOOL STRIKES IT BIG AT STATE TENPIN BOWLING TITLES

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence)—Palmer's Island Public School might be a small regional school but its name is certainly on the map after striking gold at the NSW Ten Pin Bowling finals for students with disability held in Sydney recently. A team of four male students, Joseph Novicky, Tobias Everson, Levi Harvey and Lake Taylor-Walker competed against 30 other schools at the championships and knocked them out by taking home the state title in the primary school division. This is an extraordinary achievement by these young lads and something they can be incredibly proud of. A big shout out goes to Principal, Ellie Wiseman and teacher, Nelson Burgess who travelled with the students to support and cheer them on. I'm sure the community will join with me in congratulating the students on their achievement.

CASINO LIONS CLUB

Mr CHRISTOPHER GULAPTIS (Clarence)—I offer my congratulations to the Casino Lions Club who recently celebrated their 70th anniversary. The Lions Club has done an amazing job of supporting their community with all of the projects that it has undertaken over the years, and with the ongoing Farmers Markets held every Saturday. I wish the Club continued success in the future.

UNITED NATIONS DAY HONOUR FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE SEC PROGRAM

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)—Following an invitation received from the United Nations Association of Australia NSW, twenty-two key stakeholders representing the National Science and Engineering Challenge program received an invitation to attend the 2022 United Nations Day Gala Dinner here at Parliament House on Friday, 21 October 2022. I am especially pleased to be able to note that 2022 UN Honouree is the University of Newcastle Science and Engineering Challenge! The Science and Engineering Challenge is a nationwide STEM outreach program presented by the University in partnership with communities, Rotary clubs, universities and sponsors, allowing students to experience aspects of science and engineering which they would not usually see in their school environment. Previous recipients include the Australian Red Cross, renowned jurist Michael Kirby, Reconciliation Australia and Landcare Australia, putting the Science and Engineering Challenge in august company. My congratulations to SEC Team members Professor Steven Weller, Mr Michael Cassey, Mr Chris Hendry, Ms Adriana Zaja, Mr Pete Newman and Ms Shelley Wilson on this well-deserved honour.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP ACHIEVEMENT

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—I would like to pay tribute to Nick Katris who in October was awarded life membership of the Australian Labor Party. Nick has been a continuous party member for over 44 years, what an amazing achievement. During this time, he has served 27 years as a Labor Councillor in local government which has included 22 years with Kogarah City Council and now 5 years at the amalgamated Georges River Council. He was elected Mayor in 2021 and is currently serving his second year. Nick has championed sustainability initiatives, offered critical local community leadership. He has served many local ALP Members of Parliament at both State and Federal level tirelessly and always with great enthusiasm. Nick has always been a proud and active member of NSW Labor, he is the first to put his hand up to assist at mobile offices, handing out at train stations, working on pre poll or being the booth captain from 6:am to 6:00pm on election day and then staying back to scrutineer. His love of the Australian Labor Party is obvious to all that know him and he believes wholeheartedly in its principals of fairness and equity.

RAMON WILLIAMS

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—One of Australia's most prolific news photographers of the past 60 years, Bexley's Ramon Williams, shared his favourite images and memories for the first time as part of History Week 2022. His renowned news photography includes royal tours with Queen Elizabeth II, Prince Charles, Princess Diana, political leaders and musicians, Mother Theresa, the coverage of five cyclones- including Cyclone Tracy, Vietnam War protests, the opening of the Sydney Opera House, and the 2000 Sydney Olympics. To celebrate, the 91-year-old resident, is making public his archives for all Australians to enjoy. Ramon, continues to draw on the experiences of a career spanning more than half a century with his latest project, a book, telling the incredible story of how a Bexley boy stepped behind a camera lens and into some of our nation's defining moments. Ramon trained as a fitter machinist before embracing his love of photography. He established Worldwide Photos, working as an independent news photographer to cover major events with images that were shared around the globe. Parts of Ramon's work have previously been displayed in the National Museum of Australia in Canberra. A book about his life and a TV documentary are both in production.

DR ADAM RITCHIE

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah)—Congratulations to former Sydney Technical High School student and esteemed immunologist, Dr Adam Ritchie. Now working for a top university research hub, you could confidently

say Dr Adam Ritchie has made his former high school proud. After he graduated from high school, Dr Ritchie studied Microbiology and Immunology at the University of NSW, completing a PhD in Immunology in 2005 and moved to the UK to further his research. He was in the class of 1995, but 2022, he returned to a familiar stomping ground, to be inducted in the alumni hall of fame – and for good reason. Dr Ritchie is based at the University of Oxford in the UK, and was a key player in developing the Oxford-AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine. The immunologist, lecturer in human science (medical genetics) and senior vaccine project manager was pivotal in the production and successful roll-out of large-scale manufacturing of the Oxford-AZ vaccine, which resulted in billions of doses being distributed across 170 countries. On 29 July Dr Ritchie met with students and his former chemistry teacher at his former school and spoke about career pathways. We congratulate him on his achievements and wish him well in all future endeavours.

CDSFA VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION DINNER

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield)—Congratulations to all volunteers recognised at the Canterbury & District Football Association [CDSFA] Volunteer Recognition Dinner on 14th October 2022. It was a fantastic evening of joy celebrating the role of volunteers in football. Volunteers are a crucial element of football. They help community sport keep everyone at all stages of life active, engaged, and part of a team. And volunteers facilitate the ongoing popularity and success of the sport at a community level. I congratulate Mr Ian Holmes, who was inducted into the CDSFA Hall of Fame as its 23rd Member and is recognised by the association as a remarkable individual and legend of the game. Congratulations to Andrew McVeigh of Burwood FC and Armando Gardiman AM, CDSFA, FC Five Dock and Concord Junior FC for their being awarded the Vince & Val Laws Medals for a lifetime of dedication to football. It is also a great pleasure to recognise Strathfield Football Club who took out the Crystal Cup Club Championship for the first time. Congratulations to Canterbury & District Football Association for putting on such a wonderful event and congratulations to all awardees honoured on the night.

ENFIELD LIFE SAVING CLUB

Mr JASON LI (Strathfield)—I congratulate Enfield Life Saving Club on hosting their 2022 Presentation Day at Croydon Park RSL on 14 August 2022. I was honoured to be invited by club president, Andrew Pearce, vice president, Scherie McDonnell, and secretary, Prue Ibrahim, to present trophies and medals to those outstanding club performers. It was also my pleasure to meet club treasurer - Syie Mei Thai, race secretaries - Natalie Anagnostopoulos and Bec Rumens, committee member - Sam Pear, Club Captains - Max Pearce and Karen Yik, and junior coach John Kavanagh. The Enfield Life Saving Club is proudly home to a diverse, inclusive community helping community members to enjoy the water safely through drowning prevention education. Their goal is to reduce drowning, to increase physical activity, especially in and around the water, and to contribute to the creation of more resilient communities. I was so pleased to hear that everyone is enjoying the new Enfield pool facilities and thank Burwood Council and Mayor John Faker for this renovation. I warmly congratulate ELSC for organising the event and send my best wishes to everyone who took part.

MR GRAHAM WEBSTER

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I acknowledge and record the gratitude of the Willoughby electorate to local Mr Graham Webster for reaching an extraordinary milestone of 50 years as a Justice of the Peace. That is a remarkable record of volunteer service to the community. Justices of the Peace (JPs) provide an important service to our community, witnessing and certifying documents. I'm proud to be one myself. JPs are volunteers appointed by the Governor of NSW who the community can trust and rely on to perform such tasks as witnessing an affidavit or statutory declaration, as well as certifying original documents such as passports, birth certificates and graduation testamurs. Drawn from all sections of the community, JP's must be a person of good character. Mr Webster has displayed selfless service to his community over a long period, and we are grateful for the many hours he has given to those within Willoughby in need of this essential service. All across Willoughby similar JPs volunteer their time to serve their community and I acknowledge the contribution of them all.

TRESILLIAN WILLOUGHBY

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—For any family, welcoming a newborn baby is a great joy yet also a challenge as many new parents would attest. To ease the transition to parenthood, Tresillian's Willoughby Residential Service helps families needing a more intensive level of support in their parenting journey. Families live in at Tresillian for 4-nights and 5-days, Monday to Friday, with meals and accommodation provided. To help support families, Tresillian Willoughby provides a team of experienced child & family health nurses, specialists in lactation, psychologists, paediatricians, psychiatrists, and GP's who work in partnership with parents to help make sense of their child's crying, sleep, feeding and behaviour. Tresillian Willoughby aims to help parents build a positive relationship with their child, giving them confidence and assurance as they progress through their parenting journey. For new parents with no immediate family or relatives at hand to assist with looking after

newborns, services like Tresillian Willoughby offer an invaluable lifeline. I commend the great work that Tresillian Willoughby does to support parents and strengthen families in our community.

1ST WILLOUGHBY SCOUTS

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I recognise the 1st Willoughby Scouts in my electorate for the contribution they make to enriching our youth and community. As part of the worldwide Scouting movement, the 1st Willoughby Scouts are committed to General Baden-Powell's vision of raising up young people who are adventurous, hardy and resilient, yet honourable, loyal and helpful to others. Characteristic of Scouting groups around the world, Willoughby Scouts offer a rich and varied range of outdoor activities designed to build character, resourcefulness and resilience. Located at their Scout Hall in Laurel Street Willoughby, the 1st Willoughby Scouts cater for boys and girls in primary school and early high school. Classic Scouting pursuits such as tying knots, orienteering, camping, rock climbing, abseiling, bushwalking, sailing and canoeing are just some of the activities enjoyed. Each year the 1st Willoughby Scouts run a locally renowned Christmas Tree stall selling real trees to the community to raise funds and spread Christmas cheer. I thank Adam Parker and the dedicated leadership team who selflessly volunteer every week to enrich the lives of our children and youth.

KYLIE KWONG

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown)—On behalf of the Newtown electorate, I would like to acknowledge Kylie Kwong and her remarkable contributions to our community, and to food culture in Sydney, for many decades. During lockdown, Kylie volunteered at the Addison Road Community Organisation to package food hampers to isolated and food insecure households in the Inner West community. Kylie also played a leading role in ensuring that food hampers were delicious and nutritious, as well as culturally appropriate for the people who were receiving them. Kylie has also been a champion for food sustainability both in practice and in principle. She has been a public advocate for the need to curb food waste, providing helpful tips to people across Australia on how to stop wasting food as well as personally committing to using organic or biodynamically grown food, and using every ingredient in her cooking. Kylie has made a massive contribution to food culture in Sydney over the past several years, and her current restaurant Lucky Kwong exemplifies all of the welcoming and homely aspects of our diverse electorate. I thank Kylie and her team at Lucky Kwong restaurant for being an important part of our Newtown electorate community and culture.

ALICE ANDERSON

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown)—On behalf of the Newtown electorate, I would like to acknowledge Kylie Kwong and her remarkable contributions to our community, and to food culture in Sydney, for many decades. During lockdown, Kylie volunteered at the Addison Road Community Organisation to package food hampers to isolated and food insecure households in the Inner West community. Kylie also played a leading role in ensuring that food hampers were delicious and nutritious, as well as culturally appropriate for the people who were receiving them. Kylie has also been a champion for food sustainability both in practice and in principle. mShe has been a public advocate for the need to curb food waste, providing helpful tips to people across Australia on how to stop wasting food as well as personally committing to using organic or biodynamically grown food, and using every ingredient in her cooking. Kylie has made a massive contribution to food culture in Sydney over the past several years, and her current restaurant Lucky Kwong exemplifies all of the welcoming and homely aspects of our diverse electorate. I thank Kylie and her team at Lucky Kwong restaurant for being an important part of our Newtown electorate community and culture.

DIANE FETHERSTON

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron)—I acknowledge the extraordinary contribution of Principal Diane Fetherston from Alexandria Park Community School. Through her hard work, visionary thinking and utmost dedication to her students, families and the Alexandria community as a whole, Diane has been instrumental in raising the quality of educational outcomes at Alexandria Park, along with the perception and reputation of the school. During her tenure as Principal, I witnessed Alexandria Park grow both in student numbers and the vibrance of school life, becoming a true community that supports and works to better not only its students but the broader area. It is Diane's work that has ensured the school has been, and will continue to be, more than capable of to managing and justifying the NSW Government's capital investment in its site to incorporate flexible, future-focused learning spaces to support innovative and engaging teaching practices, maximise outdoor green space and ensure the school's capacity to meet the needs of a growing population. I take this opportunity to congratulate Diane on her incredible accomplishments as she embarks upon the next chapter of her life. She will be greatly missed by students, parents and community stakeholders alike.

LOCAL KINCUMBER BUSINESS RECOGNISED FOR BEST PIES

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I would like to take this opportunity to celebrate the recent achievement of Shhmoakesys Gourmet Pies at Kincumber. This small business, owned and operated by Chris Oakes, has been awarded Wotif's Uniquely Aussie Awards. While this started out as a hobby for Chris, his delectable smoked meat filling which he prepares over 8 hours and melt-in-your-mouth pastry has won over Aussies.

Chris perfected his craft while trying to raise some money to assist a sick friend, joining the Bouddi House Trails where people across the Central Coast's Peninsula sold goods from their front yards. When his day-job folded at the start of the first COVID-19 lockdown, pie making became Chris's full-time craft. With business booming, more cafés are coming on board with mega orders, all wanting to get a piece of Chris's gourmet smoked pies. The Wotif Uniquely Aussie Awards are based on public nominations covering favourite things to eat, see and do in Australia; they prove that locals always know best with top recommendations. A huge congratulations to Chris, and a massive thank you to the Central Coast community for getting behind this phenomenal local Kincumber business.

CENTRAL COAST BOARD RIDING SUCCESS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I would like to recognise the achievement of some local board riding legends, Mister Speaker. Recently, our Central Coast board riders have showcased their talent at the 2022 NSW Board Riding Championships at Merewether Beach. In the Open Men's Short Board, Nigel Tebb from Avoca Beach competed in the grand final of Open Men's Short Board placing 5th, and later 1st in the Grand Final of the 50+ Men's Short Board. This is an amazing effort, congratulations! In the Under 13's Short Board Grand Final, William Tebb demonstrated immense skill to place 2nd! I am sure his home club of Avoca Beach are proud. Central Coast clubs dominated the Under 14's/Under 15's Female Short Board Grand Final, with Maia Abell of Wamberal placing 2nd, Kiah Tebb of Avoca Beach placing 3rd, and Mahlia Pollington of Terrigal in 4th.

This is a fantastic result which all three youngsters should celebrate. Molly Liang of North Entrance SLSC impressed the crowd, placing 2nd in the Grand Final of the Youth Female Malibu Long Board. A special mention must go to the Surf Clubs, teams, and volunteers which make these event happen. Congratulations to all involved!

WAGGA WAGGA LEGACY'S 90TH ANNIVERSARY

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—It is said that in the trenches of the Western Front, a soldier told his dying mate "I'll look after the missus and kids", a commitment that became known as The Promise. Realising the dire circumstances of thousands of veterans, widows and children, those who returned set out to help. In 1923, Major General Sir John Gellibrand formed the Remembrance Club in Hobart, while Lieutenant General Sir Stanley Savige, established a club named Legacy in Melbourne. From there, the modern-day Legacy has grown and is the only veteran service organisation in Australia dedicated solely to the care and support of our veterans' families. As Legacy prepares for its centenary, the Legacy Club of Wagga Wagga has celebrated its 90th anniversary. In 1932, the Legacy Club of Wagga Wagga was the 15th established in Australia, with 38 founding members. It is a wonderful club, still full of energy and caring. Thank you to President Doug Conkey; Vice President David Thorley, Secretary Anthony Paul; Treasurer Jim Gibson; Welfare Chairman Stewart Smith and Education Chairman John Ferguson, who along with all Legatees, as well as staff members Nicolle Stanton and Jenny Lovekin, do so much in our community.

SNOWY VALLEYS RESILIENCE HUB

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—It is now almost three years since bushfires devastated the Snowy Valleys local government area. The small community of Batlow in my electorate was particularly hard hit and was, at one point, declared "undefendable". As the clean-up and rebuilding continued, the needs of the became more obvious and the Snowy Valleys Resilience Hub was born. The hub, funded by Resilience NSW, supports individuals and the community to prepare for the future. This requires the community to come together to use their skills, knowledge, capacities, and strengths. It has been involved in a number of major projects, including the Snowy Valleys Sculpture Trail official opening and the Batlow Fruit Cooperative centenary celebration, and worked with numerous groups on community recovery initiatives. Establishing partnerships with TAFE and St Vincent de Paul to offer fee-free training has seen 20 short courses and one certificate course. Funding for the hub ends on 30 June 2023, so the key goal for the next six months is delivered RFS-approved bushfire preparedness training. Congratulations to hub founder and chair Ray Billing, all the committee members, project manager Anne Hallard and project coordinator Helen O'Meara on making the hub a success.

WORONORA MEMORIAL PARK

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy)—I would like to congratulate Woronora Memorial Park for recently being awarded the 2022 Sutherland Shire Access and Inclusion Award. Civic Disability Services nominated Woronora Memorial Park to receive the award, as they are a long-standing partner of Civic. They wanted the organisation to be acknowledged for the employment opportunities and positive outcomes the organisation has provided for people with a disability for many years. Woronora Memorial Park have employed people with disabilities through Civic to provide lawn care, gardening and maintenance services. The Civic Lawn Crew have been providing this maintenance work at the Park since 2014 and since then have been offering people with disabilities the opportunity to build their skills, increase their confidence and be part of a positive and supportive work environment. Mr Speaker, once again I would like to congratulate Woronora Memorial Park for receiving this deserved recognition and commend Civic Disability Services and the Civic Lawn Crew for their continued hard work.

SIMON CHANGSON

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy)—I would like to congratulate Simon Changson, of Wattle Grove, for receiving an Officer of the Order of Liverpool Award at this year's Order of Liverpool Awards Ceremony. Simon was recognised for his environmental volunteer work around our local community. He has been a long-term volunteer, passionate about keeping our local environment beautiful. After migrating for Laos, he first became a volunteer when he saw an advertisement in the newspaper to help clean up Clinches Pond in Moorebank. He managed to rally almost 100 Indo-Chinese refugees to clean up the thick layer of weeds. For more than 40 years now, Simon has been involved in local bush care groups across Casula, Campbelltown, Hoxton Park, Moorebank, Voyager Point and Wattle Grove. I again would like to congratulate Simon on receiving this deserved recognition and thank him for his commitment to ensuring our local environment remains beautiful and preserved.

GEOFFREY TATE

Ms MELANIE GIBBONS (Holsworthy)—I would like to congratulate Geoffrey Tate, of Holsworthy, for receiving a Member of the Order of Liverpool Award at this year's Order of Liverpool Awards Ceremony. Geoffrey was recognised for his long-term dedication to the City of Liverpool RSL Sub Branch, having served for more than 30 years. He is currently serving as President. He has also been very involved in the Liverpool community, working closely with Liverpool City Council to help organise and run local commemoration events including ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day.

Geoffrey has also done a lot of fundraising work and remains an active member on the fundraising committee of the RSL, raising awareness of the ANZAC Day Poppy Appeal to support our local veteran community. He is also one of the co-founders of the John Edmondson VC Memorial Club Lawn Bowling Group which supports many members of the community. I would like to congratulate Geoffrey for this deserved recognition and thank him for his continued service to the community.

ST CLAIR DOG GROOMING

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Congratulations to St Clair Dog Grooming for being a 2022 finalist for the St Marys and Mt Druitt local business awards in the Pet Care category. St Clair Dog Grooming is an important small business, one of the thousands of small businesses in the Western Sydney community that contribute to the economy and help power our State forward. St Clair Dog Grooming carries out their business with excellent customer care and attention to detail in their work. To be a finalist in the local business awards is a great achievement and I commend all the owners and staff who have helped to achieve this outcome.

SUSHI DELIGHT

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Mulgoa)—Today I would like to congratulate Sushi Delight on their official opening at St Clair Shopping Centre. It always a great day when another small business begins to operate, providing for local employment and a good product or service for the community to enjoy. I wish Sushi Delight all the very best and success for their small business as they begin their operations in my local community.

ZACHARY WONG

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)—I would like to congratulate the exceptionally talented Zachary Wong from Charlton Christian College who has been nominated to have his HSC Major Artwork shown at the next Artexpress exhibition. Only the most outstanding student artworks across the state are considered for inclusion in Artexpress which is held annually at the New South Wales Art Gallery, so to be nominated for inclusion in this prestigious art show is a huge achievement. 17-year-old Zachary produced a short film titled 'Vibrance in the Key of D Minor' which aims to explore the subject matter of loneliness, change and meaning in life. Drawing on inspiration from his favourite film and television programs, the short film-noir style work is

reflective of Zachary's personal struggle with the monotony of everyday life. And I must say it is exceptionally good. Zachary says that he produced the film to highlight the common plight of loneliness, and through various dramatic techniques he encourages the audience to evaluate, find a change and bring meaning to their lives. I wish Zachary all the best with Artexpress and look forward to seeing his future productions.

JAMES BIRD

Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie)—I would like to acknowledge the excellent efforts that a small but dedicated group of Lake Macquarie residents made to clean up their local environment. James Bird from Mirrabooka - along with six other adults and five children - recently gave up a Sunday to collect an impressive 43 kilograms of rubbish from bushland and a cycleway along Fishery Point Road in Bonnells Bay. Unfortunately, this tract of bush had become overwhelmed with rubbish to the extent that people could not take two steps without seeing a chip packet, plastic bottle or other similar debris. James noticed the appalling state of the environment while riding to school with his daughter and decided to do something about it. James put out a call to action on social media and was contacted by other local residents who were willing to help. Lake Macquarie City Council's Eco Angel program equipped the group with litter pickers, garbage bags and gloves, and they set to work. The bushland and cycleway have been well and truly cleaned up, so I thank James and his team for their efforts and their selfless sense of community.

PALESTINIAN CHRISTIANS IN AUSTRALIA

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Honoured to speak at the Palestinian Culture Inaugural Dinner, hosted by Palestinian Christians in Australia [PCIA], on Saturday 12th November 2022. Our Western Sydney community is united and tolerant, with shared faith communities. Sadly, in Palestine and Israel, we have seen the opposite occur. Christians have increasingly become the target of systematic attacks and discrimination. Attempts have been made by fringe, radical groups to drive out the Palestinian Christian community from the Holy Land. Thank you to Suzan Wahhab, President, PCIA, for raising these concerns with me and forming PCIA. The aim of PCIA is to work with Australian Christians to stand in solidarity with Palestinian Christians facing persecution in Israel and Palestine. As Australians and especially political leaders, the Parliament of NSW must continue to reaffirm its commitment to International Law, supporting the right of Palestinian Christians to self-determination and speaking out against discrimination that they face. As a Member of Parliament, I am committed to working to represent Palestinian Christians, to assist in preserving their faith, heritage and culture. They have a right to retain a meaningful Christian presence in the Holy Land, to contribute to building a more peaceful, tolerant and diverse region.

ST MICHAELS BLACKTOWN SOUTH - CENTENARY GARDEN

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Pleasure to visit St Michael's Blacktown South to officially open its new Centenary Garden playground on Friday 11th November 2022. I am very pleased that this new facility was constructed as a result of the Prospect Electorate Community Building Partnership (CBP) Grant 2021, with the sum of \$74,349 being granted to the school. This new playground, complete with a slide and a small climbing frame, will improve the break time for children, with improved recreational facilities. In addition to the opening of the Centenary Garden playground, this was also a very special day for the school. It was the School's 60th anniversary celebration as well as Remembrance Day. The School paid tribute to our veterans in a very moving service in their school assembly, as well as honouring the school's sixty years of history. Thank you to Sue Veling, Principal, and Rebecca Tuelan, Assistant Principal, for inviting me to officially open the Centenary Garden. St Michael's is a fantastic school with over 730 students, reflecting the multiculturalism of Western Sydney. 75% of students speak a second language at home. St Michael's students will love this new playground. I look forward to visiting again soon.

LUNG FOUNDATION OF AUSTRALIA

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Insightful to meet with Mark Brooke, CEO, Lung Foundation Australia at the Parliament of NSW on the 10th November 2022 to discuss the priority of tackling lung cancer in the electorate of Prospect. The number one form of cancer that is prevalent in the Electorate of Prospect is lung cancer. There needs to be urgent solutions implemented to reduce lung cancer in our community, to increase medical support for residents with lung cancer; enhance the management of lung disease in our hospitals; reduce smoking rates; support those in our community with Long Covid; and improve our local air quality to protect our health. The Lung Foundation Australia is the only national charity dedicated to supporting anyone with a lung disease including cancer. Their commitment to reducing all forms of lung disease is so important to eliminating the scourge of lung cancer in our community. This is especially important as many people in our Electorate are still recovering from the effects of Long Covid, following the Covid-19 pandemic. Thank you for meeting with me Mark. I look forward to working with you to reduce lung cancer and all other forms of lung disease in our electorate.

WAKEHURST PARKWAY IMPROVEMENTS

Mr JONATHAN O'DEA (Davidson)—I recognise the Davidson residents whose successful lobbying has resulted in the announcement of \$75 million for improvements to Wakehurst Parkway from Narrabeen to Dreadnought Road. Locals have regularly experienced inconvenience due to traffic problems on Wakehurst Parkway. These improvements will be valued, especially the better access to the Northern Beaches Hospital in Frenchs Forest. The road will be safer and travel more efficient, with localised road widening and more turning lanes to keep traffic moving. These improvements are at some of the worst "black spots" on the Northern Beaches are on Wakehurst Parkway. The work includes better traffic signals at the Dreadnought Road intersection and an upgrade of the Oxford Falls Road West intersection, both of which are in my electorate of Davidson. The project will also improve southbound lane capacity on approach to Frenchs Forest. The frequent closure of Wakehurst Parkway due to flooding is a serious problem and I note this funding is in addition to the \$18.1 million provided by the NSW Government to Northern Beaches Council for flood mitigation. Pleasingly, the project aims to minimise impacts on adjoining bushland and the local environment. Community consultation begins in 2023. I commend all involved.

TACKING POINT PUBLIC SCHOOL – NANGA MAI AWARDS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I congratulate the Nanga Mai Award recipients from Tacking Point Public School who have demonstrated excellence across a diversity of areas throughout the year. Students who have displayed outstanding commitment and excellence in a range of activities are eligible for a Nanga Mai Award. This could include attendance, leadership, academic commitment, community service, progress, cultural commitments, positive attitude, supporting student participation, exceptional public speaking skills, talent in performing and creative or visual arts and effort.

I commend the following students: CJ Gibbs, Lilly Boss, Paxton Scott, Jack Morris, Grace Monahan, Ben Oakeshott, Grace Morris, Anna Piri, Mason Jones and Lainey Fenton for leading by example and diligently pursuing their education with enthusiasm and commitment. When congratulating our students' accomplishments it is pertinent that we acknowledge our incredible teachers who have paved a pathway to academic success. Your unwavering support throughout each student's school years ensures they have the tools necessary to succeed in life and for that I join with parents, guardians and care givers by extending my appreciation and gratitude.

Congratulations again to all the student's for receiving accolades at the 17th Annual Nanga Awards.

NATIONAL DIORAMA CHALLENGE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I recognise two Camden Haven High School students, Isla Wilkinson and Abbey Lenane. Both students achieved success for their entries into the National Diorama Challenge, a component of the Quantum and Dark Matter Road Show, where scientists travel to 40 cities and towns across Australia in celebration of National Science Week. Year 8 student, Isla Wilkinson was presented with a certificate for 1st prize for her diorama Heisenberg's Uncertainty. Isla created a diorama containing 3D glasses - as you look through the red side of the glasses you can't see anything red in the background and looking through the blue side you can't see anything blue. It relates to Heisenberg's Theory of uncertainty where you can see an object's velocity and its precise location but you can't see both at the same time.

Abbey Lenane received a certificate for 2nd prize for her MRI Machine - a diorama that represented quantum and particle physics. I would also like to congratulate all staff involved at Camden Haven High School for their contribution to the students' success and winning the prize for Best School.

SES LORD HOWE ISLAND RESCUE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I recognise the SES team of Lord Howe Island, who on Wednesday the 19th of October rescued an injured climber from Mt Gower. The SES members responded in the late afternoon and carried the injured person down on a stretcher. They did not get to the base of the mountain until 3.00am the following morning. I thank all the SES volunteers who gave their time, their expertise and commitment to ensuring the injured person was able to be taken carefully and safely to medical treatment. The Lord Howe Island Local Unit is managed and manned by volunteers. I commend the following members for their dedication and professionalism throughout this challenging rescue and thank them for their commitment to serving the community: Taylah Kent, Ernie Mayo, Chad Wilson, Blake Thompson, Samuel Filetti, Nicola Fuller, Ashley Hooper, Riley Wilson, Tim Cruikshank, Jack Shick, Cameron Kirkpatrick, Craig Macca Wilson, Tim Solomon. Kayla Hiscox, Rebecca Moran, Cindy Shick, Darcelle Nobbs and Izak Bennett for logistics and organising food for all involved. I know that in true Lord Howe Island style there would have been many others working behind the scenes to assist and so thank you to everyone.

BARONGA AVENUE SPORTS FACILITY AT QUEENS PARK

Ms GABRIELLE UPTON (Vaucluse)—On 11 November 2022, I joined Greater Sydney Parklands CEO Joshua French to open the Baronga Avenue sports amenity building at Queens Park. The \$2.8 million facility will serve over 20,000 participants across 12 different sports. It is an airy, purpose-built building with male and female toilets, five changerooms including an umpire changeroom, and four storage rooms. Queens Park has been a busy sporting hub since the 1930s, and now families from across the Eastern Suburbs and visitors will have access to this great facility. Importantly, the facility has the first dedicated female change rooms in the Eastern Suburbs. This project acknowledges the importance of local sporting clubs in building communities and the NSW Government's strong commitment to ensuring they have best facilities possible just like this.

ISABELLA BROOMFIELD

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—I want to congratulate St Mary's Catholic School Wellington student Isabelle Broomfield who has had one of her photographs selected for the Operation Art 2022 Touring 50 exhibition! Isabella's photo, titled Dinner Party, shows her dog licking its lips, ready for a picnic, complete with a napkin tucked into its collar! The photo was one of 660 selected to be displayed at The Newington Armory Gallery in Sydney last month, and will now become part of The Children's Hospital at Westmead's permanent art collection. It will also be one of only 50 artworks to be displayed as part of an exhibition at the Art Gallery of NSW and selected regional galleries. Isabella, who studies photography as an elective through the Dubbo School of Distance Education, travelled to Sydney with her family during the holidays to view the exhibition and said she was thrilled and amazed to discover her photo had been selected for the Touring 50. Congratulations Isabella on your cracking photo – can't wait to see where your talent takes you!

RAILENE DOHERTY

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo—Minister for Agriculture, and Minister for Western New South Wales)—I recognise Railene Doherty, who has recently departed as manager of the Mudgee PCYC after 18 years at the helm.

In that time, Railene has overseen a massive shift at club, and she played a pivotal role in securing some major funding to deliver some key projects at the club, including: A new kitchen, A wall between the pool and the gym, and secure entry enabling 24-hour access to the gym facilities – a huge win for local shift workers, \$178,000 through the NSW Government's Stronger Country Communities Funding to completely replace the basketball court floor and install retractable hoops and backboard. Railene is now taking a well-earned break, but she's not going far – she hopes to continue to lead her regular fitness classes. Well done Railene, and I wish you all the best in whatever you choose to do next. I also wish new manager Brianna McNabb the best of luck in your new role – can't see how you put your own stamp on this wonderful community facility in Mudgee!

JERRABOMBERRA PUBLIC SCHOOL NETBALLERS SHINE

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro)—I wish to congratulate the Jerrabomberra Public School netball team for its achievements on the court this year. This team was the only team in the State of NSW to finish in the top four in both the Primary School Sports Association Knockout and the Netball NSW Schools Cup. Two weeks ago, this team travelled to Sydney where it was the only public school to make the Netball NSW Schools Cup. Then last week, in Griffith against Griffith East Public School in an extremely close match that changed leaders several times, went down by only two goals at full-time, finishing in third spot in the PSSA knockout. The girls played with great skill and sportsmanship and represented their school beautifully. A huge thanks goes to the parents who have helped along the way with transporting the team all around the state. Congratulations to JPS teacher, Mrs Anne McGilvray, who coached the girls and brought them together as a team. But most importantly, a huge round of applause for the players: Ava Sampson, Lucy McAlpine, Emma Giltrap, Kailani Buckmaster, Ellie Jahne, Billie Campese, Avarie Welfare, Maggie Coy and Ashleigh Welsh.

RACHEL SCATTERGOOD IS 2022 YOUNG WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro)—I recognise Miss Rachel Scattergood. Rachel was named the 2022 Queanbeyan Show Young Woman of the Year among a field of remarkable Monaro women. Rachel graduated from Queanbeyan High School in 2021 and is pursuing her passion for the rural way of life, undertaking a Bachelor of Agricultural Science with Charles Sturt University. Rachel understands the importance of our county's rich agricultural heritage and the need for young people, and particularly women to enter this crucial field of work. Rachel's desire to learn and pass knowledge is evident in her life goal to become a teacher of agricultural studies, allowing other to learn that there is more to where our food comes from than just popping into the local Coles or Woolworths. Rachel isn't scared to tackle the tasks normally often more associated with blokes. She is driven, hardworking, and dedicated to her passions. Rachel epitomises what it is to be a rural woman in modern

NSW - robust, resilient and ready to take on the world. I wish Rachel all the best when she represents Queanbeyan at the upcoming Zone Final.

LOCAL KID'S DREAM BROUGHT TO LIFE

Mrs NICHOLE OVERALL (Monaro)—An amazing mural has been painted on the Moore Park skate bowl in Queanbeyan. The young boy in the mural was based on Queanbeyan kid turned pro skater, Jack Fardell. Queanbeyan born and bred, 30-year-old Jack started skating at age six. The Californian-based, former Queanbeyan South Public School student says his favourite skating haunts included the steps in front of the Queanbeyan City Council Chambers and the Woolworths car park. A talented and influential kid, Jack competed in the extreme sports event The X-Games at age 11. By 16 he was being paid to appear at skate events across the country. This Queanbeyan skater kid's dream came to life when he left Karabar High School after Year 10 to skate full time. The mural project came to fruition thanks to a \$41,450 contribution by this government through the NSW Department of Communities and Justice Youth Opportunities Program. Lead artist on the mural was Mike Shankster, whose hyper realistic artwork has appeared on buildings all over Australia. The mural was worked on by local high school students, with Mike teaching them the skills and foundations of creating an intricate and comprehensive art project.

CARRIE DEANE

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—On behalf of the Sydney electorate, I wish to thank Carrie Deane for her leadership, commitment and service to vulnerable people in our community for the past fourteen years, most recently as Canice's Kitchen Community Manager. Under Carrie's leadership Canice's Kitchen has gone from strength to strength. Once a humble soup kitchen, today Canice's Kitchen is a thriving community hub that offers visitors a place of safety and connection in an environment where everyone is welcome. People can enjoy a meal and get help for legal concerns, employment, health and counselling. Many constituents have told me Canice's Kitchen is like home to them and I regularly refer people to the service. Carrie's leadership has been critical during a time when the cost of living has soared and the number of people with complex health and welfare needs has increased. The Canice's Kitchen response to the Covid-19 pandemic was swift and the service adapted to maintain support for vulnerable people. As Member for Sydney, I have valued Carrie's insight, ethic and dedication. I commend her four years as Community Manager for Canice's Kitchen and her work creating a safe, inclusive community.

RONNI KAHN

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—On behalf of the Sydney electorate, I wish to put on record the outstanding contribution of Ronni Kahn AO, activist, advocate and social entrepreneur. Ronni is the founder and CEO of OzHarvest, the food rescue charity that is responsible for delivering over 210 million meals since its establishment in 2004. OzHarvest currently delivers over one million meals a month to over 400 charities. OzHarvest collects quality surplus food from a network of donors and gives them to people in need, reducing both hunger and food waste. Ronni expanded this work to include OzHarvest Market, the world's first free supermarket. Ronni is a spokesperson and a keynote speaker on food waste, inspiring and educating people on sustainability and innovation all over the world. For her service to the community, Ronni has been awarded an Officer of the Order of Australia and was recently given the Key to the City of Sydney. I thank Ronni for her enormous commitment to fighting food waste and hunger. She has contributed much to Sydney, to our environment and to vulnerable members of the community.

KEIRAN KEVANS

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)—Today I bring to the attention of the House Keiran Kevans who is retiring as Coordinator of the Glebe Youth Service after 15 years of dedicated work supporting young people to reach their full potential. Keiran has been instrumental to the ongoing success of the Service as a space for young people to live, play and work. Keiran approaches every aspect of his work with care and vision – from making the Service space sustainable and inspiring, to supporting his team to bring out the best in them and the young people they work with. The passion he brings to his work every day has shaped the responsive and grounded work of the Service, especially in the face of COVID over the last few years. Very few people have contributed as much to our community in Glebe so it has been my honour to work with Keiran. I extend my deep gratitude to him for his commitment and dedication to serving the community. Thank you for everything Keiran.

WESTERN HARBOUR TUNNEL ACTION GROUP

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)—Today I bring to the attention of the House the work of the Western Harbour Tunnel Action Group, a collective of volunteers who help inform and drive the community response to the impacts of the Western Harbour Tunnel on the Balmain electorate. Through their education and advocacy efforts, the Action Group has helped residents better understand the proposed tunnelling plans and empowered

them to have their say on the project. I particularly want to acknowledge Convenor Bob Kelly, Secretary John Symonds and technical adviser Bill Ryall for their dedication to this important issue impacting our electorate. It's grassroots initiatives like these that deliver better outcomes for our environment and community.

VICTOR GEORGE PINKERTON

Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain)—Today I bring to the attention of the House Victor George Pinkerton, a cherished member of the local community who dedicated his life to the service of others. Victor was actively involved in the community, achieving The Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award and a Bronze Medal in Life Saving, following in his father's footsteps as a member of the Bondi Life Saving Surf Club and involving himself in the Club's mass rescue operation following freak waves at Bondi Beach on Black Sunday in 1938. Following Cyclone Tracey in 1974, Victor spent 18 months working in Darwin to help restore power to homes and buildings. He worked on several important projects, including the refurbishment of the QVB and the Bondi Outfalls Project. He had wide-ranging involvement in advocacy and volunteering, including through feeding homeless people living in local Wentworth Park. Throughout his life, Victor maintained a commitment to his father's mantra - 'treat others the way you'd like to be treated'. The enduring impact of this commitment is felt in the many lives and communities Victor touched and I extend my condolences on his passing to his sister Georgette and all those who loved him.

DAPTO ROTARY CLUB

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I congratulate the Rotary Club of Dapto, and thank their President, Gayle Malcolm, for the excellent work that Rotary does for the people of the Shellharbour Electorate and the greater Dapto area. Dapto Rotary members are out in the community every day, and whether it is helping to end Polio, raising money for charity, or cleaning up rubbish around Lake Illawarra, Rotary members are always on hand to lend a hand. The Dapto community would not be the same without Rotary and I thank the club executives and every member for their service to our community.

WOLLI CREEK PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale)—I recognise the Wolli Creek Preservation Society for their long history of outstanding work protecting the precious natural environment of Wolli Creek, which forms the northern boundary of my electorate. First formed in 1983, the Society has lobbied and campaigned for nearly 40 years for the protection of the largely untouched, remnant native vegetation that lines the Wolli Creek corridor and, where it has been degraded, for it to be restored to its former glory. Led by their President, Mr Peter Stevens, they have raised awareness of the need to preserve this bushland for future generations, fought to protect it from inappropriate development, worked with schools to educate future generations, and lobbied to improve the quality of the waters that run through it. Above all they have worked for the transfer of still-missing blocks of land into the Wolli Creek Regional Park, so that the entire riparian zone may be coherently managed. I commend the Wolli Creek Preservation Society for their decades of tireless work, and I look forward to working with them and seeing their hopes for the Wolli Creek Regional Park come to fruition.

6 & OUT CAFÉ

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega)—I would like to congratulate Bodalla locals and co-owners of the new 6 & Out Café, Ms Monique Wicks and Mr Chris Spooner for their new venture which is bringing a fresh and creative new dining experience to the people of Bodalla and surrounds. Many may recognise the part heritage listed building on the highway which used to be the home of the much-loved Malibu Mex. Now, the beautiful dining space, including an undercover dog-friendly courtyard, is serving up a menu focussing on the prime-quality food sourced right here on the South Coast which is in turn supporting our local producers. The restaurant's name is partially a cricket reference, but also a play on the dinner menu which is offered three nights a week. It has six dishes that are available for a week before they disappear in keeping with Mr Spooner's ethos of fresh, creative, and interesting food. It's fantastic to see a new local business taking steps to promote and bolster other local businesses in the area.

I wish Ms Wicks, Mr Spooner and Maître d' Mr Jesse Masters all the best in their new venture, and I look forward to dining there soon.

MS KEZIE APPS

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega)—On behalf of the Bega electorate, I'd like to recognise Ms Kezie Apps who is currently representing Australia alongside her teammates in the Jillaroos Squad at the 2022 Women's Rugby League World Cup. Not just picked for the team, Kezie was as named co-captain of the Australian women's national rugby league team which has seen the Jillaroos into the grand final. After a spectacular run of matches Kezie will don the jersey in the final to be played this Sunday against the New Zealand Black Ferns. Born and bred in Bega, Kezie played her junior rugby league for the Bega Roosters before taking the league world by storm

where she plays as a second-row for the St George Illawarra Dragons in the NRL Women's Premiership and the Wests Tigers in the NSWRL Women's Premiership. Kezie was also named the inaugural Dally M Women's Medallist in 2016 as well as being a Dragons Community officer here on the far south coast. Congratulations Kezie on your amazing career so far and I'll be watching come Sunday. Up the Jillaroos!

SUGAR BOWL CAFÉ KYOGLE

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I pay tribute to the incredible Shelly Snadden who yesterday announced she is closing her much-loved eatery the Sugarbowl café in Kyogle. The Sugarbowl was so much more than a café. It was a community hub that brought people from across Kyogle and villages together. The café promoted itself as a business who delivered 'delicious and honest food' and it delivered, always providing good food that was comforting and tasted great. So many groups and events in Kyogle centred around the Sugarbowl from the Giant Pumpkin Festival to the Writers Festival through to being the go-to place to grab a coffee on the way to the farmers market. Shelly has also had to deal with the tragic loss of her beloved son Lachlan last year, and I feel deeply for her. As a regular customer I will miss the Sugarbowl dearly. The large outdoor garden was a great place and you could sit there for hours. Being family and animal friendly, there were always dogs to pat and fun to be had. I wish Shelley, her family and all the staff all the best.

NORTHERN RIVERS WILDLIFE HOSPITAL FUNDRAISER

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I congratulate everyone involved in organising the Build from the Heart fundraiser for the Northern Rivers Wildlife Hospital held at the Metropole Hotel Lismore on November 3. The Northern Rivers Wildlife Hospital is such a worthy cause and I have been privileged to visit coordinator Ilke Nelson and the team recently. Currently, many injured animals (with certain exceptions) are taken to the Currumbin Wildlife Hospital, which can be a 2-hour drive that heavily impacts already stressed and sick animals. The Northern Rivers Wildlife Hospital will mean these animals can get lifesaving care locally. Guest speaker ecologist Steve Phillips gave an address stressing the importance of the hospital. Live music was provided by local singer Katzia, raffle prizes were a free vet consultation with Vitality Vetcare and artworks by Vikki Liddel and IzWoz. I thank these wonderful locals and businesses for donating their work, talent and services to this fantastic cause. I also wish to thank Nick and Felicity Lake and the Metropole Hotel who once again have provided a community event where people can gather, talk ideas and do something good for our community. The fundraiser raised \$2,600.

LISMORE SALVATION ARMY BRING THE WIGGLES TO TOWN

Ms JANELLE SAFFIN (Lismore)—I acknowledge and thank Phil and Donna Sutcliffe and the entire team at the Lismore Salvation Army for bringing The Wiggles to Lismore for 3 free special concerts to be held this Friday at the Goonellabah Sports and Aquatic Centre [GSAC]. This is so uplifting for the children and families of Lismore after our catastrophic flooding events of this year. Our kids in particular did it incredibly tough and this will lift so many local spirits. The concerts sold out like hot cakes. More shows have been added showing the demand. Blue Wiggle, Anthony Field said, "We were all devastated to see the challenges everyone in Lismore has been experiencing due to the recent flooding and wanted to do something to help lift people's spirits. We're proud to partner with the Salvos to bring some fun and entertainment back to the Northern Rivers, and we can't wait to see everyone soon." I also wish to thank Lismore City Council for lending GSAC for free providing hard to find space for events in Lismore. I can't wait to hear all about it from local families.

CWA CENTENARY

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—On Tuesday 15 November 2022, I had the absolute pleasure of joining my parliamentary colleagues, members of the Country Women's Association of NSW and community members to celebrate the CWA's centenary. One hundred years ago, in April 1922, the CWA of NSW was formed. As a member of the Maitland Branch of the CWA, I am proud to join with my sisters across Maitland, the rest of the state, and indeed our nation, to celebrate such a milestone. I was happy to sponsor Janet Jacombs, Judith Hicks, Deb Schaefer, Barbara and Earl Heckman and Amorelle Dempster representing Maitland's CWA branches including Maitland CWA, Maitland City Evening, Morpeth and East Maitland. It was also great to catch up with other local Maitland CWA members Sarah Lukeman and Sharon Buck. It was wonderful to see such a strong Maitland contingent travel to Parliament House for the momentous occasion to celebrate the CWA's legacy of positively contributing to local and regional communities for over a century. Happy Birthday CWA 100 years. Thank you for being the backbone of regional Australia, creating lifelong friendships, giving women strong support networks and being a creative and strong voice in our local communities.

GROUP TRAINING AWARD WINNER – EMILY FLAVEL

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—For Emily Flavel the accolades just keep coming. A Hunter Valley Training Company [HVTC] trainee who completed her Cert II in Fire Protection and Testing earlier this

year with Host Employer, United Safety & Survivability Corporation Australia was named HVTC Trainee of the Month for January 2022 and then progressed to this year's HVTC Excellence Awards. At the 2022 NSW & ACT Group Training Award Ceremony held in Sydney last month Emily added another award to her collection with being named the Woman in a non-traditional trade winner. The awards continue to highlight the importance of apprentices and trainees in the workforce and applaud the efforts of the host employers who create the opportunities for many young people to launch their careers. To be acknowledged for all her hard work and dedication at a state level demonstrates Emily's aptitude for applying herself and doing her very best. I wish Emily all the best with her future endeavours and careers in her chosen trade.

NSW MINING INDUSTRY & SUPPLIERS AWARDS DINNER

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland)—I was very pleased to attend the NSW Mining Industry and Suppliers Award Dinner at Parliament House recently. The ceremony, returning after a COVID-enforced hiatus in 2021, recognised the people and the businesses achieving great things as part of a responsible mining industry in NSW. With so many outstanding entrants, I am sure the judges were hard-pressed to select the winners.

Congratulations to the following category award winners; Small Business of the Year - SafeGauge, Supplier of the Year – Nautitech Mining Systems, Mining Operation of the Year – United Wambo Joint Venture, Young Achiever – Tristah Allen, Outstanding Contribution to NSW Mining – Fiona Robertson. Thank you to the many industry-leading businesses for partnering with the NSW Minerals Council to present the 2022 NSW Mining Industry & Suppliers Awards which recognises industry excellence and important role mining plays in the NSW economy.

REMEMBRANCE DAY 2022

Mr DOMINIC PERROTTET (Epping—Premier)—On Remembrance Day, Australia stops to remember the sacrifice of all our brave soldiers and veterans in war and to acknowledge the freedoms for which they fought. The Epping RSL Sub-branch held their service as they have done every year for over 100 years at Boronia Park Epping. I want to recognise and pay tribute to the RSL Sub Branch Committee's continuous commitment to organising Anzac Day and Remembrance Day Services and supporting veterans in our community. I want to thank John Curdie OAM, President of the Epping RSL Sub Branch, alongside Brian Swan and others for their service to our country and the Epping Community at large. It was also encouraging that students from schools throughout the Epping electorate - the next generation of Australians, paid tribute to the generations past who fought and died so that they might live in a country blessed with liberty, democracy and the rule of law. It is fitting that we reflect upon what our freedoms cost and remember those who paid the ultimate price especially on this day, Remembrance Day. Lest we forget.

MONA VALE HOSPITAL STAFF

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport)—I thank the superhuman staff at Mona Vale Hospital for your care of our community. Since 1964, Mona Vale Hospital has provided exceptional healthcare to the Pittwater district. The hospital provides more than 30 health and clinical services – covering inpatient care, community health, urgent care, and diagnostics. The introduction of new buildings across the hospital campus in recent years has helped support the provision of healthcare as part of a closely integrated modern hospital network, which includes Mona Vale Hospital, Northern Beaches Hospital, and Royal North Shore Hospital. Thank you to General Managers past and present – including Frank Bazik, Jacqui Edgley, Jenny McConnell, and Tayia Yeates – for your stewardship of the hospital's modernisation. To the 400 staff at Mona Vale Hospital – nurses, doctors, physios, cleaners, pathologists, radiographers, allied health, administrative, maintenance, counsellors, cooks, specialists – thank you to every one of you. To the COVID-19 testing and vaccination staff that surged magnificently during the Pandemic – thank you.

And to the Auxiliary volunteers and palliative care volunteers – thank you. Many staff and volunteers at Mona Vale Hospital have served our community for decades – a huge thank you on behalf of our whole community.

PITTWATER EMERGENCY SERVICES

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport)—I would like to convey my admiration and appreciation for Pittwater's emergency services personnel. Under the excellent leadership of Superintendent Pat Sharkey, the NSW Police Northern Beaches Local Area Command does an incredible job in serving and protecting our community. Thank you to all the men and women in blue for your invaluable contribution. To our local Fire and Rescue NSW professionals who are ever-vigilant, exceptionally skilled and always a welcome sight during emergencies. To our ambulance paramedics who provide excellent care and compassion in high pressure situations. There are simply not enough

adjectives to describe your contribution to our community. And to our volunteer emergency services workers – surf lifesavers, RFS, SES, Marine Rescue – thank you for contributing your time and expertise to support others. Thank you everyone who plays a role during emergencies and times of distress in Pittwater. Our community is forever grateful.

PITTWATER TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

Mr ROB STOKES (Pittwater—Minister for Infrastructure, Minister for Cities, and Minister for Active Transport)—I acknowledge Pittwater's incredible teachers and school principals for your vital role in educating our local students. Pittwater is blessed with wonderful primary schools, comprehensive high schools, kindergartens and early childhood centres – and this frankly comes down to the quality and passion of our dedicated teachers, principals, and support staff. Your guidance and tutelage is helping to shape and prepare Pittwater's children and young people to take their rightful place as future custodians of our civil society. The Pittwater network of schools – under the exceptional leadership of Director Andrew Stevenson – works incredibly hard to ensure a well-rounded curriculum-based education, accentuated by extra-curricular opportunities and with student wellbeing central to the education experience. The ability of our local school teachers to adapt to the challenging phases of the COVID-19 Pandemic and ensure a continuity in the delivery of education – at short notice and over many weeks and months – is something powerful and of which we may not yet fully appreciate the long-term importance. Thank you to everyone involved in our local school communities for your dedication and contribution to Pittwater.

COWRA WOMEN'S BOWLS

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—I wish the best of luck to Cowra Women's Bowls number 2 pennant team who are playing at the State Play-offs this Friday.

The team comprises of Mrs Robin Oliver, Mrs Sharon Bohanna, Mrs Dawn Dye, Mrs Joan Bailey, Mrs Eileen Brown, Mrs Sharon Hubber, Mrs Judith Day, Mrs Marlene Nicholls, Mrs Sonia Morgan and reserve player Mrs Diane Skinner. Cowra's Team Manager Mrs Robin Oliver says you get to meet a lot of people as part of the fun and friendly competition. The 2022/23 Women's State Pennant Finals are being held from Friday 18th to Sunday 20th November, with the ladies from Cowra competing in Division 2 at the Taren Point Bowling Club. This weekend we also have teams from Gundagai and Young in my electorate involved, with Gundagai competing in Division 3 at Bomaderry Bowling Club and Young competing in Division 4 at Valentine and Marks Point Bowling Clubs. I wish all the very best to all involved for a great weekend where no doubt the seat of small communities will be very proudly represented!

TREELINE LURLINE

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains)—I recently attended the official launch of Artists for Treeline Lurline – the vision of a tree-lined boulevard from Katoomba Street to Echo Point! Lowell Tarling – legendary Blue Mountains man says: There has recently been a resurgence of projects and ideas initiated by local communities. Necessity – the mother of invention - has certainly exacerbated the need for local communities to group themselves into action. The gathering included a motivated committee comprising of arborists, landscape architects, a lawyer, a representative of the National Trust, businesspeople, creatives and enthusiasts who have given of their time and resources - and won multi-million-dollar funding to beautify a road called Lurline Street, leading to the one of the most popular tourist attraction in NSW - Echo Point.

This community group successfully applied for funding to create a boulevard of trees, gardens, seating, local heritage plaques and infrastructure for utilities. This initiative came from People-Power - from artists, poets and musicians. Some, like the late Peter Kingston (Art Gallery of NSW) and musician Mic Conway (Captain Matchbox Whoopee Band), have added their weighty creative input to the project.

In defiance of cumbersome bureaucratic thought, it flies directly into the subconscious and wins hearts and minds.

ABBEY FROM ST PATRICKS COLLEGE

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—Last week I attended the Remembrance Day Service at Macarthur Park in Camden. A Remembrance Day Service grows in importance each and every year. As time progresses, we must not become complacent in expressing our deepest gratitude for the great sacrifices made by brave men and women. It is important that the generations that follow continue to understand the grave importance the 11th day of the 11th month carries. I am comforted in seeing many local primary and high schools attend the Service, especially when those bright students share the solemn Remembrance of those fallen heroes. Abbey from

St Patricks College spoke a wonderful and insightful speech. She spoke of the story of her great-great-uncle in World War II. I commend Abbey on her tremendous speaking ability and thank her for sharing her family's story.

ALLE LLOYD - SENIORS' STORIES AUTHOR

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—I would like to congratulate Alle Lloyd for having her story published in Seniors Stories volume 8. The volume contains the top 100 stories written by Seniors. This year's theme is Celebrating Diversity which includes 12 stories appearing in 11 different languages. The stories are an important avenue in building lasting connections between the elderly and young. Her story titled 'A Dinner Conversation about Beelzebub at the Beach' is rich in insightful thoughts. The experience of Australia growing in its rich culture and diversity captured by Alle in her story articulates the benefit and joy that flows from diversity. I commend Alle for her great writing and story. I thank Alle for sharing her story and providing wise and timeless lessons.

RE-DISCOVERING CAMDEN ART EXHIBITION

Mr PETER SIDGREAVES (Camden)—I had the pleasure of attending the Re-Discovering Camden Art Exhibition at the Camden Civic Centre. It is always refreshing to see the great local talent that thrives in Camden. Such events are a great opportunity for the community to come together and support local talent and passion. There were 50 artists aged between 5 and 86 which demonstrates the capability of art and culture to bring people together from all different walks of life. Congratulations to the following prize winners in the Open Category. Beanie Panya - first place for their piece - 'Octagonal.' Jane Wray second place for their piece - 'Wire on Wire.' Kym Slater third place for their piece - 'Little Sandy.' Congratulations to the following prize winners in the Junior Category. Camden Public School, Class 3-4L - first place for their piece - 'Progress... Moving Forward.' Jessica Beck second place for their piece - 'Enzo Italian Restaurant.' Madeleine Polistena for third place for their piece - 'Jasmine.' I thank Macarthur Art Group, great work done by President Jo Wong and Cliff Reece in curating such a fantastic exhibition.

LEANNE OAKLEY

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I congratulate Leanne Oakley of Como on winning the Swim Australia Teacher of Babies and Toddlers of the Year award. Swim Coaches & Teachers Australia is the peak body for swimming coaches, teachers, and swim schools. The organisation's awards bring together swim coaches and teachers from across Australia to recognise the very best in their field. Leanne is truly deserving of this recognition as she is extremely passionate about teaching children the fundamentals of swimming and importance of water safety. Although her career commenced as a swimming instructor, Leanne has continued to excel in her profession through the management of numerous swim schools. Leanne also established the leading swimming program at Pymble Ladies College which has impressively been ranked number 1 in Sydney and number 4 in Australia, and has coached countless swimmers from babies and children, to those who have successfully competed at State and National levels. I commend Leanne Oakley on this incredible achievement and extend my best wishes as she continues to help babies and toddlers develop skills to keep them safe around water this summer.

2022 CLUBS NSW PERFECT PLATE AWARD

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I acknowledge Sharks at Kareela's Cove Bar and Grill for winning the 2022 Clubs NSW Perfect Plate Award for the Southern Metropolitan area. The restaurant has impressively won the regional title for the second year in a row. To determine this award, ambassadors and celebrity chefs travelled across NSW and tasted what more than 160 club eateries from 142 clubs had to offer. On 21 July, Cove Bar and Grill were announced as the winners for their delicious Gochujang Soft Shell Crab dish. Served daily on their A-La Carte Menu, the flavoursome dish is created with crispy soft-shell crab, fresh bok choy, jasmine rice, and a deeply savoury chilli paste. Of course this success would not have been possible without the hardworking team behind Cove Bar and Grill. I particularly acknowledge Restaurant Manager Gina Louloudakis, Head Chef Anita Lisson, Sharks CEO Dino Mezzatesta and Sharks at Kareela General Manager Justin Coulton for their incredible efforts in making this win possible. I congratulate the team at the Cove Bar and Grill restaurant in Sharks at Kareela for receiving this incredible recognition and encourage our community to visit the club to try this perfect plate.

HELENA RISTEVSKI

Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)—I congratulate Helena Ristevski of Sylvania Waters on being crowned Miss Teen Universal International 2022-2023. The Miss Teen Universal International Competition was held in Sydney and brought together young women from across the world to compete for the coveted title. Helena is a remarkable young lady who was impressively crowned in just her third pageant and intends on using her platform to discuss topics important to her including the environment, youth suicide and teen mental health. In addition to her pageantry, Helena gives back to the community by supporting charities including Kookaburra Kids, Star Kids,

Beyond Blue, and raises money for cancer research through her support of Tour De Cure. I also recognise Helena's parents, Pida and Elizabeth Ristevski for their efforts in supporting her as she pursues her passion for pageantry and for instilling in her a desire to contribute to the community. I congratulate Helena for her success in being named Miss Teen Universal International 2022-2023 and wish her every success for the future.

DAVID YASSA AND THE BARONE FAMILY – THANK YOU

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—In one of my last Community Recognition Notices as the Member for Fairfield I would like to take the opportunity to extend my sincerest admiration and appreciation to Mr David Yassa and the Barone family from Barone Pharmacy for their support and friendship over my tenure. David and the Barone family are to be commended for their ongoing kindness and generosity towards those in need in our community. David has popped into the electorate office on many occasions offering supplies for those in need, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, the bushfires and in Christmas appeals. He is always among the first to step up and dig deep in support of our community through the good times and the bad. The Barone family has been providing the Fairfield locals all their pharmaceutical needs for over 50 years and throughout this time have given back to the community in so many ways. I thank David and the Barone family for their friendship and support and wish them the very best of luck in the future.

DR NABIL MATTI – THANK YOU

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr Nabil Matti from Smiles Unlimited for his continued support and friendship throughout my time as the Member for Fairfield. Dr Nabil's passion for maintaining oral health as a means to maintaining a healthy body is a philosophy he has passed on to his team at Smiles Unlimited in Fairfield. As Dr Nabil says "A healthy mouth equals a healthy body" and he has dedicated his time to educating our local community about the importance of having regular check-ups to improve their overall health outcomes. This has been a challenge as in the past, the focus for Fairfield residents in their homeland was on survival, with oral hygiene taking a back seat. However, Dr Nabil and his team have turned this around with their caring and welcoming approach, and we are seeing more and more people visiting Dr Nabil to maintain their oral health. I thank Dr Nabil for his unwavering friendship and loyalty and I wish him and his team all the very best for the future.

PHIL AND VICKI WEBSTER – THANK YOU

Mr GUY ZANGARI (Fairfield)—In my last Community Recognition Notice as the Member for Fairfield, I would like to thank my lifelong friends Mr Phil Webster and Ms Vicki Webster for their continued friendship and support throughout my time in office. Phil and Vicki have been the lifeblood of the Canley Vale community through the establishment of Richards on the Park, formerly the Kookaburra Hotel. The Webster family have been great contributors, always ready to give back to the local community through charitable works and other local programmes. I thank them for the generous support they have provided to the community over the many years they have been servicing the area. Through Richards on the Park, Phil and Vicki have also provided work opportunities for local residents for many years, and I thank them for assisting with this very real problem in our local area. Phil and Vicki are not just locals. To me they have been true friends and I thank them for a warm friendship that has been a part of mine and my family's life for many years and hopefully many more years to come.

WEAVE COMMUNITY HUB

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney)—On behalf of the Sydney Electorate, I congratulate Weave Community Hub in Woolloomooloo for their commitment and enthusiasm for supporting young people and their families in Woolloomooloo, Kings Cross and Darlinghurst. In 2022 Weave Community Hub focussed their service on providing casework support for young people aged 12 to 24 and families with children under 12 years. The space has been transformed into a welcoming, engaging environment where young people can safely socialise and participate in a range of fun activities under the guidance of the Weave staff. I have been impressed by the range of events, creative projects and programs Weave have offered this year. Under the guidance of Program Manager Kat Berdoukas, the amazing team at Weave have worked to develop connections with local young people through which targeted early intervention support is made possible. Kids are encouraged to learn new skills and their diverse interests are fostered through tailored and ever-evolving programs. My constituents have told me that Weave is a champion for the young people of the area. I am proud to have Weave Community Hub in my electorate and commend their work to support and inspire our local youth.

WOODWARD CASTLE HILL ACTION SPORT CENTRE

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)—I would like to take this opportunity to mention that Woodward has commenced construction of an Action Sport Centre within my Electorate of Castle Hill. Thanks to a \$1.8 million investment from the NSW Government's Greater Cities Fund, the facility will include spaces for BMX,

skateboarding, snowboarding, skiing, and rock climbing — from the junior grades right through to the professional level. The facility will allow for training and competition, and also has extensive viewing areas for people who wish to watch these exciting, innovative sports. Woodward should be congratulated for choosing the Northwest Growth Area and The Hills for their facility, acknowledging that this area has particular potential for the growth of these sports. This is the first facility of its kind in Australia, and it is thought that, like in America, they will soon start to pop up all over the country.

BLUE PLAQUE FOR PATRICK WHITE

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)—On Level 8 in this Parliament, Brett Whiteley's tremendous portrait of Patrick White surveys the Ministerial Offices of this State. Despite being born in England, Patrick White would soon become an immense figure in Australia's literary scene, with his best and most celebrated novels being set in New South Wales. Patrick White shines as a rare Australian author whose works have been accepted by the greater world, having won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1973, the only Australian to have been awarded this honour. White lived in the then rural Castle Hill from 1948-63, and many of his great novels, including *The Tree of Man*, *Voss*, and *Riders in the Chariot* were influenced by these august surrounds. White's novels reveal something of the redness and the harshness of this Country and this State but have an immensely human element that shows how those who are able, can thrive in this land. It was recently my greatest pleasure to announce that the NSW Government has provided a Blue Plaque to rest on this beautiful house, and I hope it keeps this esteemed author in the consciousness of the Australia he so loved.

THE 57TH PARLIAMENT

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill)—I would like to take this opportunity to recognise and thank all those people in the Castle Hill Electorate who have contacted me this Parliamentary term. When I first entered Parliament, a complete dearth of public transport in The Hills was the primary issue faced by my constituents. In this term of Parliament I was delighted to finally open the North West Rail Link, which is now a very well-utilised service. Many constituents also contacted me regarding local roads, and the completed upgrade of Showground Road is another achievement of this term. Further, it was thanks to members of my community contacting me that I learnt of issues regarding Asbestos in Castle Hill High School and of the scourge of embedded network rorts across the State, which I was able to address this term. I would finally thank all the taxi plate owners who contacted me regarding their loss of value thanks to the introduction of rideshare, and I am glad the Government were able to deliver (mostly) fair compensation. Finally, I would like to thank all my constituents in Castle Hill and look forward to representing 75 per cent of them next term as the Member for Kellyville.

UNIFICATION RUSSIAN NEWSPAPER

Ms TANIA MIHAILUK (Bankstown)—The Unification Russian newspaper is the oldest Russian newspaper in Australia and plays an important role in supporting the promotion of Russian language, culture and values to the long standing Australian-Russian community and newly arrived immigrants from Russia. The newspaper has become a staple in Russian Australian households since it was first published in 1950. The newspaper was staunchly anti-communist in its editorial content from between 1960-1992, while in more recent times the newspaper not only reports on current affairs, but also information about the life of Russian Australians – by promoting Russian balls, literary meetings and festivals, children's holidays, upcoming concerts of Russian performers and Russian music. Significantly, the newspaper regularly reports on the services and activities of Russian Orthodox Parishes throughout Australia. The newspaper also celebrates the academic, business and sporting achievements of the Australian-Russian diaspora. I acknowledge the important role of the Unification newspaper in uniting the Australian-Russian community and note that the newspaper is in great hands under the leadership of Chief Editor Vladimir Kouzmin.

NARRANDERA CLONTARF

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra—Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience, and Minister for Flood Recovery)—I wish to acknowledge the tremendous efforts of the Narrandera Clontarf and the positive impacts the program has on the students and the local community. The Narrandera Clontarf is run by director, Neville Bamblett and operations employee, Garry Ingram. The program currently has 48 students enrolled with 3 of these students graduating from year 12 this year. It is projected the Clontarf will have 54 students come the new year. I was extremely fortunate recently to catch up with Neville, Garry and a few Clontarf students at the Shack to hear firsthand how the program is improving their education, life skills and self-esteem. It was incredible to hear that many of the students are gaining jobs, apprenticeships or hoping to graduate at the end of year 12. Clontarf academies are welcoming, inclusive, and designed to foster positive learning and personal growth for the young Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander men in the programme. The academy acts as a home-base for Clontarf students before and after school, at recess and lunch, and during designated academy time. Thank you once again to the boys for hosting me. I cannot wait for our next catch up.

TONY SERGI

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I would like to acknowledge Tony 'Tank' Sergi who is well respected throughout the Griffith area for his charity work and advocacy for a range of community groups, over a long period of time. One of the many examples of Tony's efforts was in 2020 when he came up with the idea of providing much needed water for the pastoralists and residents of Far West NSW and then canvassing local farmers for donations. The donation of 28 megalitres of water was distributed to pastoralists and isolated residents of the Unincorporated Area of Far West NSW and Central Darling Shire, that had no water at that time. Tony has been a horticultural farmer for over 45 years in the MIA growing and exporting prunes, grapes, peaches and vegetables. Tony also represented his fellow farmers for 16 years as a Murrumbidgee Irrigation Shareholder-elected Director retiring from the Board in November 2021 and revelled in representing the rights of all farmers from large area to smaller area.

MOSMAN ROWERS HOSTS FUNDRAISER FOR THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I recognise Mosman Rowers, a local and much-loved community club in North Shore that hosted a Fundraising Dinner event last night for the people of Ukraine. The evening aimed to spread awareness, show solidarity in support of Ukraine, which is still being devastated by war, and raise vital funding to help support the suffering Ukrainian community. The event featured distinguished guest speakers and local artists, including UNICEF Australia Representatives, Ukrainian Artist Leon Stejko and Vocalist Julia Shved. Guests enjoyed a three-course Ukrainian-inspired dinner, art, music and conversation. Fifty dollars from each ticket and all funds raised from the evening will go directly to UNICEF. This money will provide families with emergency water, sanitation, and hygiene kits, psychosocial support to those impacted by conflict, supplies to meet the children's basic nutrition and medical needs, and essential education supplies. I thank Mosman Rowers, led by President Kathrina Doran, for hosting this fantastic initiative and our local businesses who sponsored this event. I especially thank my community, who are always ready to give their time and money to support those less fortunate.

CHANGE OF GUARD AT THE SHEPHERD CENTRE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—As Chair of the Parliamentary Friends of Hearing, Health and Wellness, I have worked closely with The Shepherd Centre and other hearing organisations to raise awareness of the importance of hearing health. Hearing affects not only the person with the loss but those with whom they communicate. Hearing loss causes connections with loved ones to suffer, placing strain on relationships. I acknowledge and thank Dr Jim Hungerford, the outgoing CEO of The Shepherd Centre, for his enormous contribution to supporting young people who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families. Jim was at the helm of this not-for-profit organisation for 12 years and has been instrumental in making it a leading specialist service provider in NSW, ACT and Tasmania. I welcome incoming CEO Dr Aleisha Davis, who comes into this new role in January 2023 after almost 20 years with The Shepherd Centre. I know the organisation is in good hands and will continue its success in helping young people with hearing loss develop listening and spoken language, literacy, and social skills, ensuring they achieve their full potential. I wish Jim all the best as he starts on his next journey.

TOONGABBIE PUBLIC SCHOOL

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Seven Hills)—I acknowledge the student leaders from Toongabbie Public School for their terrific leadership and service to their school community. Toongabbie Public School has a fantastic school community that is well known around Toongabbie, Old Toongabbie, Pendle Hill and Winston Hills. I recently had the opportunity to invite the student leaders of Toongabbie Public School for a tour of Parliament House, which was a great opportunity for them to learn about our democracy and history. The students spent time in both chambers and listened to the members speak on important issues that affect our state. I would like to recognise each of the student leaders for their service and achievements, including Daniel Burki, Max Clifton, Xavier Parsons, Max Sinclair, Adithya Anand, Akshayaa Mahes, Ebony Tai, Emily Puckey, Saisha Mehta and Ellie Oldfield. I also recognise and thank the school Principal, Craig Brown, for the terrific work he does in leading such a fantastic school community.

HELEN JARVIS

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)—There is no shortage of brilliant people in Ku-ring-gai. Today I'm pleased to recognise Helen Jarvis of West Pymble, an exemplary person in the community. Helen volunteers as chair of the management committee for Kids Youth Development Service, a non-profit organisation providing free counselling support to young people across Northern Sydney in a way that is needs-based. She has also set up Ripple Learning, a social enterprise providing

customed, interpersonal skills training for workplaces where all profits go to youth mental health services. In light of the impact of recent global events on students, I am grateful to know that people like Helen are working towards better mental health in young people. I thank Helen for supporting our youth and helping them flourish into their best selves.

HORNSBY VILLAGE HUB

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)— Social isolation is a daily reality faced by many older Australians. Fortunately, it doesn't have to be. Thanks to a coalescing of community organisations from the Police Citizens Youth Club to the Women's Shed, the Hornsby Village Hub was launched on 22 March. A community-led initiative, the Hub aims to nurture and support a connected and compassionate community for seniors. A variety of workshops and social activities are available to members, helping them to forge new friendships and improve health and wellbeing. With free membership and an organisation run by and for participants, this is a welcome initiative for the Hornsby-Ku-ring-gai area. While the hub has different venues, some are in my electorate including the PCYC. Thank you to Mala Mehta OAM, Vice Chair of Women's Shed Hornsby Ku-ring-gai, and all local organisations involved in the formation of this wonderful and vital project.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to resolution, at 21:07 until
Tuesday 28 February 2023 at 12:00.**