



New South Wales

Legislative Assembly

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)

**Fifty-Eighth Parliament
First Session**

Wednesday 21 June 2023

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Announcements	1
Legislative Assembly Photographs.....	1
Australia's Biggest Morning Tea	1
Business of the House.....	1
Suspension of Standing and Sessional Orders: Order of Business	1
Documents	1
Liquor and Gaming Data Collection.....	1
Production of Documents: Order Amended	1
Condolences.....	2
Hunter Valley Bus Accident	2
Visitors.....	7
Visitors.....	7
Announcements	7
Bowel Cancer Awareness Month	7
Legislative Assembly Photographs.....	7
Members	8
Member for Drummoyne.....	8
Question Time	8
Public Sector Wages	8
State Budget.....	8
Public Sector Wages	9
School Maintenance.....	10
Regional Health Services.....	11
Regional Apprentice and University Student Travel Card	12
Police Taser Use	13
State Debt.....	13
Bus Industry Taskforce.....	14
Northern Rivers Flood Recovery.....	15
Minister for Finance	16
Health Services	17
Road Tunnel Air Quality	18
Retail Workers	18
Police Taser Use	19
Condolences.....	19
Hunter Valley Bus Accident	19
Bills.....	23
Crimes Legislation Amendment (Assaults on Retail Workers) Bill 2023.....	23
First Reading.....	23
Second Reading Speech.....	23
Parliamentary Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023	24

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Second Reading Speech.....	24
Committees	25
Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics.....	25
Reports	25
Legislative Assembly Select Committee on the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Rental Fairness) Bill 2023.....	26
Reports	26
Bills.....	28
Parliamentary Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023	28
Second Reading Debate.....	28
Third Reading	35
Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023.....	36
Second Reading Speech.....	36
Second Reading Debate.....	37
Third Reading	38
Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2023.....	39
Second Reading Speech.....	39
Second Reading Debate.....	40
Third Reading	40
Community Recognition Statements	40
West's Group Macarthur Sports Awards	40
Joel Small.....	41
Tribute to William "Bill" Archer	41
Upper Hunter Electorate King's Birthday Honours	41
Midnight2Dawn Trek	41
Goulburn District Hockey Association.....	41
Aspire Leadership Network	42
World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day Award Recipients	42
St John Ambulance Granville Combined Division	42
Susai Benjamin	42
Bay to Bay Fun Run	43
Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club	43
Port Stephens Electorate King's Birthday Honours	43
Jim McDonnell and Des Manton.....	43
Tribute to Dr Fred Cunliffe, OAM	43
Northside Radio Fortieth Anniversary.....	44
Ashfield and District Historical Society	44
Coffs Harbour Electorate King's Birthday Honours	44
Koori Netball Tournament.....	44
Lithgow Workies Club	44
Liverpool West Public School	45
Cathy Ruggero	45

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Jordan Independence Day	45
All Abilities Rugby Match.....	45
Aunty Ruth Sims, AM	46
Australia My Country Competition	46
Alex Van Dyke	46
Tour de Rocks.....	46
Central Coast Champagne Harriettes.....	46
Private Members' Statements.....	47
Tribute to Mrs Margaret Duffy.....	47
Australian DIY Families Institute.....	47
Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service.....	48
Bathurst Men's Walk and Talk	49
Western Sydney Diabetes Alliance.....	49
Hudson Pear.....	50
Public Interest Debate.....	51
Children's Voucher Programs	51
Private Members' Statements.....	59
Swansea Channel	59
Child Sexual Abuse	59
Members	60
Inaugural Speeches	60
Inaugural Speeches	65
Private Members' Statements.....	69
Londonderry Electorate	69
Country Women's Association State Conference	70
Western Sydney Community Language Schools	71
Murray-Darling Basin Water Ownership	72
Housing Supply	73
Professor Mary-Louise McLaws	74
Red Bus Hydrogen Fuel Trial.....	74
Bowral and District Hospital	75
Tea Gardens Public School Parliament	76
Hunter New England Health District.....	77
Domestic and Sexual Violence	78
1st Port Macquarie Sea Scouts	79
Western and South-West Sydney Crime	80
Eastwood Koreatown.....	81
Waves Fitness and Aquatic Centre	81
Written Community Recognition Statements	82
Keep Australia Beautiful NSW 2022	82
Macksville View Club	83
Bellingen Memorial Hall Opening Night	83

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Carolyn Townsend, OAM	83
Anne Caterson, OAM	83
Robert Wilson, ESM.....	83
Meals on Wheels Celebrate 60 Years	84
Edna Sharpe	84
Jacinda and Aaron Acheson.....	84
Citizenship Congratulations.....	84
Ann Davies, OAM	85
Peter Stroud, OAM	85
Jamberoo Valley Ratepayers and Residents Association	85
Kiama High School.....	85
Ashton Lenard	85
<i>School of Rock the Musical, Castle Hill High School</i>	86
Castle Hill High School, Sydney West Cross Country.....	86
Cultures of the Hills	86
NSW Police Force State Crime Command Excellence In Policing Award - Detective Inspector Richard Howe	86
NSW Police Force State Crime Command Excellence In Policing Award - Mr Kazi Hoque	87
NSW Police Force State Crime Command Excellence In Policing Award - Detective Sergeant Woods	87
Rebecca Tancevski	87
Smiths Ln Dairy.....	87
Be Connected Young Mentors Program - Warilla High School	87
Hunter Hall Selected for U17 NSW Country Cricket Academy	88
Corowa Conference 130th Anniversary Celebration	88
Hope is "hungary" for More Success at Titles.....	88
MoWaNa.....	88
Appreciation of Newport Surf Lifesaving Club	88
Women's Resilience Centre	89
Nick Bolton.....	89
Dr James Renwick, AM.....	89
Casino Alive for Beef Week.....	89
Zainab Zahr.....	89
Yoke Yee	90
Mariam Bazzi Deeb	90
Steve Gault.....	90
Benjamin Mallin	90
Jim and Gloria Stevenson	91
Hills Football Association - All Abilities Football.....	91
Amy Curran	91
Walter Breceley	91
Philippine Independence Day	91
Eid Ul Adha Exhibition	92

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Vale Les Banton	92
Teigan Butchers (Rainbow Smash) - Amy Large Volunteer Award 2023	92
Ben Ross - Nominee for Inner West Citizen of the Year	92
81st Anniversary of the Defence of Sydney	93
Davidson Rural Fire Brigade AGM.....	93
Killara Rural Fire Brigade AGM.....	93
Ganmain Rallies Behind Twins	93
WNSWLHD Midwife of the Year Finalists	93
350 Games and Life Membership for Toni Mimmo.....	94
Debbie Hunt and Kieron Malone.....	94
Gayle Bowman	94
Ava Gillard	94
Manning River Dragon Boat Club.....	94
Katrina Wirth - Local Woman of the Year Award Nominee	94
Lesley Flannery - Local Woman of the Year Award Nominee	95
Janice King - Nominee for Maitland Local Woman of the Year.....	95
Jane Griffiths - Hay	95
Ken Dachi - Leeton.....	95
Howard Jones - Coomealla	95
Branding Bangladesh Eid	96
The Ponds High School P&C	96
Alannah Dimmock.....	96
Evie Waller	96
Jason Dwyer.....	97
Penrith Relay for Life	97
St Mary's Rugby League Club	97
St Mary's Senior High School Students Yasmeen Qurbani and Zoe El-Chami	97
Police Sergeant Scott McWhirter	97
Charlotte Shoemark and Poppi Stephen	97
Jack Miller	98
Steven Fortey King's Birthday Honour List, OAM	98
RFS Central Coast Members Volunteer Appreciation Day.....	98
Surf Life Saving Awards	98
Merchant Marines	99
Charlestown Azzurri.....	99
Clean Up Australia Day.....	99
Samual Terry	99
Peter Hurley	99
Blu J's.....	100
Harmonious Festival - Buddha Light, Nan Tien Temple	100
Northbridge Progress Association - Australia's Morning Tea In Bellambi St.....	100
Willoughby Roos 110 Year Celebration.....	100

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

Guyra Evening CWA Goes Global.....	101
99th Annual Moree Picnic Races	101
Chris Ferguson.....	101
Chase Family Trangie.....	101
Dubbo Men's Shed.....	101
ErinEarth - 2023 Environmental Citizen of the Year	102
Associate Professor Lynette Riley, AO	102
Miso Oishii Restaurant	102
The Australian Lebanese Chamber of Commerce.....	102
LaSalle Catholic College Bankstown - All Ability Team	103
Balmain Public School Environmental Warriors.....	103
Balmain Institute Mo and Margaret.....	103
Foodbank Visit 2023.....	103
GRC Peakhurst Big Band Blast.....	103
Italian Republic Day	104
Freshwater SLSC	104
Parramatta Cricketers to Represent NSW Men's Teams	104
"apples" - Westword Initiative 'writing Your Voice'	104
Roseneath Cottage	104
Lyndall McNally, OAM	105
Dr Kenneth Sinclair, OAM.....	105
Dr Richard Jones, AM	105
Lalor Park Hot Bread.....	105
Miss Nellie's Cafe	105
King's Birthday Honours - Professor Gail Whiteford, AM	105
CDT Leading Seaman Bayden Connerty	106
Landcare Awards	106
Royal Flying Doctor Service (Rfds).....	106
Dr Ian Cameron, OAM	106
Ross Bingham, OAM.....	107
Sandy Point RFS AGM	107
Sisters of Saint Joseph Reconciliation Action Plan	107
81st Anniversary Defence of Sydney Service	107
Margaret Bickle, AO	107
Cultural Bridges Concert.....	108
District Governor Dr Janice Hall.....	108
WOTSO North Strathfield.....	108
Rotary Club of Holroyd - 65th Birthday Party	108
House of Welcome - Community Lunch.....	108
Consortium of Tamil Associations NSW - Anzac Day	109
Australiam Arab Cultural Forum Family Day.....	109

TABLE OF CONTENTS—*continuing*

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 21 June 2023

The Speaker (The Hon. Gregory Michael Piper) took the chair at 10:00.

The Speaker read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

Announcements

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS

The SPEAKER: I advise members that a photographer has been approved to cover the inaugural speeches today.

AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA

The SPEAKER: I remind members of Australia's Biggest Morning Tea, which paradoxically is being held at 3 o'clock this afternoon in the Fountain Court, to fundraise for the Cancer Council and its cancer-related research. I have had a sneak preview of the offerings and there are some amazing cakes. I think there are some 20 contributions from staff. I am hoping that people will come along and be very generous to the Cancer Council.

[Notices of motions given.]

Business of the House

SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (10:17): By leave: I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to permit the moving forthwith of a motion, of which notice has not been given, amending the resolution of the House of 25 May 2023 for the order for papers under Standing Order 269 relating to investigations into money laundering in clubs and pubs.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (10:17): The Government supports the suspension of standing orders as proposed by the member for Sydney, who has consulted with the Government in relation to what he proposes to do, and the Government agrees. I understand the member for Sydney has consulted with the Opposition and the Manager of Opposition Business also agrees, but he can speak for himself. The matter does not appear to be contentious.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (10:18): By leave: I appreciate the Leader of the House acknowledging that I can speak for myself, which I indeed can. The Leader of the House has correctly stated the position. We supported the previous motion and, as I understand it, this motion seeks an extension of time for the production of documents. As I said on the last occasion, this is obviously an important matter, so we want to see it properly executed.

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

Motion agreed to.

Documents

LIQUOR AND GAMING DATA COLLECTION

Production of Documents: Order Amended

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (10:19): I move:

That the resolution of the House of 25 May 2023 for the order for papers relating to investigations into money laundering in clubs and pubs be amended by omitting the following words in paragraph (1) "on Friday 23 June 2023 by 10.00 a.m." and inserting instead "on Friday 4 August 2023 by 10.00 a.m."

In consultation with the Government, the Opposition, the crossbench and the NSW Crime Commission, I am amending the call for papers relating to money laundering in clubs and pubs to provide the Crime Commission with additional time to assess the documents before they are presented to Parliament. The Crime Commission and the Department of Premier and Cabinet have reached an agreement to allow the Crime Commission to review the documents in a fulsome way. This will ensure that any information that may impact ongoing investigations is

protected. It will also allow time for the consideration of potential new evidence that I have provided to the Crime Commission from informants since the last call for papers.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (10:20): This is an important matter. I always thought that the time period in the previous motion was a bit optimistic, although since the member for Sydney was concerned to deal with this matter expeditiously, we agreed to it. It is possibly not a complete surprise that the Crime Commission needs more time to produce the documents being sought. They are very important documents, and there are important considerations, as the member for Sydney outlined. We support the extension of time so that there can be proper and fulsome production. If there are concerns about the production of the documents, there can now be no excuse that the relevant authorities have not had enough time to produce them. It is a sensible extension and the Opposition supports it.

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

Motion agreed to.

Condolences

HUNTER VALLEY BUS ACCIDENT

Debate resumed from 20 June 2023.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (10:22): It seems surreal that just a few short weeks ago, on Mother's Day, we lit up the Sydney Harbour Bridge to launch National Road Safety Week. Meeting with families who lost loved ones many years ago, but who still carried the raw emotion with them on a daily basis, was truly sobering. It strengthened my resolve, both personally and professionally, to do all I can to reduce road trauma. So it was truly shocking when at around 11.30 p.m. on 11 June 2023 an incident took place that changed our lives forever in a horrific and traumatic way. On Monday 12 June people in our community and across our State and nation woke to the tragic news that a number of people had been involved in a bus accident near Greta, just five minutes from Maitland on the border of Cessnock and Upper Hunter. As time went on, we learnt the awful truth that 10 beloved people in our community had died and 26 had been taken to hospital. Many of those we lost lived amongst us in our community, but others had come from Byron Bay, Queensland, Melbourne and even Tasmania.

This incident has touched people across our nation. Maitland in particular remembers Dr Rebecca Mullen, a Singleton doctor with Hunter New England Health, who in 2015 was the school captain of Hunter Valley Grammar School. Rebecca was a talented sportswoman and student and is remembered by her local school community as a kind, warm and compassionate leader. Our hearts go out to her family, her sister, her friends and the broader school community, who still remember her very well. Our hearts go out to all the loved ones of all the victims. This is how a moment in time sends ripples of shock and grief across time and space—ripples which, like waves, wash over us at unexpected moments. As someone who wrote and reviewed critical incident management training as a bus operator for my own company and for the wider industry, I have worked over decades in safety and in managing these kinds of incidents. But nothing prepares you for a day like last Monday.

Indeed, not since the Clybucca bus accident in 1989 have we seen such a loss of life on roads in a single incident or indeed in any incident anywhere on New South Wales soil. Last Monday was tragic on so many levels, and as much as we can try to prepare ourselves and to make sense of it, it is never enough. I thank the many first responders who attended the scene. They were all locals, all beloved members of our community who are now suffering, and all selfless and dedicated people. I include everyone, from NSW Ambulance, the emergency call takers, Fire and Rescue, the NSW Police Force, police rescue, highway patrol, the Rural Fire Service, Transport for NSW, traffic controllers, council staff, hospital staff and helicopter operators—so many people have been touched and have had a hand in helping our community through this. They are just some of the people who worked together to save lives amidst the horror they were confronted with.

We have heard how even at the awful scene, older heads worked to protect the younger, less experienced responders from what they were seeing. The scene that confronted them was so traumatic and so awful. They were hampered by darkness and cold, yet they still worked to save lives and give dignity to those who had lost their lives. We can only thank them for their dedication to those who were involved in the accident and for their tireless efforts to assist at the scene. In their dedication, they showed tremendous courage and selflessness. To say thank you is never enough, but we do thank them, and our debt of gratitude is unquantifiable. Those scenes will haunt the first responders for decades to come, just as they will those who survived the crash. Survivors will be forever haunted by the loss of friends and family, and they will have memories of the horror of those last shared moments etched into their minds. I weep for them and for the long-term psychological trauma they will experience.

People have been reaching out to me since last Monday about trauma they experienced in the Clybucca accident more than 30 years ago. This will have a long-term effect. These incidents trigger past trauma for people who have experienced such devastation before. Those who survived, those of us who lost friends and family in this incident and those who played a role will in turn be triggered in the future. It is etched deeply in our consciousness. As of yesterday, there were still nine patients in hospital, and I thank the staff of John Hunter Hospital, Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Maitland Hospital and Mater Hospital for acting so quickly to help the victims. I thank the people who waited longer in emergency departments so that we could save the lives of those in the crash. Moving through last week, there were moments that overcame us—moments where it became real again. There will be moments like that for the survivors—flashbacks and other symptoms of deep trauma—and I urge everyone to be sensitive to that.

I want to speak directly to the survivors on the bus. There is no luck in surviving an incident like this. Just as this has been a reminder to all of us to hold the ones we love closer and tighter, to surround each other with love, we must also remember to hold you especially tight and especially close, and to give you even more love. What you have been through is truly horrific and no-one should have to go through it. As I moved through last week, I thought I was doing okay. Then there were moments when I just had to pick myself up, focus on whatever tedious task was at hand and move on, because that is what we are taught to do. But I urge everyone to take their own time to move on—whatever time is needed—and to know it is okay to not be okay. In fact, it is okay to be bloody terrible. It is okay to feel like you just need everything to stop. Most importantly, it is okay—it is necessary—to ask for help. This will impact all of us differently, and we all need to help each other get through it. We have to remember that while it will continue to hurt and will in a way not get better, it will get easier to live with. It will, and we must remember that as we go forward.

A lot has been said in the media about the incident. I thank the media for the way they protected us from the most terrible aspects of the crash, and for continuing to respect the privacy of those who have been impacted, while balancing the very fine line of recognising the deep public impact on our national psyche. People must talk and call for change to ensure that we can stop this from ever happening again. As the Minister for Transport said yesterday, we will work to ensure that every avenue for change is explored to make our roads, the vehicles that drive on them and all of those who travel on them safer. I say a particular thankyou to the Premier for the leadership he has shown in bringing together all of the leaders in our local community to respond to the crisis. He ensured a quick response from the NSW Police Force. I thank the police Minister for coming to the scene. I thank everyone for just showing up.

These are difficult days for anyone in a leadership role in our community. It is a time to reach across the aisle and work together to show leadership, love and compassion to our community. I thank and congratulate everyone on that. It is so important to make trauma support available quickly for people who need it. The police Minister, in consultation with the NSW Police Force, ensured that that was rolled out quickly. I acknowledge the presence of the police Minister and the Minister for Families and Communities in the House and thank them for their involvement. I thank also NSW Health and the Red Cross. I thank Sarah U'Brien from the Red Cross for reaching out regarding the memorial site, because that is an important acknowledgement that people need time and space to grieve and process what has happened. I thank her also for providing that very important incidental counselling to local people who attended the site. It can be very difficult to understand that one is in deep trauma and grief. It is an ingrained part of our lives to continue on. To have people from the Red Cross checking to see that people are okay is so important.

I thank my local Rotary clubs and their members, including Brian Coffey of East Maitland Rotary and Gerard McMillen from the Rotary Club of Singleton Sunrise, for speaking with my team about the support we can offer to victims going forward. The New South Wales Government is working with Rotary to establish a fund to provide benevolent relief to survivors, victims and their immediate family. The need is great. We have had an enormous response from the community in providing donations, but we will need more. We must remember that many people, including children, will need help going forward. I appreciate and put on record my thanks to the Deputy Premier and education Minister, Prue Car, for her wise words of counsel and commitment to ensuring that our local schools will be resourced, as they must help our children on an ongoing basis.

I also thank those people who attended or hosted community vigils. They are so important. We cannot just move on. We must give people time to grieve. That will let us recover and heal in the most effective way. The Hunter has been rocked by many traumatic events over the past few years, including storms, floods, bushfires and the pandemic—everything. It has made us stronger and, importantly, it has brought us together. I urge everyone to draw on that strength of unity, love and deep care for each other on our path to healing from the terrible events of last Monday.

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (10:33): Yesterday the member for Upper Hunter, David Layzell, contributed to debate on the condolence motion. Today I speak on behalf of my other NSW Nationals colleagues.

I appreciate all members who have made contributions to this condolence motion on the devastating bus crash at Greta on 11 June, which undoubtedly shook the communities of the Hunter Valley. It claimed the lives of 10 people far too soon, left 25 injured and, as of yesterday, nine are still in hospital. That peaceful, welcoming area became the backdrop for what can only be described as a horrifying incident that we could never imagine, even in our darkest nightmares. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families and friends of the victims and survivors during this time.

The story of each individual who lost their life on that bus was abruptly ended, yet those stories live on in the hearts of those they left behind, in their good deeds, in their words, and in the countless lives they no doubt touched. They were friends, neighbours, children, parents and siblings. Their loss has left a void that cannot be filled, and a wound that will take time to heal. In the days, months and years ahead we will continue to grapple with that loss. As has been mentioned by many members, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to our first responders. We have heard some of the amazing stories, and the main message is that we will support you.

To those who survived this terrible incident, we stand with you as you manage your physical and emotional recovery. We know it will not be easy, but support is available. You do not have to do it alone. We must take time to thank the emergency services for their tireless efforts. We must consider the health and support personnel, who worked ceaselessly in the aftermath of the crash. That dedication, bravery, professionalism and compassion sets an example for all. My colleague and friend David Layzell, the member for Upper Hunter, and the member for Cessnock, Clayton Barr, spoke to that. That support for and dedication to the local communities that have been directly impacted by this tragedy is most needed at this time. All of our local members are with you.

I acknowledge also the Premier and thank him for his leadership after the tragedy, and for acting quickly to ensure that the Government provides whatever support it can, financial or otherwise, to assist those who have been impacted. As we move forward, the circumstances behind this terrible incident will be examined. As part of that process, we must ensure that we take every necessary and practical step to reduce the likelihood of something like this from ever happening again in the future. We know that the aftermath of a tragedy like this is and will be ongoing, as it is an extremely difficult time for victims, loved ones and first responders. In such distressing moments, support is crucial to the healing process. Emotional support is available, whether it is through professional counselling or simply a conversation with family and friends. In addition to that emotional support, practical assistance will also be invaluable. That could include arranging meals, helping with child care or assisting with insurance claims and medical bills.

Coordinating those tasks can relieve stress, giving victims and their families space to focus on their emotional recovery. Community support assists not only those who have been directly impacted but also strengthens community bonds, helping everyone navigate these challenging times. Our collective empathy, understanding and action can make a most significant difference. As investigations continue and we begin the long process of recovery—and it will be long—the communities of the Hunter Valley, and members of this Parliament, remain focused on healing and remembering. Regional communities and regional people are known for their resilience, but, as has been mentioned, it is okay to seek help. In fact, it is imperative that you do seek help. We are all behind you and with you during this very trying time.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism) (10:37): I offer my condolences to the friends and families of the 10 victims of the tragic bus crash at Greta, along with all of those who suffered injuries. This truly shocking tragedy has left not just the Hunter but also the country heartbroken. I have spent time in the community in the days since the accident and have felt firsthand their pain over this tragic loss of life. Many of the victims were locals, with close ties to the community and, as we know, their local sporting groups. This tragedy will be felt deeply right across our country, and it will be years before this tightknit community ever comes to terms with it. As police Minister, I have seen up close the role that police play in responding to these tragic incidents. As has been said, many of the police first responders were locals themselves. I acknowledge the role played by the NSW Police Force, NSW Ambulance, Fire and Rescue NSW and the NSW Rural Fire Service in this incident. I know that many of the first responders were not scheduled to work but showed up because they knew that there was a significant incident. I know that many stayed far beyond the shift they were scheduled to work. Their tireless efforts will not go unnoticed, and we thank them from the bottom of our hearts.

Police are on the front line in dealing with tragedies such as this, and after the crash a large-scale emergency response commenced. It included several police districts: Hunter Valley, Maitland—and I acknowledge the presence of the member for Maitland and thank her for her contribution—Port Stephens, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and Tuggerah. They came from everywhere and it was an extraordinary response. In addition to that, there were police rescue, the Traffic and Highway Patrol, NSW Ambulance, Fire and Rescue NSW and the NSW Rural Fire Service. There were also a number of helicopters, Transport for NSW staff and those wonderful health workers in our hospital system.

After the initial emergency response was concluded and the victims transferred to hospital, a crime scene was established and examined by specialist forensic police officers from the Crash Investigation Unit. I will share with the House a conversation that I had with those members, led by Sergeant Kristen Rafter from the Crash Investigation Unit. They had just come back into the Cessnock Police Station after finishing up at the scene. It was almost 6.00 p.m. by that stage, and they still had several hours of work to bring evidence together before leaving that night. What struck me was that they had actually come from another crash before they attended this one, but they did not miss a beat. They just said, "Minister, we're doing our job." That is what they do: They do their job. These are people who need to be commended.

It is in these truly dark moments that we see the best of who we are as Australians. As police Minister, I was extremely proud of the work of the NSW Police Force. They turned up to work to save lives at this horrific scene because that is what they do when they do their jobs. Our responders from the police, the ambulance service and Fire and Rescue NSW rushed to the scene, working tirelessly throughout the night and morning to free and treat the injured and get them to hospital as quickly as possible. It was described to me that never have emergency services worked so well together. In fact, it was said it was like clockwork. They did not miss a beat.

Thankfully, most of us can only imagine the terrible scene that our first responders had to deal with that night. Again, I thank them for the selfless and professional way that they carry out their lifesaving work whenever they are called upon. I particularly acknowledge the work of Acting Assistant Commissioner Tracy Chapman in keeping the community up to date and overseeing the police response. I also acknowledge those who were in charge at the scene: Matt Zimmer, whom I met when I first arrived and who had been there since the midnight before, and Wayne Humphry, who took over, from the Port Stephens command. I also acknowledge Assistant Commissioner Dave Waddell for his contribution and leadership. I visited and thanked local police officers for their work in responding to this tragedy and made clear to them that the Government's commitment to support them to deal with the mental scars left after confronting such a horrific scene is ongoing.

I also share with the House the conversations I had with the family liaison officers. Those amazing police officers are there to assist the families, not only on the night and the following day but for the weeks and months ahead. They are there to help families travel through this shocking and horrific time. I met a couple of those officers, one of whom is from my own local area command at Lake Macquarie, Tarryn Lewis. What an outstanding individual she is, and they were all of the same calibre. They are incredible people doing work on behalf of New South Wales. I thank them for that. The Government has established a drop-in support clinic for the community and that support will continue. As has been said, Rotary Australia has partnered with the Government, and we thank them for that as well. I can assure the community and those first responders that the Government is here to support them, not just for now but in the years to come.

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter) (10:44): It was horrible news to wake up to: that 10 people had lost their lives in the most tragic of circumstances and another 25 people had been injured. When you hear about people losing their lives in a crash, your heart just sinks, but in the Hunter, when it happens in your backyard, the loss hits you harder. It is a close-knit community, where the loss of any of us is felt by all of us. But this was a tragedy that touched other parts of our State, as well as Victoria. I extend my deepest condolences to the family and friends who are grieving loved ones. Their pain is unimaginable, but they must know that everyone in this place is thinking of them. For the community of Singleton and for the Singleton Roosters, it is hard to know where to begin to pick up the pieces when you lose so many of your own. It will take time. It will be hard, but we have got their backs.

Last week I visited the Singleton community crisis centre. What I could feel was a community hurting, but what I could see was a community stepping up to help each other. What I could hear was compassion, generosity and support. To all those people who have stepped up, I say thank you. I acknowledge the first responders—our paramedics, Fire and Rescue teams and police—who worked all night in the thick fog and the following day at the devastating scene. Their strength and courage does not go unrecognised. I acknowledge those who received people at hospital—not just the doctors, nurses and surgeons but all the other people with critical roles to help save lives, from the blood bank staff, to the air crew and those who perform the necessary administrative tasks. For many of them the work continues, and I thank them for being there. There are also many people on the ground continuing to help. They include the people staffing the community centres, those ensuring the memorial site remains safe and those who have extended a helping hand to the families who have had their lives turned upside down.

The Wests Group and Hunter New England Health have been helpful in providing accommodation for those families who need to stay near hospital at the moment. I thank them for working with my office to ensure that these people have somewhere to stay. In Singleton and Cessnock, so many community organisations have put their hands up to help wherever they can: charities, rival AFL clubs, different sporting codes. It shows that it does not matter what your niche is, we are truly all in this together.

I also acknowledge the people working in government departments and in Cessnock and Singleton councils. They have worked hard behind the scenes in organisation and resource provision and took action so quickly. Similarly, mayors Jay Suvaal and Sue Moore; the member for Cessnock; the member for Upper Hunter, local Legislative Council members, including the Hon. Emily Suvaal; and the Federal member for Hunter have all worked to ensure that their communities receive the support that they need. There is no doubt that the sadness and loss will be part of the Singleton community for a very long time. But they are strong. They will keep going not just for themselves but for everyone who got on that bus on 11 June who has not gone home or who made it home carrying incomprehensible trauma. The pain will not just disappear, but neither will the rest of the Hunter. We are there for them as long as they need us.

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (10:49): I too make a contribution to this important discussion that we are having in Parliament. Words do not mean much, but they do make a small difference. I am sure that, if we could turn back time and make things different, we all, like everybody else, would. We are impacted because of what we have heard, understood and seen. But we are also impacted because of the human nature of putting yourself in other people's positions and shedding the tears that they would have shed. It does not go away. This is a small step in a very long and difficult healing process.

Weddings are meant to be the most joyous occasions. It is exciting before a wedding and after a wedding, and the wedding itself is always wonderful. Destination weddings are really lovely events too. We have all been to destination weddings, where we go somewhere outside our normal places of residence to enjoy a wonderful experience. Unfortunately, in this instance, the wedding itself was wonderful, but what happened post-wedding is something that is going to impact people for the rest of their lives. It will impact not only the families of those who were lost and seriously injured but also the whole of society. I do not think anybody woke up on that morning and did not think, "Oh, my goodness, what's happened? What is this tragedy?"

As we know, the tragedy has had a massive, devastating impact on the communities of the Hunter Valley, particularly around the Singleton and Cessnock townships. Those are small country towns that are very closely knit, where people go to school together, play sport together and raise their kids together. They are connected in every way. The loss of one life has an enormous ripple effect, but the loss of so many lives has a completely devastating effect. Our thoughts, best wishes and hopes are with everybody involved in that community, as well as all the people who were involved in the overall incident. I do not think I am wrong in saying that there would be no-one who has not felt impacted by it in their own different way.

As the Minister for Emergency Services, of course, I was incredibly proud of the way that emergency services responded to such a horrific incident. I especially pay tribute to the Branxton fire service. It is a retained unit. That means it is made up of people who have another job who also then take on being part of Fire and Rescue as their second job. Fire and Rescue is so much more than just fire; it is also the rescue element. Members can imagine the things that those fine people saw when they turned up to that horrific site. Those are things that you cannot unsee. They are things that you do not forget. You will bear those scars for the rest of your life. I mentioned Fire and Rescue but the same would ring true for the ambos, the police, the SES, the RFS and anybody else who was involved.

I note the hardship, too, for the local community. A number of my colleagues have spoken about the local representatives. I pay special tribute to them and the way that they crossed all party lines, whether they worked in local government or in the Parliament itself. A member of Parliament's job is to make sure that they stand with their community at all times. This event has showed the very best of what elected representatives can be, because when you put aside everything else, we are humans. We have a human touch and a human element, and we feel that sense of hurt that everybody else feels as well. I also pay special thanks to the chaplaincy service, the Red Cross, the Salvation Army and all of the unsung heroes that we do not see.

But, in the end, it really comes down to the impact that this has had on the people who have lost loved ones, people whose lives will never be the same. What was meant to be a celebratory occasion that would be celebrated at anniversaries has become a reminder of a tragedy. While those things cannot change, we can memorialise, in the best way possible, the people whose lives have been lost. Let us remember them in the best light that we can. Let us remember them as the happy souls that they were, as people who made an impact in their communities, and as people who were part of a society that actually believed in making things better. In small-knit towns, these things have a massive effect. We saw that particularly as so many of the victims were part of the Singleton AFL club

What has been beautiful, as is often the case in a good society, is that the outpouring of grief also means that tributes flow in other ways. I appreciate that other clubs at a national level have stepped up and, through some form of solidarity, shown their love and compassion for not only the community but also the way that people have come together for those who have lost their lives. I am highly conscious of the fact that there are other speakers

who wish to speak. I put on record my deepest condolences and that of my community for those who have lost their loved ones, for those who have lost their lives and for the community. We know that communities will stick together and our agencies will stick together.

But, most importantly, we know that the love and support from the whole State of New South Wales, and indeed across Australia and the world, is with those families. We will not forget them. Sometimes it is easy to say, "I know what you are going through." But I cannot imagine what they are going through. However, I can imagine the grief and the difficulty. I give our best wishes to that community and our deepest condolences to those families, who have to somehow pick up some pieces from something that is completely broken at the moment.

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (10:56): I add my condolences to the family and friends of the victims of the Hunter Valley bus tragedy on behalf of the people of the South Coast electorate. The sudden and tragic loss of life is heartbreaking, especially on a day that was all about love and happiness but that, under tragic circumstances, turned into something none of us should ever have to experience. This tragedy has affected families and friends far and wide, including the family of Angus Craig, who grew up and completed all of his schooling in Vincentia in Jervis Bay. Angus was a young man who grew up in beautiful Jervis Bay. He attended Vincentia High School. He completed a Bachelor of Engineering at the University of Wollongong. Angus was really well loved. A message from one of Angus's friends sums up not just how the South Coast community and Angus' family and friends feel but how anyone who was affected by this tragic accident feels:

Like all others who were blessed to know you, I spent the day in shock, just trying to fathom how this has come to pass. My heart is broken and reels thinking about your family and others who have become close to you. There are no words that can describe the pain your passing leaves.

All members in this place extend that to all the people involved in this tragic incident. On behalf of all the constituents of the South Coast electorate, I offer my condolences to family and friends. Their loss can never be made right but I say to them that our community is hurting alongside them and we are all here for them. I again express my heartfelt condolences to everyone affected by this tragedy. I take the opportunity to thank all emergency service workers. Times like this remind us just how precious life is.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): It being 11.00 a.m., debate is interrupted for question time. I set down the resumption of the debate as an order of the day for a later hour.

Visitors

VISITORS

The SPEAKER: I extend a very warm welcome to guests of the member for Hawkesbury. From the b kinder foundation I welcome CEO Danny Mason-Kinder, b kinder ambassador Grace Truman and staff. I welcome students and teachers from the b kinder schools: Arndell Anglican College, Hawkesbury; Bligh Park Public School, Hawkesbury; International Grammar School, Ultimo; St Aloysius College, Kirribilli; and Jarjum Redfern College, Redfern. The member for Hawkesbury would like it noted that she is hosting a b kinder event in the Jubilee Room today from 1.00 p.m. to 2.00 p.m., and members are invited to attend.

I extend a warm welcome to guests from my electorate of Lake Macquarie, members of the Rotary Club of Toronto Sunrise. I also welcome guests of the member for Tweed, year 10 commerce students from Tweed River High School.

Announcements

BOWEL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

The SPEAKER: I recognise that many members, if not all members, are wearing a ribbon today with a red apple that has been distributed by the office of the Minister for Health. The ribbon is in recognition of Bowel Cancer Awareness Month. The Minister has asked that it be worn today, and I see it is being worn by many members of this House. Bowel cancer is a very significant illness, a blight and a leading cause of death within our community. It is good that we are all very aware of the issue of bowel cancer and that we take what steps we can to minimise it and protect ourselves and our families. I thank the Minister for that.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that a photographer has been approved to photograph question time today.

*Members***MEMBER FOR DRUMMOYNE**

The SPEAKER: I acknowledge the engagement of the member for Drummoyne to Andrew. It was wonderful to meet Andrew and many of the member's family on the occasion of her inaugural speech, and it is great to acknowledge their engagement today.

*Question Time***PUBLIC SECTOR WAGES**

The SPEAKER: Members may notice that my voice is sexier than normal today. It is hard for me to raise my voice, so I would greatly appreciate decorum in the Chamber. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (11:07): My question is directed to the Minister for Families and Communities. Yesterday in question time the Minister for Industrial Relations said that the Government's wage offer is supported by savings that include savings in out-of-home care policies. What are those savings in out-of-home care policies?

The SPEAKER: The Premier and the Deputy Premier will come to order and allow the Minister to answer.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens—Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion) (11:07): I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. As I have already put on the record in this place, vulnerable children and families are of enormous importance in all of our communities. It is not an area that I ever wanted to politicise, as shadow Minister and now as Minister, because it is so complex and the lives of those children are so fragile. The fact is what we inherited from his Government. The question has been asked. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to know the truth, and if he wants to take a point of order because I am going to start telling the truth, then that will be a shame on him. The facts are that what this Government has inherited, and what the families and communities across all of our electorates have inherited, is an overspend in the services that are meant to go to these children.

Opposition members: Overspend?

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: Yes. This is money that is not budgeted. That is what I mean. This is part of the enormous budget deficit that has been left to this Government.

Mr Mark Speakman: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129, direct relevance. The Minister seems to be hopelessly confused. If there are these overspends, then how can there be savings to fund a wages policy? The question is about savings. How will the Minister cut out-of-home care to fund wages policy? There cannot be both.

The SPEAKER: I thank the Leader of the Opposition. I understand the point of order. The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: I appreciate that the Leader of the Opposition wants to stop me telling the truth and putting that on the record today because what the previous Government left us in child protection alone is \$255 million unfunded. This was money that was not budgeted but they just kept spending it anyway. They kept spending it and spending it and paying more and more for worse and worse outcomes.

The SPEAKER: The member for Wahroonga will come to order.

Ms KATE WASHINGTON: This is part of the enormous budget blowout that Opposition members left us. We are now working hard. We are on the job of fixing the mess that they left for vulnerable children and families across this entire State.

STATE BUDGET

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (11:10): My question is addressed to the Premier. Will he update the House on the State budget and the challenges ahead?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:11): This is a troubling question, and one that affects this hung Parliament and the New South Wales Government, involving a troubling set of numbers. Members would be aware that this Government inherited the largest debt ever handed from one government to another in the history of the State of New South Wales. The previous Government racked up \$187 billion in debt that will have to be paid off by future generations of young Australians. But it is my sad duty to add to the duress. I report to the House that in the past 24 hours we discovered that the Liberals and The Nationals, while in office, breached every debt and spending metric used to assess the triple-A credit rating in New South Wales.

Mr David Mehan: Every single one?

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Every single one. Within the next two weeks the New South Wales Government will be paying more than 5 per cent of its income to service debt. Very soon the interest on that debt every single year will be greater than the TAFE and police budgets combined. We have heard a lot of reasoning from the Opposition since the revelation of these troubling budget numbers. The leading explanation from the shadow Treasurer in the other place was to say, "We have heard a myriad of complaints from Labor about the debt position—debts that it supported as part of the State's COVID response." It would be interesting for the House to understand that in the three years from June 2019 to June 2022—the COVID years—the previous Government added \$70 billion to the debt, but in the subsequent four years from June 2022 to June 2026 they planned on adding to the debt by borrowing another \$80 billion. So there was \$70 billion for the COVID emergency, but what emergency did the Liberals and The Nationals have after COVID?

Mr Paul Scully: The election.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: An election campaign! Eighty billion dollars worth of debt! Now we are faced with these exceptionally troubling and difficult figures. The Leader of the Opposition was asked his view about spending and debt and deficits in New South Wales. He said, "We left the New South Wales budget in a very strong shape."

The SPEAKER: The member for Wahroonga will come to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: How can the worst numbers ever recorded by any Government in New South Wales history be regarded as good economic management? How is that possible? If that is good economic management, then there is no such thing as bad economic management in New South Wales. [*Extension of time*]

The instinct to preserve public money has been intrinsic to conservative politics for generations. What is wrong with this generation of Liberal parliamentarians? Why do they not preserve the same instincts? Since the election campaign, all we have heard from Liberal MPs is to spend more money. They make demands on every part of the New South Wales budget. In a notice of motion given by the member for Davidson this morning, he called for a \$10 billion commitment for the northern beaches tunnel—a tunnel that most residents up there do not want. The second point is that National Party members are no better.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: For the past three months National Party members have been demanding that the New South Wales Government subsidise the cigarettes, Red Bull and doughnuts of regional apprentices. That is their big plan—a plan to subsidise the smoko for regional apprentices.

The SPEAKER: The member for Wahroonga will come to order.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: Is it any wonder, when we look at the Leader of the National Party and Deputy Leader of the Opposition? On 19 June 2023, when he gave an interview on 2DU Breakfast—a must-listen—he said, "The mismanagement allegations of Labor just don't stack up. We were able to walk and chew gum at the same time and so we'll keep talking about and prosecuting the case to keep spending money." That was the deliberate and articulated strategy of the Leader of the National Party. Things will be different under New South Wales Labor.

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

Mr CHRIS MINNS: We are committed to tackling out-of-control spending because we know that the worst inheritance of all for the next generation of young Australians is \$187 billion worth of debt.

PUBLIC SECTOR WAGES

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (11:16): My question is directed to the Minister for Industrial Relations. Yesterday in question time she said that the Government's wage offer is supported by various savings. Can she guarantee that this will not include cuts to workers compensation benefits?

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (11:17): Mr Speaker—

The SPEAKER: Government members, particularly those on the front bench, will come to order and allow the Minister to answer. The Deputy Premier will come to order. The Minister has the call.

[*Opposition members interjected.*]

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: It is quite lengthy because the Opposition's record of bad management is quite lengthy. That is a great question from the member for Port Macquarie.

Mrs Leslie Williams: But can you answer it?

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: I will. I acknowledge that the member has an interest in workers compensation because in 2012 her Government—

Mr Michael Daley: Destroyed it.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: —destroyed it. I want to know how many injured workers she has met in her electorate, and how many injured workers all Opposition members have met. There are injured workers who are now on secondary workers compensation because of the mental stress. I acknowledge what the Attorney General said. It is palpable that there are people on the workers compensation system at the moment and that icare has done a terrible job. We have a huge mess that we have been left with.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question links the Government's wage offer to whether there will be any cuts to workers compensation benefits. She has gone on a lot about 2012. This question is about the future. Will there be cuts to workers compensation benefits?

The SPEAKER: I ask the Minister to return to the leave of the question.

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: As the Premier rightly stated, last Friday the Treasurer and I had to bail out the Treasury Managed Fund [TMF] with \$669 million because members opposite were too lazy to come up with a whole-of-government return-to-work policy. Not only that, but the year before the former Government had to bail out the TMF. The year before that it also had to bail out the TMF.

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

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS: The Government is going through a methodical, considered process. It is looking at every detail. Let me speak about icare. Those opposite should be ashamed of themselves for what they did with respect to icare. They set it up and basically storeroomed and warehoused all their Liberal buddies in icare. There are injured workers. Last week I met— *[Time expired.]*

SCHOOL MAINTENANCE

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (11:20): My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Education and Early Learning. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on the budget pressures facing school maintenance?

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (11:20): I thank the member for Granville for that wonderful question. I certainly will update the House. Members will know—as the students and teachers and parents of New South Wales know—that members on this side of the House came to government knowing that that there were things that we had to deal with when it came to schools. We had a teacher shortage crisis and record resignations. We had an education workforce on its knees that was not being valued. We had teachers burnt out by excessive workloads. What we did not know we would have to deal with when we came to government—what we did not anticipate—was a school maintenance program that was not properly funded.

The SPEAKER: The member for Terrigal is a stand-out among the Opposition members interjecting. The member for Terrigal will come to order.

Ms PRUE CAR: In the out-years, school maintenance budgets dramatically fell. That means we inherited a \$1.2 billion maintenance bill from the Liberals and The Nationals—\$1.2 billion. Not only did those opposite not build the schools that they promised in new areas but they did not even fund the maintenance of basic facilities in public schools: broken toilets, leaky roofs and damaged facilities. This is going to be a significant challenge for the new Government because members opposite have trashed the finances of the State. That \$1.2 billion school maintenance bill will be so hard to deal with. That is the truth we are telling the people of New South Wales. The member for Hornsby has left us with the highest debt in the history of this State. He left record deficits, record interest payments and a \$7 billion budget black hole. That is the legacy of the former Treasurer, the member for Hornsby.

Mr Warren Kirby: Underfunded and undervalued.

Ms PRUE CAR: Underfunded and undervalued—good on the member for Riverstone.

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

Ms PRUE CAR: Following the economic philosophy of Paris Hilton—just put it on the credit card and dad will bail you out—those opposite spent faster than any government in living memory, with \$33.9 billion in spending. Forget John Maynard Keynes and Milton Friedman; we had the Carrie Bradshaw of New South Wales

Treasurers. It was straight out of *Sex and the City*: spend on the Manolo Blahniks but do not worry about the basics. Let us look at where the Liberals and The Nationals failed to properly fund school maintenance and who the member for Hornsby ripped off. Across the electorate of Miranda, \$28.3 million in school maintenance was not properly funded. [*Extension of time*]

I look forward to members opposite explaining a \$21.7 million unfunded maintenance bill to the people of Pittwater. The member for Hornsby even dudded his own schools by \$20.7 million. Holsworthy, \$13 million; and Ryde—this gets special mention—\$12.8 million.

The SPEAKER: Government members will come to order.

Ms PRUE CAR: That is also almost \$13 million. While speaking of Ryde, on behalf of the working women of New South Wales it was refreshing to be told by the member for Ryde how hard it is to be a working woman with children in school. I thank him for speaking out about those sexist school hours. We really appreciate it. It is great being mansplained and lectured to by the young member for Ryde. Who needs strong feminists in the House? Why preselect more women when we have Doogie Howser over there?

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

Ms PRUE CAR: We have Doogie Howser telling us what it is like to be a working woman with children. We thank the member from the bottom of our hearts.

The SPEAKER: The member for Canterbury will come to order.

Ms PRUE CAR: The reality is that the former Government left record levels of debt, record deficits and skyrocketing interest payments, and one of the victims is basic school maintenance. Now this Government has to clean up the mess that those opposite created. I make special mention of the shadow Minister—the previous Minister—who was on radio this morning saying that the former Government laid the groundwork for the temporary to permanent teacher conversion. If the groundwork was making them temporary to start with, it certainly did. Members opposite created the mess, and this Government is fixing it.

The SPEAKER: The member for Tamworth will come to order.

REGIONAL HEALTH SERVICES

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (11:25): My question is directed to the Minister for Health, and Minister for Regional Health. What is being done to ensure that health facilities in regional New South Wales do not need to reduce hours for services because of staffing shortages?

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (11:26): I thank the member for a very good question. The Premier, in one of his first speeches as Premier, focused on making sure that the Government is focused on the human capital—not just the built form, but the human capital. Nowhere is that more important than in western New South Wales. I acknowledge the work of the member for Barwon. For those members who have not visited his electorate, it is simply enormous. The way he moves around it is incredible. He has offices at Broken Hill, Cobar and Narrabri. Everyone in this place should take some time to go to his electorate to learn about the challenges of those living in remote and rural New South Wales.

This Government acknowledges the challenges that people in those communities face. Unfortunately, there has been a historic failure to invest in our regional health workforce and to attract and keep skilled workers within the workforce. Unfortunately, when we came to government, we found what I think is one of the most despicable acts that I have ever witnessed. Just after our frontline healthcare staff had guided the country and the State through the worst ever pandemic, those opposite thought it was acceptable to make more than 1,100 nurses temporary in one of the most shameful acts of public administration. What that has meant for the member for Barwon is that right now there are more than 60 nurses in the local health districts he represents—particularly the Far West and Western NSW Local Health districts—who are only temporary. That is because those opposite wanted to get through an election. I cannot tell you how much that angers me and the men and women who work in our frontline hospitals.

Last night, I was at Concord Hospital. I met with a nurse, Chris, and a frontline staff specialist, Guy. When I asked them, "How has it been?", the first thing they both said was, "Staffing is a nightmare." We have to turn that around. It is critical that we are focused on regional and rural areas. I inform the member for Barwon that we will be moving 500 paramedics into those rural and remote communities. [*Extension of time*]

The Government has committed to building three new helicopter bases, which is really important for the bush. It allows rapid transport, extraction and retrieval from remote and difficult-to-reach parts of New South Wales to get people the care they need. The Government is focused on building the workforce through the Rural

Health Workforce Incentive Scheme. I inform the member for Barwon that as of 7 June the Hunter New England Local Health District has identified 1,838 eligible positions, including in Wee Waa Hospital, and has provided retention incentives for some existing employees. Western NSW Local Health District has identified 143 eligible positions, including in Nyngan Health Service, and has provided retention incentives for existing employees and attracted new employees with recruitment incentives.

I was proud to announce the appointment of the Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health, chaired by the member for Wagga Wagga, Dr Joe McGirr. It will oversee the implementation of the 44 recommendations of the landmark inquiry into rural and regional health care. The National Party fought strongly to stop that landmark inquiry from happening. I know the member for Barwon has a keen interest in ensuring that we are looking at everything when it comes to recruitment, including the availability of skilled migrant visas. There are two migrant visa types available under the New South Wales business and skilled migration program. To date, New South Wales has sponsored 1,500 health professionals across the subclass 190 and subclass 491 visas.

Due to high demand, New South Wales operates a selection and invitation process, where the best candidate in each identified skill is invited to apply for nomination. Over 20 health-related skilled occupations are listed across both the subclass 190 and subclass 491 visa programs. I commend the member for Barwon. He is a terrific advocate for remote, rural and regional New South Wales. I encourage all members to take some time to visit his electorate.

REGIONAL APPRENTICE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENT TRAVEL CARD

Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro) (11:31): My question is addressed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Will the Minister update the House on the mismanagement of regional transport programs by the former Government?

Mr David Harris: How long have we got?

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (11:31): I will try to confine my answer to three minutes.

The SPEAKER: That would be excellent.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: I thank the member for Monaro for his question. As was revealed in *The Daily Telegraph* today, the former Minister for Regional Transport and Roads managed the portfolio like he was a primary school student who wanted to be elected for school captaincy, saying, "I am going to put Fanta in the bubblers. Apprentices can get their ciggies and drinks from the servo. Whatever you want, that is fine. It is no problem." That is a disgrace. It is one of the big problems with our State. I have been looking through the Parliamentary Budget Office's election costings. I will show them to the House. Members can see two big doughnuts. Those are the doughnuts that the former Government committed to additional road funding at the last election. There was no funding until 2024-25. It had nothing to show.

Those opposite now want us to fund a card that is not well targeted. If the former Government had not shut down so many TAFEs in regional areas, we would not have to worry about the transport needs of apprentices. There was a lack of strategic planning. I have just spent a couple of weeks in the regions, and I inform the House very clearly that people who live in Lismore, Port Macquarie, Dubbo, Parkes or Forbes did not say to me, "Please fund the doughnuts for the apprentices." They said, "We are going through a massive crisis with funding for our roads."

The SPEAKER: The member for Dubbo will come to order.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: People were telling me about the hundreds of dollars that people across their communities were spending to fix cars because of potholes and damage to the road networks. They did not want an unfunded program by the former Government. The other day ex-Minister Faraway said, "This could not be spent as I had said it could be spent on non-travel-related products." He misled the House. That is the lack of attention to detail that members opposite brought to this important portfolio. We know that transport and roads are a social determinant of health, education, opportunity and jobs. Do members opposite care about getting people to jobs and to education? No. They care about getting doughnuts—

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

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: That was the big problem.

Mr Steve Whan: Despite the Minister's wishes earlier, I would like her to provide more information.

The SPEAKER: The member for Monaro is seeking additional information. I grant an additional two minutes.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: Your wish is my command. Members like the member for Monaro are fighting day in, day out for the roads and transport infrastructure their communities need. The former Minister said to his department, "I need you to find \$98 million so that I can give it to apprentices at the expense of other programs." It was not new funding; it was taken out of the Transport for NSW budget.

The SPEAKER: The member for Dubbo will come to order.

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: Transport for NSW was not able to spend that money on roads and other projects. Right across this State it is like being Old Mother Hubbard going to the cupboard, because that lot opposite have ransacked it. Members opposite probably would have had a better impact if they had driven around in their cars throwing fifties out of the window. That is about as effective as this program was for improving the road network in our State. You can go down to Wellington and look at the bridge there that is not connected to a road anymore. None of the councils that I have spoken to have said, "Please, Minister, can you give the apprentices some more money?"

Mrs Leslie Williams: Did you ask them?

Ms JENNY AITCHISON: I did ask them. In fact, I met with the member for Port Macquarie. How many times did I hear her mention the Regional Apprentice and University Student Travel Card? Zero times. Doughnuts. Members opposite properly named the card when they came out with the first iteration of it. They named it the regional apprentice university travel card. That stands for exactly what the card is: a rort. This Government will not support that. It will fund the roads and transport services that people in the regions need.

POLICE TASER USE

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst) (11:36): My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. What action is the Minister taking given the recent news that the NSW Police Force covered up the first public statement about the removal of the reporting of the tasering of Clare Nowland?

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism) (11:37): I am not going to thank the member for Bathurst for his question. As we all know, Mrs Nowland passed away at 7.00 p.m. on Wednesday 24 May. I again pass on our deepest condolences to her family and the community down there. I spoke to Mrs Nowland's daughter after the funeral about how important that day was. They are a gracious and loving family. The incident is a level 1 critical incident, and there is an investigation underway. We should allow that investigation to run its course. As part of that investigation, there will also be a review by the NSW Police Force Professional Standards Command and oversight by the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission [LECC]. We should allow the LECC to do the work that it does—

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. It has come to light that there has been a cover-up, and the question asked what action the police Minister will take to investigate it.

The SPEAKER: I heard the question and have been listening to the Minister's answer. I do not uphold the point of order.

Ms YASMIN CATLEY: It was the first I had heard about the information. The Opposition should take it to LECC. However, in addition to that, it is important that we bear in mind where I started: the family. The family had not been informed of this, which is, obviously, why the question was so vague. Let us let LECC do the work we have charged it to do.

STATE DEBT

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (11:39): My question is addressed to the Attorney General, representing the Minister for Finance. Will the Attorney General update the House on the implications of the former Government's plan to borrow an additional \$25 billion to speculate on stocks and other investments?

The SPEAKER: Order! Members will come to order. I know that members are keen today, but they should show respect to the Attorney General as he answers the question.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (11:40): I thank the member for Auburn for her question. As we know, yesterday the Treasurer delivered an update in the other place on the true financial position of the State. When I was watching that statement being delivered, there were mixed emotions. The most profound emotion I felt was disappointment—disappointment for citizens of the State who have invested their faith in a government, only to see that misspent and to see governments inherently fail; and disappointment for

new Government members, who come into government bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, and want to deliver on their promises and their agendas, only to see it delayed and thwarted by mismanagement on the other side. But the disappointment turns to anger when I have regard to the ongoing trickery that the former Government continued to adopt on a whole range of budgetary issues. You thought those opposite would have learnt their lesson from the Transport Asset Holding Entity [TAHE]. But, no, with every page we turn over, there is more trickery.

The SPEAKER: The member for Wahroonga will come to order.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: Unlike the former Government, we will be up-front about the economic challenges we face and what needs to be done to fix them. The member for Auburn asked about the implications of the former Government's plan to borrow an additional \$25 billion to speculate on stocks and other investments. What she is referring to is the Debt Retirement Fund [DRF]. It sounds innocuous. Earnings from the fund are retained, hermetically sealed in that fund and can be used only to pay down debt. The former Government planned to grow the fund and use the proceeds to pay down government debt. It sounds fine until you find out that the way in which those opposite were going to grow the fund was by increasing borrowings—by borrowing more.

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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: In fact, they were going to borrow more than \$25.3 billion between now and 2027 to deposit into the DRF. They wanted to pay down debt by going into debt. Worse, they were prepared to gamble taxpayers' funds on all sorts of investments and pray that the investments worked. They made financial investments around the world in things like non-government services but also ventures that carry risk, such as stocks, bonds, property and more. It sounds fine when things are going well, but twice on the— [*Extension of time*]

The SPEAKER: The member for North Shore will come to order.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: That gambling had the capability to be a significant risk to the taxpayers of New South Wales and to lose billions of dollars exactly at the time when the budget could not face it.

Mr Alister Henskens: A low chance of that.

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: I heard the member for Wahroonga. There have been two major budget shocks in the past decade—ones that went not for months but for years—and the effects of which we are still feeling. Just like TAHE, this is the sort of thing that those opposite kept doing, year after year. Worse, it turns out that swelling the size of the Debt Retirement Fund with debt, in addition to all the things I have just mentioned, was all about accounting trickery: It made the budget look healthier than it was, because it assumed a return, year after year, of 7 per cent from every dollar deposited into that fund, even if it lost money. If it were losing money, those opposite would have reported 7 per cent. That was the assumption. If those promised returns are removed from the forecast—here is what it does to their budget trickery—the \$328 million projected surplus in 2024-25 turns into a deficit of \$911 million and the \$824 million surplus forecast for the year after turns into a \$600 million deficit.

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

Mr MICHAEL DALEY: As I said, you would have thought they had learned from TAHE, icare and a whole range of mismanagement on a monumental scale. But, every time we turn over a page in the budget, their trickiness and their so-called accounting standards are laid bare for all the world to see.

BUS INDUSTRY TASKFORCE

Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (11:45): My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport. Will the Minister please update the House on the Bus Industry Taskforce?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (11:45): I thank the member for Wallsend for her question. I acknowledge her and, indeed, all the Hunter MPs, who stand with their community as they deal with such a significant loss in that part of the State. Last Monday Australians awoke to the terrible news there had been a major bus accident in the Hunter Valley. Ten people had lost their lives and many were in hospital. I cannot begin to comprehend the deep sadness and grief that that community is bearing after that horrific accident. I join with all members in expressing our deepest sympathies to those affected.

Road safety should always be above politics. The circumstances of that tragic accident need to be investigated. We need to consider whether we can do things to prevent that kind of thing happening again and from affecting further families and communities. On 1 May I formed the Bus Industry Taskforce. It is led by John Lee. I asked them to advise the Government on how it can improve bus services across this State. Following the tragic events last week, I have expanded the terms of reference for that task force to include an examination of certain aspects of the safety and regulatory arrangements of buses in our State. That includes examining whether

current requirements regarding seatbelts are adequate enough. We need to make sure that those provisions are adequate. We need to make sure that those provisions of enforcement of wearing seatbelts are adequate as well.

While the former Government commenced a rollout of seatbelts across some regional New South Wales school buses, it is critical that we look at whether that program needs to be expanded to other areas of the State. The task force should also consider whether any changes to the Australian Design Rules for buses and coaches are needed. I asked the task force to look also at the ability of Transport for NSW to oversee and enforce safety management systems implemented by bus and coach operators. This direction includes examining whether there are any gaps or duplications between Transport's requirements and those overseen by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator.

I want to ensure that the task force has adequate independent support to respond to those terms of reference quickly and independently. That is why last week I appointed Darren Lane, a member of the task force, to provide independent safety advice on the operations of buses across our State. Mr Lane has more than 20 years of experience with assisting Australian organisations in government and the private sector on safety systems, including the former State Transit Authority. He is a former safety regulator. I am pleased to report to the House that they have already commenced work on making sure we have the right provisions in place. [*Extension of time*]

I have asked the task force to ensure that early findings and recommendations are provided to me and to the Government by 31 July. Mr Lane will continue to work with the bus industry to ensure that we are responding appropriately and that further reports are provided as soon as that information is available. Members should be aware that, in asking the Bus Industry Taskforce to do this important work, we are not interfering or duplicating any police or safety investigations in relation to this tragic accident. Rather, this is about looking at the changes that might be required from within the Department of Transport or within the industry. I have made it very clear to the task force that I expect that it will work cooperatively with the NSW Police Force and obviously with the Office of Transport Safety Investigations [OTSI] to ensure we provide the best possible safety outcome. OTSI has commenced its work and is undertaking investigation right now into this incident. Of course, as soon as the report is made available to me, I will table it in this House.

Each review and investigation into this incident will provide another perspective on what happened and how we can stop such horrible incidents from happening again. We should not fear different ideas, views or perspectives on how to improve safety. We should welcome them. We want to hear from road users. We want to make sure it is safe for our passengers, so we need to make sure that passengers have a voice. We want to make sure it is safe for our transport workers, so they have to have a say about their wellbeing as well. We want to ensure that the fleet that carries passengers and our drivers is well maintained, and that means our operators need to share their views too. This is a complex transport system. No fix is easy. That is why we are using the Bus Industry Taskforce to undertake this important investigation and report directly to the Government.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Tweed.

[*Interruption*]

Members will come to order. The member for Tweed is back on the job. He will be heard in silence.

NORTHERN RIVERS FLOOD RECOVERY

Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed) (11:50): My question is directed to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. When will the Government deliver the \$750 million second tranche of funding for housing buybacks in flood-impacted communities in the Northern Rivers?

Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (11:51): That would be the unfunded program, I believe. I appreciate the member's question and the Government is undertaking the process of delivering the Resilient Homes Fund, including the Resilient Homes Program and the Resilient Lands Program, through the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation. The Government is rolling out the Resilient Homes Program, the largest buyback program of its kind in Australia, and we are prioritising home buyback, home raising and home retrofit offers for communities across the Northern Rivers because it is important that we do what we can to get people into homes. In terms of getting people out of homes that are at high risk, dealing with retrofit and improvements that might have to happen in terms of those who can stay in the areas they live in, and also making sure that there is new land and new opportunities available for housing into the future, the Government released the draft Resilient Lands Strategy on 2 June this year.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. It is a very specific question, which is when the Government will do tranche two. Tranche one was done by us when in government.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: No, it wasn't actually.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Yes, it was. When will tranche two happen?

The SPEAKER: It is not a debate. The member for Dubbo has taken a point of order. The Minister will address the question more specifically.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Sure. It is disappointing, though, that the Opposition has now decided to go down the path of trying to politicise flood recovery. Those opposite have tried to politicise everything else in this place and now they are politicising flood recovery. I think the people of the Tweed and the Northern Rivers should be outraged by that. We are going through the process. The Government has issued the first round of buyback options under the Resilient Homes Program and, as at 19 June, 308 offers of voluntary home buyback have been approved, 150 offers have been accepted and 11 settlements are complete.

Mr Dugald Saunders: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Minister still has not said when. One of his members, the member for Lismore, specifically wrote to the Premier. It is a simple question: When?

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member for Dubbo will resume his seat.

Mr PAUL SCULLY: Not one dollar of that was in the budget—not one dollar. It is all right to confect outrage at the moment, but not one dollar was put in. We will work through flood recovery, we will do it responsibly and we will do it within the context of the budget mess that those opposite left us.

MINISTER FOR FINANCE

Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (11:54): My question is directed to the Premier. The Premier's finance Minister is married to his good friend George Houssos—

[Interruption]

The SPEAKER: Members will come to order. I need to hear the question, as does the Premier. The Deputy Premier will come to order.

Ms ROBYN PRESTON: The finance Minister is married to the Premier's good friend George Houssos, who is a senior manager of government relations at the Insurance Council of Australia. On 3 May the Premier allocated nine insurance Acts to the Minister for Finance. What communication did the Premier have with the Minister for Finance about her conflict of interest before making those allocations?

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:56): What an odious and obnoxious implication there is in that question. How odious and obnoxious. Members will notice there is an enormous amount of conjecture in the question, but no actual allegation—nothing that the Minister or her partner have done that would in any way breach the ministerial code of conduct or the provisions the Minister outlined to the Government before taking that commission. I can go through those for the benefit of the House. The Minister has, of course, outlined the steps that would be taken by her and her office to avoid a conflict of interest in relation to her husband or her husband's employer.

They include writing to me about any decisions that are going to be taken that are expected to confer a benefit or may be perceived as a conflict of interest; ensuring that any members' meetings she attends with the Insurance Council of Australia or its representatives are also attended by a senior public servant; declaring the interests of her husband during any relevant Cabinet or Executive Council meeting; abstaining from participating in any relevant discussion or decision-making in relation to the Insurance Council of Australia or any members of the ICA unless the Premier or the chair of the committee approves it; and advising the Secretary to the Treasury, the Department of Customer Service about her partner's interest, so that any correspondence from or on behalf of the Insurance Council of Australia or its representatives is managed appropriately and any requests for meetings with these entities are treated in the same way as any other request.

It is a detailed and comprehensive plan to manage a conflict of interest. The Opposition will not acknowledge this, but the truth of the matter is that every member of Parliament must manage conflicts of interest—unless you live in an igloo in Tasmania.

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was what communications were there between the Premier and the Minister about managing a conflict of interest before she was allocated the responsibility.

The SPEAKER: I understand the point of order. I heard the question and have been listening closely to the Premier. The Premier is being relevant.

Mr CHRIS MINNS: The implication in the question is that Minister Houssos tried to get the portfolio because her husband works for the Insurance Council of Australia. That is the smokescreen those opposite are

attempting to prosecute in the Parliament. The Minister has worked diligently on behalf of the people of New South Wales, and not a shred of evidence has been provided to traduce her good name—unlike the shadow Treasurer, who had a direct pecuniary conflict of interest and was promoted by the Leader of the Opposition. He had shares in Transurban while he made decisions about toll roads. He took that money. That was disgraceful conduct on the part of the previous Government.

HEALTH SERVICES

Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (11:59): I address my question to the Minister for Health, and Minister for Regional Health. Will the Minister update the House on the workforce challenges facing hospitals in New South Wales?

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (11:59): What a fantastic question. I thank the member for Bega for his ongoing commitment to our health workers right across New South Wales, and particularly to his local health district, the Southern NSW LHD. Recently we had an opportunity to meet with the CEO of that LHD. The member for Bega has a very strong relationship with the health workforce in his region. Many will know that he has a very strong relationship with the health workforce across New South Wales. Yesterday in the other place the Treasurer delivered a budget update to the Parliament. He uncovered a range of different fiscal timebombs that the Government has inherited.

As I outlined earlier, perhaps the most disappointing timebomb for everyone in this place, and certainly for me—and I will go through the impact it has had on each LHD in a minute—is that at a time when the shadow health Minister was saying that he was recruiting a 10,000-plus nursing workforce, he should have included an asterisk outlining that 1,100 of those were only temporary. I want everyone to think about the context in which that decision was made. Those are some of the men and women—though not all—from our frontline healthcare workforce who navigated the people of New South Wales through arguably some of its darkest hours. He played an act of trickery and treachery.

Mr Matt Kean: Point of order: I take a point of order under Standing Order 129. The Minister should make it apparent to the House that the reason for the workforce shortage is because he misled Gerard Hayes.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr RYAN PARK: Currently the Hunter New England LHD has 138 unfunded nurses. The great people of Greater Western Sydney have 119 unfunded nurses. There are 104 unfunded nurses in the South Eastern Sydney LHD. In the Sydney LHD there are 99 unfunded nurses. In the electorate of the member for Wahroonga—*[Extension of time]*

I look forward to being invited on the very popular Macquarie Street Matters podcast—

Mr Alister Henskens: Point of order: I refer to Standing Order 129. I appreciate the Minister plugging my podcast, but it has nothing to do with the question that was asked.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr RYAN PARK: The Northern Sydney LHD has 82 unfunded nurses.

The SPEAKER: The member for Monaro will come to order. The member for Heffron will come to order. The member for Riverstone will come to order.

Mr RYAN PARK: There are 61 unfunded nurses in the Illawarra Shoalhaven LHD. The Western NSW LHD has 56 unfunded nurses, the Northern NSW LHD has 51 unfunded nurses, and the Nepean and Blue Mountains LHD has 50 unfunded nurses—and the list goes on. That was one of the most appalling decisions we have seen. Upon taking up my new role, I was appalled to hear NSW Health say, "We've got this system—COVID testing clinics." Do members remember those? I wonder why we continue to fund them. It is weird, because down my way people were using them as learner driver tracks as there was no-one there. One or two people might turn up and buy a cup of coffee—the normal thing.

I said, "Excuse me, how much is this costing?" They said, "It is costing us millions of dollars." I said, "Millions of dollars? Why haven't we stopped this?" They said, "The former Government." Just to remind members what happened, the so-called economic managers opposite kept COVID testing clinics open with no-one attending at a cost of millions of dollars to the State. The Minns Labor Government scrapped it. We will focus on delivering for frontline healthcare workers by making sure that we spend every single dollar sensibly and sustainably right across New South Wales.

ROAD TUNNEL AIR QUALITY

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (12:05): I direct my question to the Minister representing the Minister for Roads. Considering new research indicates that the health risks from transport pollution are higher than previously understood, will she commit to a review of the chief scientist's findings on road tunnel air quality?

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (12:05): I thank the member for Balmain for her question. As her neighbouring MP, I represent communities that have been significantly impacted by road tunnels and by WestConnex. I understand that residents want assurance that the air they and their kids breathe is safe. I assure the community and the member for Balmain that our Government is committed to the health and safety of all road users. We are committed to reducing emissions from transport and improving air quality across our city and State. The independent NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer released reports on road tunnel air quality in 2014 and 2018. Those reports found that emissions from well-designed road tunnels caused a negligible change to surrounding air quality and, as such, there is little to no health benefit to surrounding communities in installing filtration and air treatment systems in those tunnels. However, the Government recognises that air quality around most motorways is a key community concern.

I confirm for the member for Balmain and for other members of the House that my colleague the roads Minister has asked the chief scientist to review those reports. Transport for NSW will also conduct a review of air quality monitoring from operating motorway tunnels across the network and look at the impact on ambient air quality. I am advised that no road tunnels in Australia utilise tunnel filtration systems. Further, air quality monitoring has been and will continue to be carried out at all stages of the WestConnex project, including once it is operational. Air emissions in New South Wales are regulated by the NSW Environment Protection Authority [EPA], and compliance with ambient or outdoor air quality standards is an essential consideration during road project design and operation. To ensure that requirements and standards are met, projects must be built and operated according to conditions placed on the project by the planning Minister.

Those conditions control air quality limits and require ongoing monitoring and reporting. They are developed in consultation with the New South Wales Advisory Committee on Tunnel Air Quality, which is chaired by the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer. The committee includes representatives from the EPA, NSW Health, Transport for NSW, the Department of Planning and Environment, and world-leading air quality experts. Air quality monitoring results are made public and published on the New South Wales Department of Planning and Environment website. The Government will continue to support initiatives to reduce emissions from vehicles and monitor tunnel and roadside emissions to manage them appropriately. [*Extension of time*]

The member for Balmain can be reassured that I will continue to work with her and with residents in our communities and across our cities and the State to ensure that the issues around air quality and WestConnex are well managed. As the Minister for Transport, I am working every day to deliver a world-class public transport system that is accessible, affordable, safe, connected and sustainable. It has to be sustainable. That is why this Government is committed to expanding its investment in zero-emissions buses and active transport. It is giving people the choice to shift out of their private vehicles onto public transport, onto bikes or to walk. We know that a reliable public transport system is the best way to deliver real choice for people and passengers across all of Sydney.

People are sick and tired of being stuck in their cars and paying more and more for tolls across the city, which members opposite made. We are the most tolled city on earth. That is the system that we inherited from members opposite. People do not have the choice to access public transport. That is the change that we need to make. Investment in public transport is the best way to give people that choice. It benefits everybody; it reduces congestion and emissions. It makes our city more liveable and connected, not just for people on the Balmain peninsula but for communities all across New South Wales. As Minister for Transport, I will be working each and every day to ensure that we achieve that for all people across our city and our State.

RETAIL WORKERS

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (12:10): My question is addressed to the hardworking Minister for Industrial Relations. Will the Minister inform the House about how the New South Wales Government is keeping retail workers safe?

Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (12:10): I thank the very hardworking member for Prospect. I know how hard he has been advocating for this change over a very long time. I know of his very strong advocacy on behalf of retail workers in his electorate. This morning the Premier, the Attorney General and I met with retail workers at Woolworths Town Hall to hear firsthand about the challenges retail workers face every day when dealing with abuse and even assault in their workplace. Accompanying the Premier, the Attorney General and I were Bernie Smith, the

NSW Branch Secretary of the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association [SDA]; Barbara Nebart, the secretary of the SDA Newcastle branch; Natalie Davis, the general manager of supermarkets at Woolworths; Paul Zahra from the Australian Retailers Association; and Paul Nicolaou, Executive Director of Business Sydney—government, retail workers, employers and industry working together.

We spoke to retail workers like Touhi and Cheryl and many others, who shared their experiences of abuse and assault at work. It was confronting. All of us have heard the stories that have been told by retail workers, particularly during the pandemic. It is getting worse. Their stories underpin the need for the Government to take action. The workers' experiences are borne out by evidence and research by the McKell Institute. It has confirmed that a staggering 85 per cent of retail workers have been abused or assaulted at work. In a survey of 6,000 retail workers conducted by the SDA in 2022, 70 per cent of respondents said that abuse and violence became more frequent during COVID-19. One in five workers said they were spat or coughed on during the pandemic. In the same survey, almost 8 per cent of respondents said they had been the victim of physical violence from a customer in the past 12 months.

That must stop. The Government is committed to taking the strongest possible steps to stamp out the abuse and assault of retail workers. The Government plans to do this by amending the Crimes Act and creating new offences modelled on existing offences in the Crimes Act for assaults against law enforcement and frontline health and emergency workers. Our planned amendments will greatly increase the maximum penalties for assaulting retail workers. During the pandemic we watched retail workers continue to go to work to serve our community. They were on the front line. They risked their own safety to keep us all fed and stocked. We called them essential workers. We all did—every single member in this Chamber. [*Extension of time*]

Here is our opportunity to give meaning to our words to ensure that retail workers enjoy the same right to a safe workplace as other essential workers in New South Wales. I ask all members to support the Government in its plan to protect our retail workers. I congratulate the SDA, the Australian Retailers Association, Business NSW, Woolworths, Bunnings, Wesfarmers and Coles, which are standing with the Government to protect the rights of retail workers to have a safe workplace. This is what happens when we come together. The reception for the Premier was fantastic. The Premier even served some customers at the checkout. It was fantastic. Members will see it tonight on the news. The secretary of the SDA, Bernie Smith, said, "The new laws announced by the New South Wales Government today will help protect retail and shop workers from customer abuse and ensure they feel safer and more respected in the workplace." I also note the response of the Australian Retailers Association:

ARA CEO Paul Zahra praised the NSW Government's commitment to protecting retail workers and consulting with industry via the ARA on the development of the initiative.

...

"Actions speak louder than words ...

Woolworths Group CEO Brad Banducci said:

This is a significant day for our 50,000+ hard working retail team members across New South Wales.

He also said:

Woolworths Group today welcomed a move by the New South Wales Government to strengthen laws with tougher penalties for abuse against retail workers.

Business Sydney Executive Director Paul Nicolaou congratulated Premier Chris Minns on this initiative. We will support retail workers today.

POLICE TASER USE

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism) (12:15): I add to my earlier answer. For the benefit of the House, I make it very clear that that was the first I had heard of an earlier, more detailed draft, which I mentioned in my response. But I also make it very clear that the Commissioner of Police was very up-front about the process that the department of police had taken. I read from a statement I have been provided:

The determination of the content and timing of information released to media on 17 May 2023 was made in consideration of Mrs Nowland's extended family, the gravity of the situation and that the critical investigation team was not on the ground until that evening. Our priority was to ensure family members learned details of the incident directly from police rather than third parties and to ensure the integrity of the investigation. The approach taken was consistent with the NSW police policies.

Condolences

HUNTER VALLEY BUS ACCIDENT

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (12:19): I speak on the condolence motion moved by the Premier. It was meant to be the happiest day of a young couple's lives. Shortly after 11.30 p.m. on Sunday 11 June, that happiness was rocked by an unimaginable tragedy. Ten people were killed and dozens more injured in a bus crash that has sent shockwaves across the Hunter region, across New South Wales and across Australia. The loss is difficult for many of us to comprehend, and I simply cannot imagine the pain of those directly affected by the tragedy. The town of Singleton has been particularly devastated. A tragedy like that is difficult for any community but is felt even more in smaller towns.

I add my condolences to those offered by the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and my colleagues on both sides of the Chamber. On behalf of the Charlestown electorate I say to the family members, the friends, the loved ones and the communities of those lost that we are with them. The terrible, tragic collision affects the entire Singleton community and particularly, of course, the Singleton Roosters AFL club. All of the AFL clubs across the region have felt the loss of the five members who died in the crash—players and volunteers who were dedicated to their community and their club. It is a shattering event for the community—for the families, for their friends and for their loved ones—and it will be felt acutely for many years to come. The impact was felt more widely than just in Singleton and the Hunter, with communities across New South Wales and Australia holding services and memorials for their sons and daughters who were lost so young and so suddenly.

I mention one in particular, Bec Mullen, a young doctor at Newcastle's Calvary Mater hospital. Like the other nine people who lost their lives on that night, Bec had a life of incredible promise ahead of her. My love and my sympathies go out to her family. I went to school with Bec's mum. While it must have been a terrible and deeply upsetting end to their wedding day, I extend to Mitchell Gaffney and Madeleine Edsell my sincere wishes for a long and happy marriage together. I say to them and to everyone who is affected by the loss of the 10 special guests: Be kind to yourselves and take time to grieve, but also draw strength from your love for one another.

I also take this opportunity to acknowledge the first responders who were on the scene within minutes of the crash. As NSW Ambulance Chief Superintendent Paula Sinclair pointed out just hours after the crash, those first responders are paramedics every day of their lives, but they do not experience a job like that every day. The first plea for assistance from the NSW Ambulance inspector who arrived on the scene has been reported in the media. He knew he was dealing with a tragedy on a scale that we had not seen in this State for decades, but he did not know how truly horrific the crash had been. Many of us have heard the radio coverage of what he said that night, and his words are haunting. But just as noticeable is the lack of panic in his voice—his control in the face of something that for many of us would be completely shattering. That exact level of professionalism and courage is the hallmark of our first responders, and I am incredibly thankful for the work that they undertake each and every day, often under trying conditions.

I thank our police, our paramedics, the retained Fire and Rescue officers who attended the scene, the Rural Fire Service and the health workers, who have all been part of the rescue and recovery. I acknowledge that the circumstances were, thankfully, unique. Those first responders met the challenge with the professionalism and skill that they bring to every call-out, but we cannot overlook how devastating the event was. It is so important that first responders are supported as they come to grips with what they encountered that night, and I am very pleased that the Premier has announced a significant amount of support available to them.

The tragedy is difficult to get one's head around, even from a distance. I think about the strength and courage of the first responders; the grace and resilience demonstrated by the families, friends and loved ones of the victims; and the community spirit and empathy shown by Singleton, the Hunter Valley and all of New South Wales. Now we must and will give all those who are grieving the space and the support that they need. My thoughts are with each and every one of those people as they grieve and as they face the rest of their lives after the loss of their loved ones.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): On behalf of the people of Wallsend, I express my sincere condolences to the victims of the bus crash and their families.

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (12:25): I speak to the condolence motion and thank the Premier for bringing it before the House. The bus accident at Greta on the night of Sunday 11 June, with resulting injuries and the tragic loss of life of 10 passengers, has stunned the State and, indeed, the nation. I extend my deepest condolences, and those of the Albury electorate that I represent, to the families who have lost loved ones. Their loss is unimaginable. I wish a speedy recovery to health to those who were injured in the crash and who have returned home. We particularly keep those who are still in hospital in our prayers.

I know the pain and loss stemming from the accident will remain for a long time with the families and communities of the Hunter, from Singleton to Greta and Cessnock. I extend the appreciation of my community to the staff and healthcare professionals of the John Hunter, Calvary Mater, Maitland and Royal Prince Alfred

hospitals for their efforts and skill in providing urgent and continuing care and medical treatment to those who were in the incident. I acknowledge also the importance of the work carried out on the roadside by our New South Wales police and emergency services—the officers, staff and volunteers who responded without hesitation to the accident to help rescue the passengers and to get them on their way to hospital in the middle of the night.

Many, like me, awoke to the terrible news. It will be hard to ignore the important questions it raises about road safety. I encourage all who are interested in helping out to consider making a donation to support the families through the difficult times ahead. Donations can be made to the New South Wales Government and Rotary fund at rawcs.org.au. In conclusion I say to those affected: In the days ahead, draw strength. Our minds and our thoughts are with you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): I encourage the community to make donations to Rotary Australia World Community Service in Singleton.

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (12:27): On Monday 12 June Australians woke to the terrible news that there had been a major bus accident in the Hunter Valley, causing 10 people to tragically lose their lives and leaving many others in hospital. It is incredibly difficult to comprehend the sadness that rests on the shoulders of so many because of the accident. I know I join all members in this House, as well as a number of residents in my electorate of Summer Hill who have contacted my office, in extending our sympathies to everyone impacted by the tragedy. We know that this tragedy will have far-reaching and long-lasting impacts for the families and the loved ones of those who lost their lives, for those who were injured, and indeed for the entire community. When accidents like this occur, our communities always rely on the swift and skilled response of our first responders. I thank the incredible emergency services personnel who immediately attended the site. To the police, the firefighters, the paramedics and the transport commanders who secured the site, who rescued people, who treated them and who transported passengers—thank you for the critical and incredibly challenging work you do.

I also acknowledge the impact that this type of work can have on those first responders. The New South Wales Government has provided, and will continue to provide, specialist trauma support and assistance to the staff and to transport operators as required during this very difficult time. I assure the House that the Government is taking this matter with the utmost seriousness and that a series of investigations is currently underway. The circumstances of this accident will need to be investigated to consider whether there are things we can do and changes we need to make that will prevent this kind of thing from happening again and affecting further families and communities. As members would be aware, the NSW Police Force is undertaking an investigation. In addition to this, the Office of Transport Safety Investigations has commenced its work to inquire into the cause of this incident in accordance with section 46 of the Passenger Transport Act 1990. I will table the report on that investigation as soon as it is completed.

We know that this community is hurting and the Government will ensure that people are able to grieve. We want to make sure that they can be with their friends and with their loved ones at the site of this terrible incident. It is a natural human response to want to go to the site. A vigil was held at the temporary memorial on the evening of Thursday 15 June. Traffic control was in place at the time and Transport for NSW monitored that event to make sure everyone was safe. I assure the House that Transport traffic controllers remain onsite, assisting the Red Cross in facilitating access to the temporary memorial at the roundabout for family and loved ones involved.

To the families impacted by this event and to the community still grieving, as the Minister for Transport, I take my responsibility seriously to ensure that what we do is critical and well informed, and that we do everything we possibly can so that no further community has to experience this type of grief and loss. As the investigations proceed, I commit that I will continue to listen carefully. I will consider all the ideas put before me in a considered way. Most importantly, I will act to improve the safety of our transport network.

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (12:32): This is a really sad day but a really important day on which we speak passionately and reverently about what was arguably one of the most difficult and darkest days our State has faced in a very long time. On the evening of Sunday and in the early hours of the morning, I was awakened by messages from my secretary and Commissioner Morgan, who is the NSW Ambulance commissioner, about a very tragic accident that had occurred in the Hunter. It is hard to imagine because the last time an accident like that happened, all of us were a lot younger and we have not seen an accident like this, thank heavens, in such a long time. It was only when we started to see the images and I began to have discussions with my colleague the member for Cessnock, who is in the House, and other Hunter MPs that the tragedy started to take on a scale, the likes of which we have not seen for a very long time. That incident left 10 people killed and another 25 with significant injuries. Today, 10 days on from the accident, seven people remain in our hospitals.

That Monday evening I spoke to a number of frontline paramedics, and they were very challenging conversations. I spoke to Joel, who was one of the first paramedics on the scene and who made the radio call, which we have all heard about, to mobilise additional resources to the crash site. Despite the scale of this incident, the integration and coordination of emergency services that night and in the early hours of the morning should be heralded. There will be an inquiry and I understand all of that, but I hope the inquiry focuses on what these brave women and men did that was so incredible and that, without a doubt, saved lives and allowed people to go home from hospital. When I spoke to Joel about how he was going, he told me that he had been in the service for approximately 15 years but he had never seen a scene like it. It was like a war zone. I do not think any of us, certainly not me—and I said this to him—can ever walk in our frontline responders' shoes. But I said to him and to the other paramedics I spoke to, who include Todd, Luke and Aaron, how proud we are and how proud I was of them, as their Minister—really proud of those for men and men, who did incredible work under challenging circumstances.

If I can paint the scene at Greta that night and in the early hours of the following morning, there was a bus on its side in a cold and foggy environment near a major arterial freeway and there was a paramedic and a couple of police officers on the scene in a matter of minutes. I had the opportunity to speak with one of those officers, Taycee, when I was in the region to see how the troops were and to check on the supports we were putting on. It was incredible. Just for a moment, on my way home that evening when I left the scene, I tried to imagine what they were confronted with on that evening. It is not something that any of us can do, but it is really important that we at least try to do that because it gives us a sense of the challenging conditions they faced.

The other conversation I had in recent days was with a gentleman named Matt Mullen. Dr Rebecca Mullen tragically lost her life. I have had a number of communications with Matt, whose family, understandably, is doing it incredibly tough. I said to him, like the Premier said, that we—the member for Cessnock, the member for Upper Hunter and all of the Hunter members, the police Minister and the Premier—will stand with this community every step of the way. The show of leadership from local members and local mayors is testament to them as individuals. I know I am proud of them and proud that they are colleagues and friends, but they should be very proud because I know their community is proud. Every person I spoke to up there said how proud they were of the local leadership. I thank each and every one of them for that.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the incredible work of our frontline paramedics. I also acknowledge the incredible work of our hospital staff across the board. They worked incredibly hard, particularly in those first few hours. The casualties were great. The extent of trauma was even more significant. I thank every single healthcare worker who played a role in the lead-up, at the site, and in the recovery because they have done their State, themselves and their families very proud. As their Minister, I am proud of every single one of them. In the early hours I knew that we would need mental health support and sustained mental health support for the community. That was the feedback I received very quickly from the member for Cessnock. The secretary and I made a decision quickly to mobilise mental health teams in those communities to try to make sure that, as people started to deal with the unimaginable, there would be support along the way. That is something we can sometimes forget during a crisis. In those first few hours, the adrenaline is rushing and people are doing their very best to salvage and preserve life. It is in the days, weeks and months after that the community will need constant support.

Yesterday I checked in with the Ambulance Commissioner and he reported that he had been engaging with his staff and crews right across the board, and obviously they were dealing with it in their own way. It is very tough, and I do not want anyone to think otherwise. We have not yet seen the enormous toll that this will take on our frontline responders. But I said to them on that day when I was in the Hunter—and I have said repeatedly since then—that we will stand with them. I do not want any barrier for those people to be able to access the support they need, whether it is in the days ahead, the weeks ahead, the months ahead or beyond. We as a government need to make sure that support remains in place.

I acknowledge the family members who have lost loved ones. Like the Mullens, they are dealing with a pain that is simply unimaginable. I acknowledge the couple, who did all the right things on a wedding day. How many of us have travelled to the Hunter region and experienced a beautiful wedding, then got into a bus and travelled back to our accommodation? It is almost a rite of passage, particularly as we get older; it is what we often do. Those people had gone above and beyond to keep their guests safe, and I cannot begin to imagine what they are dealing with at the moment. We will care for those families with loved ones who have been injured or who are still in our hospitals in the only way we know how—with the passion, sensitivity and caring nature that distinguishes our NSW Health employees. I want to make sure that the community, through their local members, particularly the member for Cessnock and the member for Upper Hunter, know that when the cameras go and the lights and sirens move on our Government will support them every step of the way. I know I speak on behalf of the House. The member for Cessnock gave an incredible speech in the House yesterday that made us all feel very proud.

I want every single one of those people who have been impacted by this to please reach out. Whether they are a frontline responder, a family member or a person in the community who knew someone, they must seek help. This is a burden that is very big, and they cannot carry it on their own. On behalf of the health service, as Minister, I say that we will be with them every step of the way. I thank our frontline responders, our healthcare workers in hospitals and all of those emergency responders on the ground. I also pay tribute to those who we have lost in this tragedy. To their families I say that we are thinking of them very deeply. They are in our thoughts daily. They will be in our thoughts for some time. We will be with those who are with loved ones recovering from their injuries every step of the way during what will be a difficult, and perhaps long, recovery.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The question is that the motion be agreed to. Members will indicate their support by standing in their places.

Motion agreed to.

Members and officers of the House stood as a mark of respect.

Bills

CRIMES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (ASSAULTS ON RETAIL WORKERS) BILL 2023

First Reading

Bill introduced on motion by Mr Michael Daley, read a first time and printed.

Second Reading Speech

Mr MICHAEL DALEY (Maroubra—Attorney General) (12:43): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The New South Wales Government is pleased to introduce the Crimes Legislation Amendment (Assaults on Retail Workers) Bill 2023. The bill is the result of an election promise made by Government members when they were in opposition. It follows a long and sustained campaign by the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association [SDA], the union that protects retail workers in this State and nation. I thank members of the SDA, particularly secretary Bernie Smith, for taking the long-held concerns of its members to us in opposition, with objective evidence that they had obtained and anecdotes from many of their retail workers who had been treated inappropriately by members of the public. The SDA sought action on their behalf, and we are pleased to deliver that action. I particularly call out the Minister for Industrial Relations, who championed these new laws and negotiated them with the SDA. I am happy to have played my part. As the Minister pointed out today, earlier this morning the Premier, the Minister and I met with retail workers to let them know that the bill was coming forward to the House this afternoon. They and other representative retail bodies are elated with the bill and are happy to see the culmination of a long campaign.

The bill will create new offences under the Crimes Act 1900 for assaults and other actions against retail workers. These reforms implement an election commitment made by NSW Labor to give retail workers greater protection against assaults, threats and abuse. Retail workers keep our economy running and ensure that the people of New South Wales can obtain essential goods. Deliberate acts of violence against retail workers in the course of their duties, such as those seen in some instances during the COVID-19 pandemic, are unacceptable. The Government has heard firsthand accounts from retail workers across New South Wales who have suffered abuse and even violence in their workplace. Such offending is distressing for these workers, their families and the wider community. There is no excuse for it. It is unacceptable.

The new offences contained in the bill recognise that acts of violence against retail workers warrant higher penalties than the general assault provisions in the Crimes Act. The Government will protect our retail workers from acts of violence. The bill is intended to send a strong message of support to retail workers. It sends a strong message of warning to those who commit assaults or other acts of violence against retail workers that such behaviour will not be tolerated. I turn to the substance of the bill. Schedule 1 to the bill will insert new division 8C into part 3 of the Crimes Act. This division introduces specific offences for assaults and other actions against retail workers into the Crimes Act. New section 60F in schedule 1 to the bill defines a retail worker as "a person whose duties primarily involve working in an area of a shop open to the public". A shop is defined as "the whole or a part of a building, place, stall, structure, tent, vehicle or yard in which goods are sold, or offered or exposed for sale, by retail, including by auction". "Goods" are things produced to be sold, and in new section 60F "goods" is intended to mean merchandise or possessions.

New section 60G in schedule 1 to the bill will introduce three new graduated offences of assault and other actions against retail workers. The structure of these offences is modelled on the offence structure for the existing provisions for assaults and other actions against police, law enforcement officers, frontline health workers and

frontline emergency workers under part 3, division 8A of the Crimes Act. However, the maximum penalties for the retail worker offence provisions reflect the different nature and level of risk faced by retail workers. New section 60G (1) makes it an offence to assault, throw a missile at, stalk, harass or intimidate a retail worker in the course of the worker's duty, even if no actual bodily harm is caused to the worker. This offence will carry a maximum penalty of four years' imprisonment. This is two years more than the maximum penalty for the general offence provision for common assault that applies to everyone in the community.

New section 60G (2) makes it an offence to assault a retail worker in the course of the worker's duty and, by the assault, cause actual bodily harm to the worker. This offence will carry a maximum penalty of six years' imprisonment. This is one year more than the maximum penalty for the general assault occasioning actual bodily harm offence. New section 60G (3) makes it an offence to wound or cause grievous bodily harm to a retail worker in the course of the worker's duty, being reckless as to causing actual bodily harm to the worker or another person. This offence will carry a maximum penalty of 11 years' imprisonment. This is one year more than the maximum penalty for the general offence of recklessly causing grievous bodily harm and four years more than the maximum penalty for the general offence of recklessly wounding.

New section 60G (4) makes it clear that an action is taken to be carried out in relation to a retail worker in the course of the worker's duty, even if the worker is not on duty at the time, if it is carried out either as a consequence of, or in retaliation for, actions undertaken by the worker in the course of the worker's duty. This will mean that there will be circumstances in which an assault on a retail worker will be captured by the new offences even if the assault occurs outside of the shop in which the retail worker works.

Schedule 2 to the bill makes consequential amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act 1986 to provide that some of the new offences will be table offences. This means that they will be triable summarily in the Local Court unless an election is made for the offence to be prosecuted in a higher court on indictment. Schedule 2 [2] to the bill provides that the offence in new section 60G (2) will be a Table 1 offence. This means the offence will be tried summarily unless the prosecutor or defendant elects otherwise. Schedule 2 [2] to the bill provides that the offence in new section 60G (1) will be a Table 2 offence. This means the offence will be tried summarily unless the prosecutor elects otherwise. This is consistent with similar existing offences in the Crimes Act relating to police, law enforcement officers, and frontline health and emergency workers, and is intended to ensure efficiency within the criminal justice system.

Everyone deserves to feel safe at work. Retail workers are essential to the functioning of our economy and society and should not be subject to violence in the course of their work. I am very pleased to introduce this bill, which will ensure that assaults and other acts of violence against retail workers are better recognised and subject to appropriate penalties. The new offences are intended to not only provide a stronger deterrent against deliberate acts of violence against retail workers but to also better meet community standards. The New South Wales Government will monitor the impacts of these reforms. This includes ensuring that the new offences are working as intended to protect retail workers without disproportionately affecting Aboriginal people or people with mental health or cognitive impairment. The Government is committed to improving the way our justice system protects workers and ensuring that criminal penalties are appropriate. These reforms serve as another very important example of this work. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned.

PARLIAMENTARY REMUNERATION AMENDMENT BILL 2023

Second Reading Speech

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (12:54): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Parliamentary Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023. The bill proposes amendments to the Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1989. The Government made an election commitment to impose a two-year pay freeze for politicians. This pay freeze will achieve savings that can be used to help fund the essential workers and essential services that keep New South Wales running. The bill gives effect to that election commitment.

Members of both Houses of the New South Wales Parliament receive remuneration determined by the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal in accordance with the Act. Members' remuneration consists of a basic salary under part 2 of the Act and additional entitlements under part 3 of the Act. In addition, recognised office holders—being those members who hold certain parliamentary or executive government roles—receive an additional salary and expense allowance as set out in schedule 1 to the Act. This is based on a percentage uplift applied to the basic salary.

The amount of members' remuneration is subject to determinations made by the tribunal under the provisions of the Act. The tribunal may make a determination fixing the amount of the basic salary at such times that the tribunal thinks fit or the Minister directs. The tribunal makes annual determinations regarding additional entitlements on or before 1 June in each year or such later date as the Chief Commissioner of the Industrial Relations Commission directs. The practice of the tribunal has been to make a single annual determination each year that determines any changes to both the basic salary and additional entitlements. The most recent determination of the tribunal was made on 24 May 2022. The tribunal made determinations of both basic salary and additional entitlements, and these took effect on and from 1 July 2022.

The bill inserts a new section 4A into the Act that imposes temporary arrangements for the determination of basic salary. The new provision provides that a determination of basic salary by the tribunal must not fix an amount that would increase the basic salary to an amount that is more than the amount determined to have effect from 1 July 2022. To the extent that there is any inconsistency between the new section 4A and section 4 (3), the new section will prevail. Section 4 (3) requires that, in making a determination, the tribunal gives effect to the same wages policies the Industrial Relations Commission is required to give effect to under section 146C of the Industrial Relations Act 1996. The provision will be repealed automatically at the end of the day on 30 June 2025.

This provision has the effect of freezing the basic salary of members at the amount that was determined by the tribunal last year until 30 June 2025. The bill does not impact the tribunal's annual determinations under part 3 of the Act regarding additional entitlements. Additional entitlements include matters such as the electoral allowance, the communications allowance, the general travel allowance, the Sydney allowance and the equipment, services and facilities allowance.

Section 10 (1) (a) of the Act sets out the principle that additional entitlements are provided for the purpose of facilitating the efficient performance of the parliamentary duties of members. Additional entitlements are necessary for members to be able to perform their duties and serve their constituents in the best possible way. For this reason, additional entitlements will continue to be reviewed and, if considered necessary, increased, in accordance with any determination of the tribunal. The provisions of the bill will be taken to have commenced on the day that the bill was introduced into Parliament. The amendments proposed by the bill will honour the Government's election commitment to freeze politicians' pay for the next two years. I commend the bill to the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): It being 1.00 p.m., debate is interrupted to take note of committee reports. I set down resumption of the debate as an order of the day for a later hour.

Committees

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGE AND ETHICS

Reports

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

Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (12:59): As Chair: I speak to report No. 1/58 of the Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics entitled *Matters relating to the position of a Member suspended from the service of the House and subsequently re-elected*, which is, indeed, the first committee report for the new Parliament. The report concerns matters relating to the position of a member suspended from the service of the House and subsequently re-elected, consistent with a referral made to the committee by the House on 10 May 2023. The referral from the House specifically required the committee to inquire into and report on matters relating to the position of a member who:

- a. has been suspended from the service of the house until the verdict of the jury has been returned on criminal charges laid against him or her; and
- b. is subsequently re-elected to the next Parliament prior to any such jury verdict having been returned, or the proceedings having concluded.

The referral from the House further provided that the matters for inquiry should cover:

- a. whether consideration should be given to taking action against a member suspended in such circumstances;
- b if so, the scope of action that should be considered; and
- c any other related matters.

Given the significance of the issues raised, the committee resolved to obtain independent legal advice and has benefited from the expert opinion of Mr Stephen Free, SC; Mr Brendan Lim of counsel; and Mr Jackson Wherret of counsel. I thank those individuals and their instructing solicitor, Mr Mark Smyth, for sharing their knowledge and expertise with the committee.

After a thorough inquiry process and careful deliberation, the committee was able to reach unanimous conclusions concerning the matters of the inquiry. Consistent with the committee's jurisdiction and the terms of reference for the inquiry, the report provides some guidance as to whether consideration should be given to taking action against a member in the circumstances in question, as well as matters that may be relevant to such decision-making. However, the committee identified that it is a matter for the House itself to determine whether to exercise its power in any given case, including the power to suspend.

The committee's report went on to detail how the suspension of a member could potentially have serious and negative consequences for the House, a member's constituents, victims of any alleged crimes and the presumption of innocence of a member. In the circumstances, the committee recommended that the House seriously consider those factors before using Standing Order 255 to suspend a member. Further, the committee noted that Standing Order 255, which relates to the suspension of a member who has a criminal trial pending, requires strict and deliberate thresholds to be met before it is used. Having regard to the need for careful and thorough deliberation on matters of such gravity, the committee also recommended that, should the use of Standing Order 255 be contemplated in future, the House should refer the matter to the committee for prior consideration and that the standing orders and the resolution establishing the committee be amended to this end.

In closing, I thank my fellow committee members for their valuable contributions throughout the inquiry process. The time lines for the committee to report were tight and could not have been achieved without the dedicated and collegiate approach displayed by all members. I thank the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Ms Helen Minnican; the Deputy Clerk, Ms Carly Maxwell; and the committee secretariat for their professionalism and support in the conduct of the inquiry. It is an important committee report and inquiry. We set some clear thresholds for the consideration of the usage of Standing Order 255. I thank the Government for referring the matter to the Standing Committee on Parliamentary Privilege and Ethics. I commend the report to the House.

Report noted.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES
AMENDMENT (RENTAL FAIRNESS) BILL 2023**

Reports

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

Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (13:03): As Chair: I speak to report No. 1/58 of the Legislative Assembly Select Committee on the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Rental Fairness) Bill 2023 entitled *Residential Tenancies Amendment (Rental Fairness) Bill 2023*, tabled on 9 June 2023. The committee was appointed to consider matters relating to new section 22B of the bill and additional measures for improving transparency and better protecting tenancy applicants. The committee produced its report in just 16 days. That time frame reflects the urgent need for key reforms to address elements of the current rental crisis—a matter that this Government is deeply committed to. The committee received 22 written submissions from stakeholders, including from the Government, legal experts, tenants' advocacy service providers, community advocacy groups, industry representative groups and private individuals. The committee also held the first public hearing of this Parliament. It heard from 17 witnesses, who appeared to give evidence on behalf of 11 organisations.

I thank all inquiry participants for their effort and dedication throughout the short inquiry and for engaging so constructively in it. The report makes seven recommendations and 11 findings, addressing a broad range of matters relevant to transparency and broader improvements to the current tenancy application process. The committee acknowledges that there is a rental crisis in New South Wales, driven by many complex factors. Aside from new section 22B, the Government bill will introduce key reforms that will extend the existing ban on landlords and third parties soliciting higher amounts of rent, as well as introduce a portable bond rollover scheme. The Government is also in the process of appointing the first ever Rental Commissioner for New South Wales, and the committee heard support for that appointment.

The committee supports both of those reform measures, and it recommended that the House proceed to debate and pass all other provisions of the bill as a matter of urgency, which happened in this place yesterday. The committee also found that secret rent bidding is happening in New South Wales and that new section 22B sought to add transparency around the practice. Throughout the inquiry, the committee heard and considered stakeholders' concerns about the potential unintended consequences of the disclosure requirements under clause 22B. As an individual participating in the committee process—if I take my Chair hat off for a moment—I was shocked that people were proffering a preference to have rent bidding continue in secret as opposed to it being out in the open. I respect the concerns that participants had about what bidding out in the open might lead to, although I emphasise that there is no evidence to show that that might be the case.

Putting my Chair hat back on, during the inquiry the New South Wales Government announced that it would amend the bill to omit new section 22B. The committee believes this approach is consistent with the concerns that were raised during the inquiry. Inquiry participants acknowledged the positive intent behind adding greater transparency around secret rent bidding. The committee supports further consultation with key stakeholders by the incoming Rental Commissioner on proposed reforms to improve transparency in the tenancy application process.

The committee also heard about disadvantages and instances of discrimination when applying for tenancy agreements by individuals from marginalised groups, including Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability, people over 55, people on lower incomes and people at risk of homelessness. The committee recommended that, in consultation with advocacy groups, the Government consider how to limit or reduce discrimination when those groups are seeking to enter tenancy agreements. Finally, the committee heard about additional measures that could improve transparency in the tenancy application process. Many stakeholders emphasised the importance of having enforcement measures to ensure compliance. There is also a lack of adequate data to measure the extent of rent bidding. We have recommended that NSW Fair Trading consider implementing reporting requirements and a standardised tenancy application form to enable the Rental Commissioner to collect data on rent price increases and rent bidding.

In closing, I thank my fellow committee members for their valuable contributions and hard work throughout the inquiry. I also thank the secretariat for their professionalism and support. For the secretariat to turn this inquiry around in such a tight time frame meant they needed to work nights and weekends to get the job done. The Parliament cannot thank them enough for the incredible effort they made to do it all so quickly. Most of all, I again thank the submission makers and witnesses who engaged in the inquiry process on such a short turnaround. I emphasised to each of the attendees at the inquiry that the Government is committed to significant reform in this space, and I urged all of them to please stay engaged with this entire process because we highly value and respect their contributions. The committee greatly appreciates the time and effort of all those involved and thanks them for their valuable contributions. I commend the report to the House.

Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (13:09): On behalf of the Government, I express my appreciation to the chair and members of the Select Committee on the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Rental Fairness) Bill 2023 for the speedy way in which they were able to make their recommendations to the House to indicate that changes were needed to the bill. It is consistent with the Government's approach to ensure that this House not become the rubber stamp it can be tempted to become—and did in previous administrations. Rather, it must utilise the skills of members and the fact that there is a minority government. That will ensure as best as possible that the legislation that leaves this House and goes to the other place does not have unintended consequences.

Genuine concerns were raised during the consultation process on the bill. Even now there are differing views as to whether there are unintended consequences of new section 22B, to which the member for Cessnock has referred in his contribution. Nevertheless, the committee recommended that the newly appointed Rental Commissioner begin the task of ensuring that the possible unintended consequence of a rent auction does not occur while the Legislature tries to address the rental crisis and rent bidding. I particularly thank the members of the crossbench who drew the Government's attention to the possibility of there being unintended consequences, and I thank them for offering to serve on the select committee. They performed a remarkable task within a short period. I also thank the staff of the Parliament for being of so much assistance throughout the public hearing and the drafting of the report. I commend the report to the House.

Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (13:12): I contribute to the take-note debate on the report of the inquiry into the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Rental Fairness) Bill 2023. I make this contribution on behalf of The Greens and also as a member of the select committee. I note that the committee chair and the Leader of the House are in the Chamber, and I acknowledge the contributions they made. The Greens are pleased that the bill has passed this Chamber. On behalf of The Greens, I acknowledge the willingness of the Government to work with the crossbench, advocates and other stakeholders to get to a good outcome in which the portable bond scheme has passed and a referral for broader consideration of transparency is being handed to the Rental Commissioner to look at.

During the inquiry we heard overwhelmingly that nobody was interested in the idea of rental auctions—not renters, not tenants, not advocates, not peak bodies and not even the real estate industry. In fact, it is the first time in my eight years in this place that the Real Estate Institute and I have had the same position on anything—and I hope it will be the last. It means that potentially people will start talking, but I promise I have some radical rental reforms coming. In the discussion we repeatedly heard about the concept of transparency and empowerment. There was an idea that providing renters with information about the cost would somehow empower them to engage in a rent-bidding frenzy for a rental property whereby the already far too high price can go up and up.

Being outbid for a rental property that you cannot afford—when you have no more money in your bank account and know that the rent has been bid to a level that is too high for you—is not empowering. Facing the reality at every rental auction that people have more money than you—when you know that there is no more money in your pay packet to pay more rent—is not empowering. Pitting renters against each other to see who will fork out the highest price for a rental property is not empowering. Real estate agents and landlords preying on renters who are desperate to secure a home in a brutally competitive rental market because they face eviction is not empowering.

If we are serious about empowering renters, there is so much more we can do to ensure that they have an affordable and secure place to live. We can start with the key recommendation from the peak organisations who gave evidence to the inquiry around the idea of advancing standard rental application process and forms. That would give a level of empowerment and protection to renters. I am sure renters would agree that it would be far more empowering if they did not have to hand over huge amounts of personal and private information just to secure a place to live.

The other key recommendation in the report is the idea of addressing discrimination faced by renters. Again, addressing discrimination in our rental market is something that renters would find empowering. But there are other additional empowering measures that the Government could take. We could start with the key advice from the peak organisations that gave evidence that we could ban rent bidding entirely in this State. That would be empowering for renters in their ongoing struggle against the inflated rental market. We could end unfair no-grounds evictions. Imagine how empowering that would be for renters. We could allow them to have pets, which The Greens will move to do. Finally, we could get rents under control. Those are the empowering measures that The Greens are committed to delivering. We hope that beyond the report and the bill we see those kinds of empowering measures become law so that reforms can be delivered for renters.

Report noted.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell): I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.30 p.m.

Bills

PARLIAMENTARY REMUNERATION AMENDMENT BILL 2023

Second Reading Debate

Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (14:32): On behalf of the Opposition, I speak on the Parliamentary Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023. The piece of legislation involves a real cut to parliamentary salaries by a two-year freeze when currently there is now over 7 per cent inflation. In many respects, it is a piece of legislation and an announced policy that the Coalition supported, but it is unnecessary. Just as MPs' salaries were frozen during the COVID-19 pandemic without legislation, it is not necessary to pass legislation to achieve the outcome of the bill. The reason is clear and was adverted to in members' speeches in the other place and by the Minister earlier today. Section 4 (3) of the Parliamentary Remuneration Act binds any determination of parliamentary salaries to Government policies consistent with section 146C of the Industrial Relations Act. Public sector policies, such as the wages cap, are determined by regulation. So these outcomes could have been achieved by regulation, without the necessity of any legislation.

One must conclude that the reason it is being done this way is to patch up this new Government's complete absence of legislative agenda. It is filling up parliamentary time because the Labor Party, even after 12 years when it had an opportunity to develop public policy, was completely bereft of it even when going to the election. We are experiencing hard economic times at the moment. Members of Parliament need to set an example to the community and be cognisant of the fact that we are doing it tough. The community is doing it tough for a couple of reasons. The Federal Labor Government is completely mismanaging the economy of our nation. It has no cost-of-living policy and has presided over multiple interest rate rises in the short time it has been in government. The Federal and the State Labor governments are not honouring promises about reducing energy prices. All of those things are having a significant impact on family budgets.

We have now heard that the new State Government is going to make that even worse. It is cutting Active Kids vouchers, Creative Kids vouchers and First Lap vouchers. Back to School vouchers will be cut next. It is cutting Regional Apprenticeship vouchers. What we saw today in question time was an absolutely appalling attack on young people in regional areas taking on apprenticeships. They must travel significant distances to undertake skills training and they are being blamed for using government vouchers to give them a little bit of relief from the significant travel that they need to do. We have a huge labour shortage in our nation. We should be encouraging

young people to undertake skills training, not vilifying them in Parliament like this Labor Government did today in question time. Those programs are being cut because of this Government's unfunded public sector wage increase. Before the election, members opposite said they would not have to cut anything and that it would all be funded through productivity.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): Government members will come to order.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: Let us quantify the magnitude of some of the choices this Government is making. Every 0.2 per cent increase of public sector wages would fund a year of Active Kids vouchers. The Ultimate Fighting Championship [UFC] policy of this Government—

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): Government members will come to order. The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Wahroonga will cease raising his voice. The member for Coogee will come to order. The member for Summer Hill will come to order. They should take a chill pill. The member for Wahroonga will speak in a calm manner.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: The UFC policy alone, which is a new spending initiative, would fund 160,000 Active Kids vouchers worth \$100 each. In this State 700,000 Active Kids vouchers are being cut because of decisions this Government has made.

Mr Warren Kirby: Were they funded?

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I hear the interjection—a stupid interjection from the member opposite.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): Order! Members will not debate across the Chamber. Government members will remain silent.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: It is very inconvenient to be reminded of all the broken promises that I have just drawn attention to. The Premier said, "We're going to roll over Active Kids vouchers. We're going to roll them over, just like the Liberal-Nationals Government will." Broken promises on reducing electricity prices when they are going up, up, up. It is inconvenient for those opposite to be reminded, so early into the life of this Government, of the broken promises of the Premier, who really is not so much a Premier as a misleader with all the broken promises at the last election—

Mr Ray Williams: That is true.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): The member for Kellyville interjected as soon as he walked into the Chamber. The member will not speak unless he has the call. He may simply nod in agreement.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: It is no surprise that those opposite would be getting hot under the collar when they are reminded of these matters. Yesterday in the other place the Treasurer tried to suggest that it was all the Opposition's fault. What did we hand over to this new Government? We handed over the highest State demand, the highest growth of any State in Australia at 3.75 per cent. We handed over the lowest unemployment rate of any State at 3.2 per cent—the lowest unemployment rate in about 50 years. We handed over the largest public infrastructure investment program of the nation with \$220 billion in transformational infrastructure. We handed over half the debt-to-GDP ratio of Victoria. We also handed over the only State to have two triple-A credit ratings, from Moody's and from Fitch, and a budget which had a pathway to surplus in 2024-25.

That is what the Minns Labor Government has. The crocodile tears from those opposite about, oh my goodness, how terrible it all is, have continued, but those metrics which I have just read are significant. They show the strength of the New South Wales economy, the strength of the budget that has been handed over to those opposite, and how completely hollow it is to make many of the arguments that we are hearing day after day in this place from Government members. It is in that light that we need to consider the current set of circumstances. Yesterday in the Legislative Council the shadow Treasurer gave an absolutely outstanding assessment and evaluation of the current New South Wales budget and economy. He addressed the level of State debt—which is a fraction of the debt in Victoria under the Victorian Labor Government—and the disappearing budget black hole. Having sought particulars of this so-called budget black hole, we are now being told that it is actually \$7 billion of headwinds, so not something inherited but something prospectively into the future.

It has been interesting to listen to this debate about the current state of the budget. It has proceeded a little as if the budget was some sort of mystical being that was only revealed in incoming briefs to Ministers. The fact is that the New South Wales budget was fully documented and that document was publicly available about 12 months ago when it was delivered. The forward estimates and the detail of the budget were set out. For those opposite to suggest that somehow promises were made not knowing the state of the budget is completely preposterous. It was a public document. What was and was not in the forward estimates should not have been a

surprise to them. It was fully known to them at the time that their election promises, which they have already broken, were made.

I suggest to the House that they take into account the outstanding speech of the shadow Treasurer given yesterday, which sets out in detail the true economic picture of the state of the budget and the New South Wales economy. That is a far more reliable indicator of the state of the budget. Much of the economic pain being caused to families in New South Wales is a direct consequence of the mismanagement of our national economy by the Federal Labor Government and the decisions that this new New South Wales Labor Government has made in cutting cost-of-living measures properly put in place by the now Opposition to try to ease the circumstances of households to ensure that they could navigate these economic times.

It was not entirely foreseeable that the Federal Labor Government would botch the economy as badly as it has, with numerous interest rate rises and the complete absence of any measures within its budget to manage cost-of-living pressures encountered by New South Wales families. None of those things could have been known at the time that the last Coalition budget was delivered. Nevertheless, going into the election we identified that matters were tough and that the cost of living was a significant issue for families. We said at that time that we would support a freeze on parliamentary salaries for two years. Consistent with that position, we will be supporting this bill—a bill that could have been achieved by regulation rather than legislation. It seems to be more about padding the time out in this place rather than achieving outcomes that could have been achieved in another way. The Coalition will support the bill because the Opposition recognises the significant cost-of-living pressures that are being encountered by families. We seek to lead by example. It would be a poor example for us to be taking a pay increase at a time when New South Wales families are doing it so tough.

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (14:47): I support the Parliamentary Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023. The member for Wahroonga would have us believe that over a decade worth of wage suppression has nothing to do with—

Mr Alister Henskens: It was 10 years of real wage increases.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: Denying our vital workers a salary increase with a wages cap that has been in place for many years while the salaries of members of the New South Wales Parliament are regularly assessed and adjusted is unacceptable.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner): The Clerk will stop the clock. I asked for silence when the Manager of Opposition Business was speaking and I expect the same courtesy to be extended to the member for Riverstone. It is more pleasant if members remain silent and are nice to one another.

Mr WARREN KIRBY: The intentional restraint of public sector salaries in the past 12 years is simply unjust. I receive my salary as a representative of my constituents—individuals who have entrusted me with their votes. However, how can I morally accept regular and continual increases to my salary while members of my community endure hardship? According to 2021 census data, the Riverstone electorate is inhabited by more than 104,000 individuals, 46 per cent of whom are employed in essential roles. Nearly half of my constituents, not including retail workers, have patiently awaited fair compensation for 12 long years. The Opposition would have us believe that the Federal Labor Government, which has been in power for the past year, has caused that pain.

North West Community Services offers community support services to residents in my electorate. CEO Angela Van Dyke reported a drastic 300 per cent increase in residents requiring emergency assistance and a massive spike in use of the Energy Accounts Payment Assistance voucher system. That is not the result of Federal economic policy; it is a direct result of a failure of the previous Government to support essential workers. It is truly alarming that the beneficiaries of that support are not just individuals at the lowest end of the socio-economic index scale in our community. North West Community Services has witnessed a significant rise in members of my constituency who fall in the middle of the scale.

Essential workers are proud contributors to our community, diligently fulfilling their roles and serving our society without bloated incomes. They are always self-reliant and never seek assistance but, unfortunately, they have been unjustly denied fair compensation for their dedicated efforts. On top of that, they face additional challenges such as mortgage stress, unaffordable housing, electricity bills and the burden of rising living expenses. That those essential workers have dedicated themselves to our society in recent years compounds that injustice. Those individuals deserve fairness and equitable compensation. Considering the dire state of the State's finances—and I remind the House that we have \$187.5 billion of debt, which is the largest ever in the history of New South Wales—we must find the necessary savings to prioritise supporting essential workers and essential services.

In the coming two years, the Government will waive any basic salary raise for parliamentarians. It is as simple as that. We have chosen to forgo our pay increases so that those who deserve and desperately need fair compensation can be paid adequately. That crucial decision must be made to rebuild our essential services and

invest in frontline workers—to invest in people, not just buildings. I am proud to be part of the Minns Labor Government, which is firmly dedicated to putting an end to the freeze on pay for frontline workers, while simultaneously pursuing responsible budget savings by implementing a temporary freeze on the salaries of senior executives. We must lift the wages cap. The Minns Government is actively fulfilling its election pledge to curtail executive expenditure, regain control of the budget and allocate more significant resources to frontline services. I am proud to speak about this matter as it directly impacts my community. I wholeheartedly support the bill.

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (14:52): I support the Parliamentary Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023. This very short bill seeks to cap parliamentary salaries for the next two years. I thoroughly endorse the Government's reasoning, given the fact that as community leaders we must show restraint at this point in time. Many families across the electorates of our State are doing it tough. It is incredibly important that we lead by example. I could not endorse that more thoroughly. I am sure that members who have been in this place for a while would be amazed at how much misunderstanding about their entitlements there is among members of the public. Many people assume that we have a lifetime pension, that we are given a car or that we are in a health fund. None of those is awarded to MPs of the State Parliament—one may have to go to the Federal Parliament to receive that level of entitlement.

Very few members of Parliament that I have met in this place in my time have come here for the money. They are here because they genuinely want to serve their community. When I was on council, I said, "Anyone who goes into politics for the money is either stupid or corrupt." It tends to be the case that those people who go into politics for the money are both of those things. It is entirely appropriate that, given the tough circumstances families face, we lead by example. Therefore, I totally endorse the Government's wish to freeze members' wages for two years. However, I acknowledge the comments of the member for Wahroonga on the motivations behind the bill, as the changes to wages for frontline workers were already budgeted for. To claim that savings made under the bill will be diverted elsewhere, when appropriations would have to be made for frontline workers, conflates two separate issues.

Firstly, it is entirely appropriate that we increase the wages of frontline workers. I make clear that I will support any legislation in this place that raises the labour expenses cap. I do so for a very simple reason: When that 2.5 per cent wages cap first came into place, inflation was running well below that. That is not the case today. For fireies, ambulance officers, police and teachers it is often very hard to afford to live in the communities they seek to serve. It is a very different situation today. It is commendable that we seek to address that imbalance. Personally, I would have liked to see the savings from this measure go to homelessness services. The Government could have hypothecated savings from parliamentary salaries into services that desperately need investment.

As the former Minister who increased funding to homelessness services to its highest level, I know what those services are capable of doing. That would have been a good place to direct those funds into. The bill alone will not quell the disquiet about the remuneration of members of Parliament—I am sure that will not be the case—but I hope it leads to a better understanding of why people are here. The fact that this will go to support frontline workers will hopefully help some in the public who are more sceptical about the motivations of members of Parliament to better understand that we are genuinely here to serve the community. Many in this Chamber and the other place have taken significant pay cuts to become members of Parliament. In fact, they continue to forgo their careers, which would otherwise afford them significant remuneration. That is not the motivation for the overwhelming majority of public servants, be they at the local, State or Federal level.

I will leave two members of the Government with one particular observation: Whilst I am very pleased to see that some are taking real wage cuts, some continue to take pay increases. Some members of the Government in this place still occupy not only their local councils but also their super boards, which pay an incredible amount of money. I believe it is in the order of \$65,000 a year, in addition to their council allowance and in addition to the boards from which they receive pay. I wonder if those members will contribute to debate on this legislation and indicate their fiscal restraint in relation to income, and explain to their communities that they understand the challenges of the cost of living. I look forward to hearing from them if they speak to this bill.

Mr Ray Williams: Name them.

Mr GARETH WARD: I will not name them. The pecuniary interest registers will bear out clearly who they are. I wish them all the very best. We will see whether they support this legislation. The Government's intentions behind the bill have my wholehearted praise and full support.

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote) (14:57): I am delighted to contribute to debate on the Parliamentary Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023. The member for Wahroonga's positive assessment of the former Government's record was well off the mark. The fact is that the former Government has left our State in a dire mess, and the people of New South Wales have tasked the Minns Government with cleaning up that mess. The aim of the bill is simple: to provide for a wage freeze until 30 June 2025 on increases to the basic salary of

members of both Houses of the Parliament of New South Wales by amending the Parliamentary Remuneration Act 1989.

I am proud to contribute to debate on the amending bill, which was one of NSW Labor's commitments heading into the 25 March 2023 election. The fact that the bill is before the House speaks volumes about the Minns Government's determination to honour its election commitments. When the Minns Government makes a promise, members on the Government side of the House keep that promise. That notion is blatantly foreign to members on the other side of the House. The former Government was notorious for breaking promises and failing to deliver on its commitments. The Minns Government has shown in a matter of months that it can do more than just talk the talk; it can also walk the walk.

This amending bill proposes to insert a new section into the Act that would ensure that the tribunal does not fix an amount that would increase an MP's current basic salary. It is a smart, practical and sensible decision. The public service workforce went backwards in terms of pay under the former New South Wales Government. For years those public service workers have been crying out for a fair wage increase to help them tackle the rising cost of living. It is a very reasonable request. The fact of the matter is that many public service employees have not been paid fairly or adequately. Let us look at our nurses as an example. It was our State's nurses that were on the front line in the fight against COVID-19. The vast majority of the State was forced into lockdowns in order to prevent the spread of the virus. It was an inconvenience, sure, but at least we were limiting our exposure.

Nurses did not have that luxury. Every day they went to work and risked their own safety and welfare to look after others. They risked the safety of their families as well by potentially bringing home the virus. They did so because that is what nurses do. It is not a profession that anyone enters into because of the pay cheque. They chose that career out of a desire to help others—it is that simple. However, it does not mean the financial needs of nurses or their loved ones should be dismissed. The same can be said for teachers. Teachers play an incredibly important role in shaping our youngest generations. Teaching can be a thankless job at times. However, I can assure every teacher throughout the Heathcote electorate and the State that the Minns Government acknowledges and appreciates their efforts. Their passion, dedication and perseverance are nothing short of admirable and inspirational.

I have had the pleasure of visiting a number of schools throughout my electorate since being elected as the first female member for Heathcote, and I always express my gratitude to the teachers and staff for what they do on a daily basis. The Minns Government has shown its appreciation for teachers and staff on multiple occasions, whether it be by creating 10,000 new permanent positions or by going to the negotiating table to ensure they receive better pay. We are certainly committed to ensuring teachers and staff get the pay and respect that they deserve. In a previous life, I worked in an office at a local school, so I appreciate how hard everyone throughout a school community works and just how much they care for each individual student. I have never spoken to a teacher or a staff member at a school who said they chose their career path for the dollars. They chose it because they were passionate about education. I cannot speak for those on the other side of the House, but I know that I did not enter this place for the pay cheque either.

I ran for the seat of Heathcote on multiple occasions because I believed that, as the local member, I could help make the local area a better place. As the member for Heathcote, I am committed to working with our community to ensure the electorate can thrive. Make no mistake, as MPs we are compensated fairly, particularly when compared with the wages of public servants like nurses and teachers. If a pay freeze for members of Parliament helps eat away at the incredible debt accrued under the former Liberal-Nationals Government, then I am all for the freeze. If a pay freeze for members of Parliament helps provide a much-needed wage increase for public servants like teachers and nurses, then bring it on.

We are elected to this place to serve our community and the people of New South Wales. We are not elected to this place to serve our own self-interest, despite what those on the other side of the House may think. I am fully supportive of the bill, and I believe there would be many New South Wales residents who would feel the same way. I urge those on the other side of the House to support the bill and to prioritise the needs of public service workers ahead of their own. I thank the House.

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Kellyville) (15:03): I contribute to debate on the Parliamentary Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023. I start from the perspective of having watched yesterday's speech by the new Labor Treasurer, which outlined his assessment of the current economic or budgetary position that he feels his Government is now in. At the same time I was looking at this bill in front of me. It dawned on me that the reason that this bill to cap politicians' wages over the next two years has been brought before the House is that over the past 12 weeks the Treasurer has clearly struggled to get his head around the budget. He has struggled with the economic climate that we are currently in. He has had to scrap promises that the Premier made to keep the Active Kids vouchers and the energy rebate that was in place.

I think his assessment of the current situation indicates that the Government is just not up to the job. The new Treasurer, Daniel Mookhey, is not up to the job and therefore he has brought a bill before the House that says, "We are not worthy of a wage increase because we can't manage the finances of New South Wales. We can't deal with the current budgetary climate and the budget we have, even though it has been left in great condition by the previous Liberal-Nationals Government through some very dire circumstances." The Treasurer has hoisted up the white flag. He is saying to us that he is not up to the task. The Government is falling short in what it can do in this current term of government with the budget conditions that it has. He is saying, "The least we can do is not take a wage rise." When parents front all of the new members of the Labor Party in the street, they are going to say to them, "You have forced my child to stop playing sport and stop undertaking creative activities because you have slashed the rebate that helped us with the significant cost-of-living expenses in our family's budget. You have scrapped that and, because you have scrapped it, our children are now not going to play sport."

I will go a bit further. The First Lap vouchers were scrapped by the new Labor Government—and so help the Government if a child is to drown, because that was the reason those First Lap vouchers were put in place by the previous Liberal-Nationals Government. It was a very responsible measure to teach our children to swim, and I will guarantee that there is not a member of this House, regardless of their political persuasion, that would disagree with that incentive. That has been scrapped. I warned the Government of the serious ramifications that may have. It will place another burden on parents trying to meet the cost of living. Now the Treasurer is again talking up the dire conditions in New South Wales. If we compare New South Wales with its neighbouring State of Victoria, run by Dangerous Dan, it has significantly lower debt. The percentage of debt as per gross State product in New South Wales is currently around 10 per cent but will probably rise to about 14 per cent. That is less than half of Victoria's debt as a percentage of gross State product right now, which is around 27 per cent to 28 per cent.

Compared with Victoria, the New South Wales budget is in a much better position. Yet yesterday the Treasurer talked down our economy. He is almost begging Standard and Poor's to remove our triple-A credit rating. I remind the House that, under the previous Liberal-Nationals Government, the State was awarded a triple-A rating twice. Government members should not talk down this State's credit rating; they should talk it up. They should be saying to Standard and Poor's that we have a great story to tell—that we have low unemployment and we have business confidence and we will get through these dire economic times, because we can and we will. But, no, the new Labor Treasurer chooses to talk it down and say, "Oh, the doom and gloom! We're going to get stripped of our triple-A credit rating." He is begging them to remove the triple-A credit rating just so he has an excuse, because he cannot work through the current budget conditions that he has been dealt. That is pretty poor form.

I note the current economic conditions. Let me remind the House of what the previous Liberal-Nationals Government dealt with. In some areas of New South Wales there was almost 10 years of back-to-back drought, and in the majority of areas there was at least a six- to eight-year drought period. It was dreadful. It was historically the worst drought this State has ever faced. Following that were the worst bushfires this State has ever faced, and then COVID, a once-in-a-century pandemic—we have only seen one of those before that anybody can remember—which had to be dealt with. Then on the back of that were the worst floods that this State has experienced. Look at all of those emergency conditions that the previous Government had to deal with. Billions and billions of dollars were pumped into the bush to help deal with drought. Animals were dying in paddocks. That Government did everything to restore and contain breeding stock to ensure that, when the drought turned, agricultural industries could improve and increase. I note that at one point during that drought there was an agricultural export downturn of some 25 per cent. One-quarter of the agricultural product that is normally exported out of this State was gone, wiped away because of those significant drought conditions.

Then look at the billions of dollars, once again, that are still being injected into some of those communities that lost homes and premises on the back of the horrific fires, and the destruction that those fires caused and the lives that they cost. Even emergency services personnel lost their lives. Those were dreadful fire conditions. But the billions and billions of dollars that affected the bottom line of the budget were followed by COVID. As has already been stated today in the House, it cost New South Wales some \$70 billion to address COVID. No-one, not a person in this country, could ever say that the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government and its Premier at the time, Gladys Berejiklian, were not the gold standard for addressing the concerns and issues of COVID not just in this country but around the world in terms of the percentage of lost lives and the vaccinations, medications and personnel who were put out on the street et cetera.

Sure, it was a huge cost, but what is the cost of each life? That is the question that needed to be asked. Some \$70 billion was wiped away. Then on the back of that was flood after flood. Billions of dollars were injected into communities like the Hawkesbury, which is next to my electorate. Every time there is a flood there it costs \$2 billion. It would have cost half that to raise the Warragamba Dam wall, but ultimately the Government has chosen to renege on that. It will not go ahead with that particular project. Those were just some of the conditions

that the previous Liberal-Nationals Government experienced. And you know what, Madam Deputy Speaker? Through all of those conditions, not once did New South Wales have its triple-A credit rating taken away due to its budgetary conditions. Yet after 12 weeks the new Labor Treasurer has thrown up his hands. "I can't handle it. I'm scrapping kids' programs. I'm scrapping swimming programs. I'm scrapping energy programs. I'm scrapping all that we promised that we would deliver when we got into government." He has thrown up the white flag and he is saying, "We're not good enough." Because he is not good enough, he will make sure that he does not take a pay rise. If anything, he should take a pay cut.

Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (15:14): I support the Parliamentary Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023, which follows the Government's election commitment to impose a two-year pay freeze for politicians. I call into question some of the assertions made by the member for Kellyville. One of the mistakes being made in the Chamber today relates to the idea of responsible management of the budget. As a former business owner, I know that, with a business, when you sit down for the yearly budget, you have incomings and expenditure. It is really quite simple. Money comes in and money goes out. If you do not have enough money coming in, you cannot have money going out. That is the way a simple budget works. One of the easiest and more responsible ways to take that on is to freeze the wages of the people who are in control of the budget.

In the past, when Opposition members were part of the previous Government, they would freeze the wages of the people who had no control over the budget and continually bump up their own wages. That was completely irresponsible. In any small business, if the owner was to continually bump up their own wage while continually freezing the wages of their frontline workers, they would end up with no workers. And—surprise, surprise—that is the situation New South Wales has found herself in. You cannot be responsible without freezing the wages of the people making the decisions. Looking at the budget, Government members have decided that the most responsible thing to do is say that, as politicians, we get quite a reasonable wage and our wages should be frozen for two years so that the people who we employ, our frontline workers, can have their wages unfrozen.

Those people have been on the front line for us for many years. As a former teacher, I can tell members that it is tough being a frontline worker. I have many stories of kindergarten students whose parents were working at local hospitals sneezing in my face during COVID, because kindergarten students do not really understand personal space. Those teachers were on the front line, risking their lives and their families' lives, and not earning a stable wage that was growing with inflation. It is the same with paramedics. Many paramedics have told me that it is really hard when both income earners in a house are on a paramedic, teacher, nurse or firefighter wage. If both parents in a household are on one of those frontline worker wages, it is really tough to make ends meet. On top of that, a lot of those workers are casual and they then find it difficult to get loans. We are looking at starting to rectify that and balance it out, because we are losing teachers and nurses. They are moving interstate, because the conditions are better and the pay is better.

People do not go into those industries for the remuneration; they do so because they care about our community. They serve the community. As the member for Heathcote said, we also, hopefully, went into our jobs in service of the community. For long enough we have asked all of those frontline workers to accept a wage freeze in order for the community to be better off. The Minns Labor Government is saying, "Enough is enough." We are going to freeze our wages for two years and fund the increase of wages for those frontline workers and essential services out of those savings. Those people are serving our community day in, day out. The idea that we would not want to put those people as our first priority in the Chamber is quite abhorrent to me. It is about leading by example; it is about saying that we are willing to do this for our State because we are responsible fiscal managers. Government members are happy to look at our State budget—which, to be honest with you, is probably slightly larger than my business budget was. But when looking at a budget that is a little tight, and much tighter than we expected it to be, the first thing we can do is be responsible ourselves. We should not call on our frontline and essential workers to do that for us. I commend the bill because it is a fantastic example of leading by example, and I am proud to speak for it today.

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (15:19): I speak in support of the Parliamentary Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023. The services delivered by the essential workers that we all rely on every day are so critical to New South Wales. Implementing the Government's election commitment to place a two-year freeze on public sector senior executive pay rises will create savings that will help to fund essential workers and essential services—the essential workers who teach our children, clean our hospitals, drive our trains, keep us safe 24/7 and save lives in fires, floods and everyday emergencies.

It is not easy to come by the money to fund those essential workers when the State has inherited an incomprehensible debt, which costs more each year in repayments than the combined police and TAFE budgets for New South Wales. A two-year freeze on public sector senior executive pay rises would be implemented in conjunction with waiving salary increases for parliamentarians. At a time of cost-of-living pressures for so many individuals across New South Wales, the focus of this Government is to help make it easier to make ends meet by

funding pay increases for essential workers. Our Government knows that increasing the pay of our frontline essential workers will not only assist those individuals and their families but also have a natural flow-on effect on the small businesses in our economy.

One need only walk down the main street of any suburb or town across New South Wales to know the benefits that businesses can gain from putting more money in the pockets of our essential workers. It supports them to employ more people in their businesses. It is a natural flow-on effect and, when the cost of living is a really challenging issue for people right across New South Wales, the opportunity for small businesses to put somebody on for a couple more hours a day can make a difference to their ability to pay for their children to be involved in additional activities. It means that they can pay the rent, pay the bills and pay for their essential needs in their homes. The flow-on effect of the Government's fiscal responsibility in putting a freeze on those pay rises is that those people in our community can benefit, right across the State.

Members are elected to lead by example. When it was elected, the new Government promised to fund the existing programs that our communities were led to believe were funded by the previous Government. The funding simply was not there; the budget simply was not there. The former Liberal Government led our State down the garden path. Funding was non-existent and instead our new Government inherited a debt that was beyond the pale, but that will not deter us. The Minns Labor Government will honour its election commitments and find the necessary funding through fiscally responsible financial management.

One of the mechanisms the Government will use to achieve that is a two-year freeze on the salaries of public sector senior executives and parliamentarians. In doing so, the Minns Government will actively fulfil its election pledge to curtail executive expenditure, regain control over the budget and allocate more significant resources to frontline services across New South Wales. That will benefit all of our local communities and is the right thing to do. I wholeheartedly support the bill.

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (15:25): In reply: I thank members who contributed to debate on the Parliamentary Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023: the member for Wahroonga, the member for Riverstone, the member for Heathcote, the member for Kiama, the member for Kellyville, the member for Camden and the member for Parramatta. As members would be aware, the bill amends the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal Act 1989 to implement a two-year pay freeze for politicians. The amendments to the Act will freeze the basic salary of members at the amount that was determined by the tribunal last year until 30 June 2025.

Members raised a number of issues during the debate. Members opposite raised the issue of the State's budget, and members on this side of the House rightly continue to highlight the fact that those opposite left us a \$7 billion hole in the budget, which may be added to further by budget pressures that we may not yet be aware of. The Government is committed to spending more funds on the essential workers and essential services that form the backbone of the State and that people across New South Wales rely on every day. The bill is a key part of our reinvestment in the public service—in the human infrastructure that we need across our State, be it in our hospitals or in our classrooms. The savings achieved by a pay freeze for MPs will help the Government fund the commitment to spend more on essential workers like our police, teachers, paramedics and nurses.

While that requires a sacrifice by MPs, the Government is on board with that. The Government is absolutely committed to doing the right thing in the interests of the broader community and in recognition of the hard work performed each and every day by those essential workers. The bill should not be seen as a diminution of the important work of parliamentarians. The role of representation is critical, and Government members value that role. But we also have to make choices, and we are making a clear choice. We are meeting our election commitment to ensure that we can fund our essential services and the essential workers who deliver those services.

The member for Wahroonga raised the issue that the Special Minister of State issued a direction to the Parliamentary Remuneration Tribunal to make a determination fixing the amount of the base salary no earlier than 1 May 2025, for commencement on 1 July 2025. That direction was an interim measure put in place to allow the Parliament time to consider this bill. The Government considers that the bill is preferable to both a direction and a regulation, as was suggested by members opposite, to put beyond doubt and make absolutely clear the implementation of that election commitment. I commend the bill to the House.

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

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Ms JO HAYLEN: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.**STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICES REMUNERATION AMENDMENT BILL 2023****Second Reading Speech**

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (15:29): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Government is pleased to introduce the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023. The Government made an election commitment to impose a two-year pay freeze on the remuneration provided to senior public servants. This pay freeze will achieve savings that can be used to help fund the essential workers and essential services that keep the State of New South Wales running. This bill gives effect to that election commitment.

Senior public servants generally are remunerated in accordance with the provisions of the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Act 1975. That Act provides for the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Tribunal to make determinations under a number of different provisions as to what is the appropriate remuneration, or bands of remuneration, for certain roles. The Act provides for determinations for the following offices. Part 3 of the Act concerns judicial and non-judicial office holders, such as independent statutory appointees. A full list of the offices covered by part 3 determinations is contained in schedules 1, 2 and 3 to the Act. Part 3A of the Act concerns executive office holders.

The background to the tribunal's determination of 21 July 2022 under section 24C of the Act describes the persons covered by part 3A in the following terms. The chief executive service and senior executive services were employed under the provisions of the former Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002. That Act was repealed in 2013 and replaced with the 2013 Act. There are a small number, if any, of transitional former senior executives subject to the transitional arrangements provided for in schedule 4 of the Government Sector Employment Act, and executives employed in the NSW Police Force, the senior executive service [SES] and the NSW Health service who continue to be eligible for remuneration packages as determined under part 3A of the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Act 1975. For that reason, the tribunal will continue to make a determination for the SES remuneration ranges. The tribunal will review those arrangements each year to determine whether further determinations are required.

In addition, determinations under part 3A are also made under transitional provisions in relation to certain police senior executives and administrative senior executives under the Police Act 1990, as well as the Specialist Medical Skills Determination and the General Medical Skills Determination. Part 3B of the Act concerns senior executives and includes secretaries of departments of the public service, the Commissioner of Police, public service senior executives under the Government Sector Employment Act 2013, NSW Police Force senior executives under the Police Act 1990, NSW Health service senior executives under the Health Services Act 1997, and Transport service senior executives under the Transport Administration Act 1988.

This bill is in three schedules. I will deal with each of them. Schedule 1 to the bill amends the existing provisions of the Act. The first amendment—schedule 1 item [1]—is to amend section 6AA of the Act, which concerns the requirement of the tribunal to give effect to declared government policy on the remuneration for public sector staff. Currently that section applies to determinations made under part 3A of the Act of any alteration in the remuneration packages for executive office holders within the meaning of that part—part 3A applies to executive office holders; and determinations of any alteration in the remuneration packages applicable to executive bands within the meaning of part 3B—part 3B applies to senior executives. Section 6AA (2) requires that:

In making a determination to which this section applies, the Tribunal is to give effect to the same policies on increases in remuneration as those that the Industrial Relations Commission is required to give effect to under section 146C of the *Industrial Relations Act 1996* when making or varying awards or orders relating to the conditions of employment of public sector employees.

The bill will omit subsection (2) and insert new subsections (2) and (3) that will require the tribunal to give effect to any policy about the remuneration of executive office holders and senior executives that is declared by the regulations to be an aspect of government policy required to be given effect to by the tribunal. The regulations made under this provision will be able to both set out a policy and adopt a policy that is set out in another document. The provisions will therefore remove the current necessary statutory nexus between the wages policy that applies to public sector employees under the Industrial Relations Act 1996 and allow for a specific policy to be applied under the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Act 1975 only in relation to the most highly remunerated public sector employees.

Schedule 1 item [2] inserts a new savings and transitional provision that makes provision for machinery matters in relation to the regulation to be enacted by schedule 2, which I will now discuss in further detail.

Schedule 2 to the bill establishes the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration (Executive Office Holders and Senior Executives) Regulation 2023. This new regulation is the instrument that will implement the pay freeze for executive office holders and senior executives. The regulation prescribes a policy that the tribunal is not to make a determination that has the effect of awarding an increase in remuneration that takes effect before 1 July 2025. Schedule 3 to the bill amends the existing Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration (Judicial and Other Office Holders) Regulation 2013. Firstly, it omits clause 5A of that regulation. Clause 5A is a provision regarding a temporary wages policy that had effect for 12 months and was inserted on 29 May 2020 by the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration (Judicial and Other Office Holders) Amendment (Temporary Wages Policy) Regulation 2020. That provision has now expired and can be repealed.

The schedule will insert a new clause 5A that imposes a temporary policy that the tribunal is not to make a determination that has the effect of awarding an increase in remuneration that takes effect before 1 July 2025. This provision will apply for two years to the exclusion of the other policy contained in clause 6 that otherwise sets a wage policy for the tribunal to apply in making determinations regarding judicial and non-judicial other office holders. The provisions of both the regulations established by and inserted by schedules 2 and 3 to the bill, which give effect to the pay freeze, will expire at the end of 30 June 2025. The amendments contained in the bill will honour the Government's election commitment to freeze senior public servants' pay for the next two years. I commend the bill to the House.

Second Reading Debate

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) (15:37): The Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023 would freeze the salary of senior executives bands 1 to 4 at the level set by the Statutory and Other Office Remuneration Tribunal in its 2022 annual determination until 30 June 2025. I note that the bill makes no changes to section 24P of the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Act either to affect current contracts or to prevent Ministers requesting special determinations under that section for new appointments. It remains to be seen how the Government makes use of those provisions.

The former Liberal-Nationals Government and the Labor Opposition both announced a two-year wage freeze on remuneration for senior executives as a pre-election policy. The Liberal-Nationals Government also proposed a 20 per cent reduction in the senior executive service with early offers of redundancy. The Labor Opposition proposed a 15 per cent reduction in the senior executive service based on natural attrition only, which the Parliamentary Budget Office suggested may be hard to attain. The Liberal-Nationals policy would have cut expenditure by \$133 million more than Labor's policy and would have provided a more effective means of determining which senior executive positions should be eliminated. Under Labor's policy it may not always be possible to identify a suitable replacement following the death, retirement or resignation of a particular senior executive from among existing members of the senior executive service. In any case, the Opposition supports the bill.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (15:39): I contribute to debate in support of the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023. The bill will amend the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Act to temporarily freeze any increases in remuneration for senior office holders in the public service. In effect, this puts an end to the terrible message the previous Government sent to frontline workers when top executives received pay rises over and above the consumer price index and well above wages growth. I will offer some examples shortly. I appreciate that we should endeavour to attract the best and brightest to the public service. We need them to run government departments, which are big apparatuses and have multimillion dollar—sometimes billion-dollar—budgets. We should seek to attract the best people to those jobs and, in order to do so, there needs to be some level of competition with private sector wages and salaries.

However, it is unconscionable to continue down the path of massive pay rises for senior executives in the public service while suppressing wages for everyday public sector workers. When I talk about public sector workers, I am talking about the nurses who did everything humanly possible through the COVID pandemic. I am talking about the fireies, who go over and above each and every day—whether it is a fire or a rescue—and I am talking about train drivers and teachers, essential workers who should be and who are being recognised by this Government, despite the actions of the previous Government. Earlier, I mentioned top executive pay rises in the public service. A *Sydney Morning Herald* article from the end of last year showed that at NSW Health, which has over 130,000 public sector workers, executive salaries account for almost 20 percent of the total staff cost.

When one thinks of the health department, one thinks of hospitals and health clinics. One thinks of nurses and frontline workers. But one-fifth of the salary budget goes to executives. That needs to be corrected, and this bill goes some way to doing that. At the end of 2022, the salary of the top executives at Infrastructure NSW represented 49 per cent of total staff costs. Whereas one-fifth is taken up at NSW Health, the salary of the top executives at Infrastructure NSW, an agency with some 130 staff, alone accounted for basically half of total staff cost. There is an imbalance, and the bill seeks to address that. Economic orthodoxy will tell you that when the

Federal budget is in surplus and interest rates are increasing, that the economy is going great. But I do not think that anyone would agree with that at this point. When you get down to the micro level, that is certainly not the case. It highlights what an issue inequality is in the economy at the moment. We can see inequality here in the salary discrepancies.

It does not just stop at senior public servants. We have just dealt with the Parliamentary Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023, which will freeze increases to the basic salary of members of Parliament. Both of these bills are responsible and prudent. The savings from the bills will allow the Government to deliver a well-earned pay rise to nurses and teachers, who most definitely deserve it. I chose to speak on the bill because my electorate of Leppington is home to many essential workers, including nurses, schoolteachers, train drivers and firies. During the election campaign I heard stories about how they were all overworked and undervalued under the previous Government.

At pre-poll and early voting I had the pleasure of seeing the current shadow Treasurer at my pre-poll booth. There were multiple occasions where he got into arguments with voters. In my mind, that is not a good idea. They were essential workers and argued with the shadow Treasurer about their treatment under the then Government. A train driver who was a proud member of the Rail, Tram and Bus Union refused to accept a how-to-vote card from the shadow Treasurer, and they got into a bit of a barney. The train driver recalled the then transport Minister referring to train drivers who were taking industrial action as terrorists. The now shadow Treasurer claimed that that was not the case. Members know that is the case.

Leppington is very close to Campbelltown and Liverpool hospitals, so many nurses live in my electorate. Many of them also came through the booths. One nurse told a story about how she worked in the children's ward and at one point was solely responsible for 30 beds. There were 30 children in the hospital and one nurse was looking after them. Again, members of the former Government were effectively gaslighting this nurse, telling her that that was not the case. I know it is the case because I have heard many similar stories from many nurses. The same things happened with teachers and firies. People who live in my electorate felt that they were being ignored and insulted, and they were driven to vote for the Labor Party and the Minns Labor Government. They did not just vote; they also campaigned. Many people on booths were talking to voters because the previous Government had pushed them to that point. I thank them. We are now taking action to deal with the issues by putting forward the bill.

It will also send a great signal to the people of Leppington, many of whom are dealing firsthand with the rising cost of living. Levels of mortgage stress are at their highest since August 2008, according to research by Roy Morgan. When research on levels of mortgage stress is done, postcodes in my electorate regularly rank in the top five. Dealing with the cost of living and trying to square the ledger will be welcomed by the people of Leppington, over 50 per cent of whom are paying off a mortgage. They are feeling anxious about home loans that are about to go from fixed to variable. The costs of tolls, groceries and power bills are also going up. Anything the Government can do to address the cost of living will no doubt be welcomed by the people of Leppington. With the money that will be saved as a result of the bill, the Government will fix the education system, repair the health system and address the appalling state of the budget, about which members have heard in recent days. Members of the former Liberal-Nationals Government used to refer to themselves as great economic managers, but I think all of that has been laid bare in recent days, especially by the Treasurer yesterday.

Members have heard the numbers. There is a \$7 billion black hole and \$187 billion in debt, and we have to address it somehow. This bill is one of the ways we will do it. The three credit metrics are at risk, which will potentially have an impact on our credit rating. In practical terms that means that if we lose the triple-A credit rating, that is another hit to the budget that we simply cannot afford. Put simply, the former Government managed the budget in a careless manner, and it was unsustainable. Labor is fixing that. We are making sure that spending programs are targeted and measured. Of course, in September, the Government will hand down a fiscally responsible budget as it moves on the path of fixing the State's finances. This bill is an important step in the budget repair process. I commend the bill to the House.

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (15:49): In reply: I thank members for their contributions to debate on the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration Amendment Bill 2023. I thank the member for Hornsby and the member for Leppington. The bill implements the Minns Labor Government's election commitment to implement a two-year pay freeze for senior public servants. I commend the bill to the House.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Ms JO HAYLEN: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

STATUTE LAW (MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS) BILL 2023

Second Reading Speech

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (15:49): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2023 continues the statute law revision program that has been in place for more than 35 years. Statute law bills have featured in most sessions of Parliament since 1984 and are an effective method of making minor amendments to the statute book. They are also significant in maintaining the quality of our State's legislation by removing typographical errors, updating cross-references and repealing redundant provisions. The bill was passed with six amendments in the other place on 30 May 2023. I briefly outline those amendments.

Following concerns raised by the Opposition, amendments were made in committee in the other place to withdraw from the bill, firstly, a provision in schedule 1 to the bill seeking to amend section 177 of the Public Works and Procurement Act 1912 in relation to the delegation of an administrative function; and, secondly, three provisions in schedule 2 to the bill seeking to amend section 15 of the Drug Supply Prohibition Order Pilot Scheme Act 2020, section 51A of the Surveillance Devices Act 2007 and section 144 of the Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2022. Following a concern raised by The Greens, the Government moved an amendment in committee in the other place to withdraw from schedule 1 to the bill a provision to amend section 152 of the Fisheries Management Act 1994.

Following a concern raised by the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers Party, an amendment was also made in committee in the other place to withdraw a provision from schedule 1 to the bill seeking to amend section 26 of the Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002. I note that the Government considered that each of the six withdrawn amendments were appropriate for inclusion in a statute law revision bill. However, given the longstanding practice that if any member objects to any proposal in the bill, that proposal is then omitted from the bill, the Government was willing to withdraw the six provisions from the bill so as not to delay its passage.

Schedule 1 to the bill contains policy changes of a minor and non-controversial nature. It gives effect to proposals that are too inconsequential to warrant separate amendments to the bill. In the bill as amended in the other place, schedule 1 contains amendments to 21 Acts. I outline some of the amendments that are included in the schedule. It includes an amendment to the Medicines, Poisons and Therapeutic Goods Act 2022 to ensure that the offence of prescribing, supplying or administering prescribed substances and other therapeutic goods in the circumstances prescribed by the regulations, without the approval of the health secretary, applies to veterinary practitioners in the same way as it applies to health practitioners.

Schedule 1 also includes amendments to remove outdated references from legislation and to help streamline government administration. For example, the Conveyancers Licensing Act 2003 and the Property and Stock Agents Act 2002 will be amended to remove obsolete references to statutory declarations that were required under now repealed provisions. The Contaminated Land Management Act 1994 will be amended to omit a reference to a guideline that has been superseded. The schedule also amends the Plastic Reduction and Circular Economy Act 2021 to clarify that the requirement for a prohibited plastic item to be unnecessary or problematic applies only to items prescribed by the regulations, and not to items prescribed as prohibited plastic items in schedule 1, part 1 of that Act.

The Subordinate Legislation Act 1989 will also be amended to postpone the automatic repeal of statutory rules. The Subordinate Legislation Act 1989 provides for a mechanism for statutory rules to remain in force until a specified date. Ten regulations are proposed to be postponed this year. The Heritage Regulation 2012 is proposed to be postponed in light of a significant review of the Act being undertaken following the previous Government's response to report No. 59 of the Legislative Council's Standing Committee on Social Issues, entitled *Review of the Heritage Act 1977*. A bill is being prepared to repeal and replace the Boarding Houses Act 2012, which has prompted the postponement of the remake of the Boarding Houses Regulation 2013. The current regulation is required until the new Act and accompanying regulations commence.

A review of the expenditure growth rate target is expected to be undertaken this year, and the remake of the Fiscal Responsibility Regulation 2013 is being postponed so that the review can be completed. The repeal of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulation 2012 and the Veterinary Practice Regulation 2013 is proposed to be postponed to enable the Government to develop its reformed animal welfare regulatory framework, in line with public commitments. The postponement of the repeal of the Radiation Control Regulation 2013 will enable

the Environment Protection Agency to complete its review of the Radiation Control Act 1990, following a report tabled in Parliament in December 2021, before making any consequential regulation changes.

The new Public Interest Disclosures Act 2022 will commence on 1 October 2023, replacing the Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994. Accordingly, it would be premature to repeal the Public Interest Disclosures Regulation 2011, as new regulations will be made under the new Act. The repeal of the Statutory and Other Offices Remuneration (Judicial and Other Office Holders) Regulation 2013 is being postponed to allow the consideration of amendments related to the NSW Public Sector Wages Policy. The repeal of the Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013 is being postponed for two years to enable the Office of the Children's Guardian to undertake a review of the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012. The repeal of the Explosives Regulation 2013 was postponed by legislative amendment last year until 1 September 2024. The bill re-enacts the existing postponement.

Schedule 2 to the bill deals with matters of pure statute law revision, consisting of minor technical changes to legislation that the Parliamentary Counsel considers are appropriate for inclusion in the bill. Schedule 2 includes amendments to remove expired provisions relating to the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Other examples of amendments in the schedule include the correction of typographical errors, removal of duplicate punctuation, insertion of missing punctuation and corrections of cross-referencing errors. Schedule 3 to the bill makes minor and non-controversial amendments proposed by the Parliamentary Counsel to the Interpretation Act 1987. The amendments insert definitions for a number of frequently referenced courts, tribunals, statutory offices, bodies and officers to remove the need for them to be separately defined in individual Acts and instruments across the New South Wales statute book.

Schedule 4 to the bill contains general savings, transitional and other provisions. That includes a provision that deals with the effect of amendments on amending provisions. Schedule 4 also includes a provision allowing for regulations to be made that are of a savings or transitional nature. I hope members appreciate the uncontroversial nature of the provisions contained in the bill. However, if any amendment causes concern or requires clarification, it should be brought to the Government's attention. If necessary, the Government will add additional information to any of the matters raised. In particular, it wants to ensure that, if there are proposals, they can be dealt with so as not to hold up the passage of the bill. I commend the bill to the House.

Second Reading Debate

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (15:58): The Statute Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2023 was not initially on the legislative agenda for today, but that does not matter because it is an uncontroversial bill. It is noteworthy, though, that the Government is running out of legislation and has had to bring this on quickly.

Ms Jo Haylen: We're just efficient.

Mr ALISTER HENSKENS: I hear the member for Summer Hill. They are really working the member for Summer Hill hard today by having her bring forward these pieces of legislation that could be done by regulation or are otherwise not contentious. Despite the Government members' long speeches in the other place on this relatively uncontroversial bill, I do not think that will be necessary from our side at least. We thank the Government for making the changes we requested of it in the other place. The bill is now in a form that the Opposition agrees with. We support the bill.

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (15:59): In reply: I thank the member for Wahroonga for his contribution and cooperation. So as to not hold up this important bill any further, I commend it to the House.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): The question is that this bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Third Reading

Ms JO HAYLEN: I move:

That this bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Community Recognition Statements

WESTS GROUP MACARTHUR SPORTS AWARDS

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (16:00): I am delighted this afternoon to acknowledge all our sporting volunteers and nominees, but particularly the award recipients, for their significant contribution to sports

in my electorate of Campbelltown. Of course, I am referring to the Wests Group Macarthur sports awards, which were held recently by Wests League Club. The youth volunteer of the year was Cody Sainsbury of Macarthur Football Association, led by chairperson and local councillor Darcy Lound. The adult volunteer of the year was Fred Furner of Macarthur BMX Club. In the words of Chairman Buxton, these are the unsung heroes of sport and Wests. I thank all sports volunteers and particularly thank Wests and the CEO of Wests Group Macarthur, Daniel Perkiss, for putting together and organising the 2023 Wests Group Macarthur sports awards.

JOEL SMALL

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:01): I recognise Mr Joel Small, who did a coast-to-country bike ride for Dementia Australia, cycling 1000 kilometres in six days, from coastal Terrigal to rural Deniliquin, the home town and resting place of his grandad Jim. Joel was riding in honour of Jim, who was a keen cyclist and did many charity rides himself. Joel's grandfather was an Australian politician, the National Party member for Murray in the Legislative Assembly between 1985 and 1999. All funds raised will support the work of Dementia Australia to provide vital support and services for people living with dementia and their families and carers. These services include counselling, support groups, education and training. The donations raised through the bike ride for Dementia Australia came to \$23,350. It was eye-opening to learn that dementia is the second leading cause of death and the leading cause of death in women. Along the way, he met so many people whose lives had intersected with dementia, and who desired to contribute to support Dementia Australia. I thank Joel for all he has done for Dementia Australia.

TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM "BILL" ARCHER

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (16:03): I pay tribute to the life of William "Bill" Archer, who passed away on 3 June, at the age of 72. Bill was an integral part of the community, generously volunteering his time. Bill was a coach, manager and committee member for junior rugby clubs, started Western Raptors Junior Rugby Union Club and was a long-term leader within the Blacktown City Junior Rugby League Club. Bill played a vital role at the Blacktown City Lions Club, including as vice-president and by helping out at barbecues, food drives and many other activities. Bill served for many years on Blacktown City Council's advisory committees. Bill Archer was a long-time Labor activist and joined the local Doonside branch in 2016, where he provided invaluable support and friendship. Our heartfelt condolences go to his wonderful wife, Judith, and all the family. I thank him for all his service to the community, his wonderful friendship and the mentoring he did for so many people. Vale, Bill Archer. May my friend rest in peace.

UPPER HUNTER ELECTORATE KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (16:04): I congratulate the Upper Hunter electorate's three recipients of King's Birthday honours. I congratulate Pauline Carrigan, OAM, of Scone on being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the general division. Pauline founded Where There's a Will in memory of her son, and it has been wonderful to see the organisation's work to enhance mental health and wellbeing in the Upper Hunter community, especially among our children and young adults. Dr Paul Collett of Gloucester was also awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the general division for his work to ensure the availability of health care in rural and remote New South Wales. Dr Collett's commitment to enabling communities in the bush to have access to doctors has been sustained and unwavering over more than 30 years. Gloucester had another reason to celebrate when Terry Hayes, who now resides in Queensland, received his Medal of the Order of Australia in the general division. It is a wonderful tribute to Terry's contributions.

MIDNIGHT2DAWN TREK

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism) (16:05): I acknowledge the dozens of community members who participated in the Midnight2Dawn Trek on Anzac Day. At midnight around 80 people made the 20-kilometre trek from Redhead Beach to the Anzac Day dawn service at Nobbys Beach. This is the second year the trek has taken place in Newcastle. As a proud representative of the Hunter, I am pleased to advise the House that the trek originated there back in 2015 and is now taking place right across Australia. It was great to see so many locals—including Luke Douglas, who served in the Middle East—getting involved. Our Anzacs have made great sacrifices so that we can live better lives today. The trek is a great way to pay tribute to their efforts. I congratulate everyone who participated in the Midnight2Dawn Trek. I look forward to seeing them plus more participating in next year's event.

GOULBURN DISTRICT HOCKEY ASSOCIATION

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (16:06): Today I recognise the Goulburn District Hockey Association and, in particular, the work of Naomi Jones, Laura Gray, Glenn Turner and Caitlin Jones. This year the Goulburn District Hockey Association has implemented a new format for its under-7s and under-9s players to develop the association as a whole and to provide young players with the opportunity to become the best hockey

players they can be. The overall aim is to give all junior players the opportunity to have numerous touches of the ball at each game. Having a limited number of players on a smaller field allows for more involvement for each child, all while developing the foundational and basic skills to play hockey. The format of the program is 30 minutes of drill rotations followed by two 10-minute games to finish. The program also strongly encourages parental volunteers and involvement. The philosophy behind the change is to develop solid core basics and maximise learning opportunities. Each child receives the same quality coaching and development, which aims to increase skill diversity in later years. Congratulations.

ASPIRE LEADERSHIP NETWORK

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (16:07): On Saturday 31 May I had the pleasure of attending the closing ceremony for Aspire Leadership Network's women's leadership training at Bryan Brown Theatre in Bankstown. The pride and joy on the faces of the students was evident as they received their certificates. But the ceremony was not just about certificates. It was a moment to reflect on the journey that each student had been on. It acknowledged the hard work, dedication and perseverance that had led them to this point. I look forward to seeing all the students succeed in life and contribute to a better society for all. Their results show that, no matter where you come from and what your family history is, you can achieve great things in Australia if you put your mind to it. I especially congratulate Dr Rawaa El Ayoubi and Aspire Leadership Network, as well as their multicultural resource centre, on their support and their outstanding work in giving voice to and structuring a cohesive voice for culturally diverse women in Australia. I greatly value my relationship with Aspire Leadership Network and thank it for extending this invitation to me. I wish every participant and every graduate every success in their future endeavours.

WORLD RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT DAY AWARD RECIPIENTS

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (16:08): World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day on 8 May celebrates the spirit of humanitarianism. This special day recognises the individuals who make a difference to the lives of so many in their communities. They are the ones who drive positive change. With this year's theme of "Everything we do comes #fromtheheart", four Coffs Coast residents were recognised for their exemplary contributions to the important work of Red Cross locally. They are Alison Nash from Coffs Harbour, who was awarded the NSW Service Award; Jean Vickery from Woolgoolga, NSW Innovation Service Award; Jill Watters from Coffs Harbour, NSW Service Award; and Kerry Chaffey from Coffs Harbour, NSW Service Award. Each of these remarkable women is at the heart of her community, helping to make the Coffs Coast an even greater place to live. They are the first to step up and support those in need around them. We are extremely fortunate to have Alison, Jean, Jill and Kerry living in the Coffs Harbour electorate. I congratulate them on their outstanding achievements and their commitment to helping others.

ST JOHN AMBULANCE GRANVILLE COMBINED DIVISION

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (16:09): Last week I was delighted to check out the new St John Ambulance vehicle purchased by the Granville Combined Division with the assistance of a Community Building Partnership grant. The van has been named in memory of Naomi Martin. In 2013 Naomi suffered a cardiac arrest at Qudos Bank Arena and was saved by a team of St John Ambulance volunteers. Following this, she and her husband, Don, donated two automated external defibrillators [AEDs] to the Granville division, one of which was used two years later to save another woman's life at Qudos Bank Arena. Naomi and Don became very close to the Granville division and advocates for AEDs, supporting St John Ambulance wherever they could. Naomi sadly lost her battle with breast cancer in 2021. However, in recognition of the efforts made to save her life, Don fundraised to purchase 23 new AEDs to donate to St John Ambulance, which is more than three times his target of seven. The Granville division is proud to adorn its new vehicle with Naomi's name in recognition of her and Don's outstanding support.

SUSAI BENJAMIN

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Winston Hills) (16:10): I take this opportunity to recognise Blacktown councillor and honorary director of the Toongabbie Legal Centre, Susai Benjamin, OAM, on receiving an Order of Australia medal in the General Division of the King's Birthday 2023 Honours List. I have known Susai for over eight years and he has always been a very hardworking member of the local community. Susai has a strong involvement with the Toongabbie Legal Centre, which is a free, community-based legal service, established in 2005. The legal centre strives to assist disadvantaged individuals in the Toongabbie and surrounding areas. In 2019 Susai received the Michelle Crowther PSM Excellence Award from the Law Society of New South Wales. I note that Susai's dedication to open public spaces and parks has been a notable aspect of his advocacy work over many years. I congratulate Susai on this outstanding achievement and thank him for the fantastic work he has done in our local community.

BAY TO BAY FUN RUN

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:11): I give many thanks to the Terrigal Trotters and everyone involved in organising the Bay-to-Bay Running Festival on the beautiful Central Coast. I congratulate the grand 3,200 participants, including the member for The Entrance, and thank them for their contribution to the Central Coast community. I extend my gratitude to those who travelled far and wide to come together and run in the event, such as the women's \$1,000 prize-winning first-placed Claire Ashworth and many other visiting participants. It was extraordinary to see the record-breaking turnout and each and every runner and sideline supporter who, even on that very chilly morning, helped to contribute to the \$70,000 goal to support Central Coast charities. Two recipients were Camp Breakaway, a member of National Disability Services that provides services for disabled members of the Central Coast community and carers alike, and the Glen Centre, which should be commended for its drug and alcohol rehabilitation services. Those two charities and others can continue their hard and appreciated work with the help of everyone involved in the Bay-to-Bay Fun Run.

FRESHWATER SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (16:12): Today I recognise that on Sunday 25 June 2023, Freshwater Surf Life Saving Club will host its 114th annual general meeting. Since 1908 Freshwater surf club has been an integral part of the community, initially made up of locals who camped along the beach. Now the club is home to more than 1,300 hardworking members who selflessly give up their weekends to keep people safe as well as to run the fantastic Nippers program with over 400 Nippers. The club has also played a crucial role in advancing surfing in Australia. In 1914, Duke Kahanamoku visited the club to give a surfing display. This kicked off surfing in Australia. The Duke never forgot his visit to Freshwater and, in 1952, he donated one of his famous wooden surfboards to the club, which is proudly displayed to this day. I congratulate and thank Freshwater surf club for all they do for our community and wish them the best for Sunday and for the season ahead.

PORT STEPHENS ELECTORATE KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens—Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion) (16:13): I recognise in this Parliament the Port Stephens locals who were recently recognised in the King's Birthday Honours List. Stephen Leahy was recognised for his role in emergency services. Stephen is a former police officer and boss of the Westpac Rescue Helicopter who volunteers with Surf Life Saving and the NSW State Emergency Service to keep our community safe. Kerry Schiemer was recognised for his services to aviation. Kerry joined the Royal Newcastle Aero Club in 1968 and was made a life member in 2008. Over those years he was a flying instructor and an acrobat pilot, not to mention an impressive local pharmacist. Ken White is Lifeline's longest serving volunteer, having started in 1983. Ken is also involved with the community radio station, Port Stephens FM, and previously worked as a counsellor at the Yacaaba Centre. John Turner is a former Nationals member of this House who was recognised for his service to the community and to the Parliament. I am pleased the former Myall Lakes MP has now seen the light and calls Port Stephens home. I extend the congratulations of this House to those deserving OAM recipients and thank them for their service to our community.

JIM MCDONNELL AND DES MANTON

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (16:14): Dedication, passion, and commitment are just a few words I could use to describe two incredible individuals for whom I have the utmost admiration: Jim McDonnell and Des Manton of Gundagai. Jim and Des were recently visited by Lions District Governor, Michael Ryan, on 22 May, as a special dinner was held to celebrate their fiftieth year with the Gundagai Lions Club. The Gundagai Lions Club was established in 1973, a journey the pair have been involved in right from the outset after they were approached by their sponsoring club from Wagga Wagga all those years ago. Currently, Jim is the president of the club and was formerly the vice-president and secretary. Des has also been the president, vice-president and membership chairperson. Additionally, Des is the recipient of an international award for his service to Lions. Due to their outstanding service of three decades, Jim and Des became life members in 2003. Last, but certainly not least, I recognise two wonderful ladies, Pat McDonnell and Carol Manton, for supporting Jim and Des, and their local community.

TRIBUTE TO DR FRED CUNLIFFE, OAM

Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (16:15): I inform the House of the passing of the great Penrith local, Dr Fred Cunliffe, OAM. He worked as a doctor in Penrith for more than 40 years, retiring in 2010. Dr Cunliffe was a GP and specialist obstetrician-gynaecologist practising in Penrith since 1967. He delivered thousands of babies in Penrith during his long career. He was honoured with an OAM in 2008 for his dedicated career in medicine. In 2017 he was awarded an Australia Day Community Achievement Award by council. During the 1980s, Dr Cunliffe was involved in forming Riding for the Disabled and he donated his property and facilities at

Regentville and later secured land in Orchard Hills. Perhaps his most high-profile role was with the Penrith Panthers, from 1969 to 1986, as club doctor and member of the support team. He was granted life membership of the Panthers in 1980. Indeed, in their recent game against the Roosters, players wore black armbands as a mark of respect.

NORTHSIDE RADIO FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (16:16): I was honoured to join Northside Radio at Chatswood concourse on Saturday 20 May 2023 to commemorate its fortieth anniversary. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, residents and community groups right across Sydney's North Shore came together, calling for the establishment of a community radio station to serve the local community. On 21 May 1983 Northside Radio, licensed as 2NSB, commenced full-time operations. In attendance was the then member for Bennelong John Howard and then member for Lane Cove John Dowd. Since then, Northside Radio, now broadcasting as 99.3FM, has continued to showcase music, interviews, news, and current affairs—everything from jazz and blues to Irish radio. Northside Radio is run by dedicated volunteers, and we all should be proud. Over the years they have included the talents of some big names, including Smoky Dawson, Catriona Rowntree and Jono Coleman. I have been interviewed by presenters Richard Bell and Greg Smith, which always delivers a few laughs and good times.

ASHFIELD AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (16:17): I congratulate the Ashfield and District Historical Society on its fiftieth anniversary. The protection of our rich and storied history is the key responsibility of every generation. The society collects and curates historical records, undertakes research, publishes journals and books, and promotes the heritage of our local district. It organises regular events throughout the year, including talks and presentations, site visits, walking tours, discussions and forums, and assists with research. The work done by the society to preserve and explore the history of Ashfield and its surrounds is critical to ensuring that current citizens, and citizens of the future, are aware of their past. The work of the Ashfield and District Historical Society means we can learn and grow from the challenges, trials and achievements of those in the past, stretching back thousands of years to First Nations custodians of the land and country. I acknowledge and commend each and every member of the society and thank them for holding a light to the past and keeping our history alive.

COFFS HARBOUR ELECTORATE KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (16:18): Coffs Coast residents have featured prominently in the King's Birthday Honours List. Detective Superintendent Steven Clarke was awarded an Australian Police Medal. He has spent his 35-year career in operational policing and has been an exceptional leader, displaying courage, resilience and fortitude. Detective Superintendent Clarke was most recently the Coffs-Clarence Police District Commander, when he set a strong example for the staff he led. In 2019-20, as local emergency operations controller, he oversaw the local emergency response and recovery phases during our extreme bushfire season as well as many flood emergencies. Woolgoolga's Ronald Johnson received the Medal of the Order of Australia for his services to the community through music. His achievements include his role as former music tutor for more than 20 years at the Coffs Harbour University of the Third Age, and as a former volunteer at the All Age Theatre Woolgoolga, the Woolgoolga Rotary Club and the Red Cross Woolgoolga branch. Mr Johnson has been a private music teacher since 1953 and he helped with the production of musicals at Woolgoolga High School in the 1980s and 1990s.

KOORI NETBALL TOURNAMENT

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (16:20): For over two decades the Koori Netball Tournament has been hosted at the Charlestown netball complex in Bula Street, Charlestown. Now the biggest celebration of Koori netball in New South Wales has been named a finalist in the Inclusive Achievement of the Year category at the 2023 Sports Foyer NSW Community Sports Awards. I attended the 2022 tournament, which brought together more than 1,500 Aboriginal netballers from around the State. I saw First Nations women and their supporters sharing their love of the sport and celebrating their talent in a fun, inclusive environment. I congratulate all those involved in organising the event, all the players who attended and Charlestown Netball for hosting the event. This recognition is very well deserved, and I wish them all the best for the awards. I look forward to future Koori netball tournaments.

LITHGOW WORKIES CLUB

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst) (16:21): I acknowledge the role played by the Lithgow Workies Club in helping to give back and make the community a better place. The club was a big winner at the recent ClubsNSW awards night, held at Big Top Luna Park. Lithgow Workies Club was named the winner in the Heart of the

Community category. This prestigious award recognises the outstanding efforts of clubs that have made a significant positive impact on the community by contributing to and improving the social, cultural, financial or environmental wellbeing of the community. Lithgow Workies Club management and staff take great pride in being an integral part of the community and a dedicated community partner not only for the club's members but also for its visitors. The Clubs and Community Awards are the New South Wales club industry's premier awards competition, celebrating the outstanding social contributions of the New South Wales club industry. Clubs like the Lithgow Workies Club in regional locations such as Lithgow are at the heart of our communities. I appreciate the role of the Lithgow Workies Club as a popular meeting place for residents, providing fun, friendship and camaraderie for everyone.

LIVERPOOL WEST PUBLIC SCHOOL

Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (16:22): A couple of weeks ago I visited Liverpool West Public School in my electorate with the Deputy Premier, and education Minister, to view the progress of works at the school. The upgrade of Liverpool West is well underway and will deliver a further 28 teaching spaces, four new support rooms and a preschool. I thoroughly enjoyed touring the school with Liverpool West students, especially school captains Ryan and Aleksandra and the school ambassadors. They happily showed us their new facilities, including new classrooms, special program rooms, a new hall, a library and a covered outdoor learning area. It was great to see the enthusiasm shown by students for their school. I was thrilled to hear that some have been inspired to become teachers themselves. I thank principal Mrs Martin, deputy principals Ms Tina Iervasi and Ms Sotiropoulos, and the Liverpool West school community. It is a testament to the Liverpool West school spirit that Ms Iervasi is a former student herself. I look forward to the opening of these much-needed school facilities.

CATHY RUGGERO

Mr MATT KEAN (Hornsby) (16:23): Cathy Ruggero is the heart and soul of the Hornsby Heights Football Club. She deserves plenty of gratitude and recognition for her unwavering commitment to developing football in the Hornsby area. Cathy has had various roles including club president, MiniRoos coordinator, gear and merchandise coordinator, coach, assistant coach and team manager. She has been an invaluable asset to her club and her tireless efforts have helped to create an inclusive environment where players can thrive and grow. Cathy led the club as both the men's and women's division 2 teams advanced to the premier league competition. She is easily one of the best sporting administrators and community leaders one will find anywhere across our State. Balancing personal life, work and volunteer commitments is no easy feat, but Cathy's passion for football and the resolute support of her football-crazy family have provided the foundation for her success. With impeccable organisation and a dedicated committee, she has managed to navigate the demanding responsibilities with grace and resilience. I congratulate Cathy Ruggero on her outstanding contributions to football in Hornsby and the greater northern suburbs region.

JORDAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (16:24): It was an honour to attend the 2023 Jordan Independence Day celebrations and flag-raising ceremony hosted by the Australian Jordanian Community Association on Saturday 10 June. Jordan Independence Day celebrates the journey towards self-determination and sovereignty for the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and remembers the sacrifices that were made and the struggles that were faced to achieve independence. It was wonderful to celebrate this occasion, which also coincided with the twenty-fourth accession to the throne of His Majesty King Abdullah II, the royal wedding of the Crown Prince and Princess of Jordan, the Great Arab Revolt anniversary and the Jordan Army Day. In attendance were members, friends and supporters of our Jordanian community in Western Sydney. We were also joined by Dr Ali Kraishan, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps and Ambassador of Jordan to Australia and New Zealand. Together, we celebrated with insightful and exciting presentations, speeches and performances. I thank President Mohammed Al Qadi and the volunteers of the Australian Jordanian Community Association for organising this event and inviting me to celebrate this important occasion.

ALL ABILITIES RUGBY MATCH

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (16:25): On 3 June I attended our community's first all abilities rugby match at Concord Oval, hosted by Let's Get Going and West Harbour Rugby Football Club. The game comprised 14 participants with varied abilities, paired with 10 local players from rugby union clubs, rugby league clubs, the Men of League Foundation, media and TV personalities. Sport is such an essential part of the Australian culture, and we should always strive for inclusion for all. I wholeheartedly support events like the all abilities rugby match and hope to see more like it in the future. I am so proud that the match was held in my electorate. I extend my thanks to Let's Get Going, West Harbour Rugby Club and all involved in creating such a special and inclusive event. I particularly acknowledge Vicki Liubinskis, local community treasure and founder of Let's Get Going. I congratulate all involved in this wonderful match.

AUNTY RUTH SIMS, AM

Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (16:26): I recognise Aunty Ruth Simms, AM, from Nowra, who has worked for more than four decades with children. I was thrilled to have Aunty Ruth here for my inaugural speech in this place. Aunty Ruth is currently based at Culburra Public School. With 43 years of service, she is the longest serving Aboriginal Education Officer for the Department of Education in New South Wales. Aunty Ruth's work has been recognised internationally. She has contributed to World Indigenous Peoples Conferences, including by running workshops in Albuquerque and Hawaii. Aunty Ruth regularly performs welcomes to country and encourages our community to embrace and celebrate the history, culture, talents, achievements and survival of the oldest continuing culture in the world. I thank Aunty Ruth for all she does for our community and the impact she has had on so many families in the South Coast electorate.

AUSTRALIA MY COUNTRY COMPETITION

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (16:27): I acknowledge the efforts of Forestville RSL Sub-Branch in organising the annual Australia My Country Competition. I was honoured to attend the awards ceremony on Saturday 17 June 2023. The initiative invites school students in years 3 to 6 from across the North Shore and northern beaches to submit a poem, artwork or written piece celebrating Australia's proud heritage. Community-led programs like these instil a sense of pride in and appreciation for the brave men and women who have served or who continue to serve Australia in the Australian Defence Force. The theme of this year's competition was "Australian Defence Force involvement in Disaster Relief operations". Over 300 entries from across 11 schools were submitted to the competition. I congratulate all the students who took part. In particular, I congratulate Ava Scicluna from Belrose Public School, Felix Jones from Kambora Public School and Frederick Glover from John Colet School on taking out first prize in their respective categories. I pay tribute to the Forestville RSL Sub-Branch for its tireless work in organising this event.

ALEX VAN DYKE

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (16:28): When a community goes through trauma like flooding, those impacted look for a beacon—someone they know they can turn to. For many in Riverstone, that person was North West Community Services community connections manager Alex Van Dyke. Her unwavering commitment to serving her community and her ability to deliver outcomes for those affected are truly remarkable. In times of repeated adversity, it can be easy for individuals to lose faith and feel overwhelmed. However, Alex's presence and dedication provided a sense of stability and reassurance. Her professionalism and compassion not only helped them navigate the immediate challenges but also instilled a sense of trust in the support available to them. That Alex works diligently to ensure that the assistance provided is not merely a handout but a pathway towards a better life speaks volumes about her approach. It is through the efforts of individuals like Alex that communities come together, heal and emerge stronger in the most difficult of times. Her selflessness, empathy and unwavering dedication make her a true unsung hero in our electorate. Alex is an inspiration to others and a reminder of the positive impact that one person can make on the lives of many.

TOUR DE ROCKS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (16:29): I congratulate a team of local Port Macquarie cyclists who participated recently in the Tour de Rocks to raise valuable funds for cancer research and community programs. Tour de Rocks is now in its tenth year, taking cyclists on a three-day, 230-kilometre journey over dusty tracks, gravel roads and private land. Held annually in April, the ride commences in Armidale and travels to Wollomombi and Guyra and then back again to Armidale, finishing at the University of New England. Representing Port Macquarie on her first ride in 10 years was Leasa Harris. Leasa was recruited with 15 other locals by our one and only Melinda Cockshutt, with their team joining 295 cyclists and 110 support crew bravely tackling outback terrain over nearly 4,000 metres of elevation. Supporting her all the way was Haley Hyde and the team from H-Fit; Sue and Paul Jogeever; Leasa's sister and brother-in-law Amanda and Piet Verrijdt; and her niece Zahra. This year \$150,000 was raised from the tour, with funds going locally to the Mid North Coast Cancer Institute and Camp Quality, enabling them to host an event in Bonny Hills. I again congratulate all the participants on supporting such a worthy cause.

CENTRAL COAST CHAMPAGNE HARRIETTES

Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (16:30): I acknowledge the Central Coast Champagne Harriettes, who this year celebrate their fifteenth anniversary. The Harriettes are an offshoot of the Hash House Harriers, an international running group that has a popular worldwide presence. The ladies-only club meets on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month at a run that is hosted by one of the members, who is referred to as "the Hare". The Hare sets a run course of up to six kilometres in length through bushland or along a beach—or anywhere, in fact, on the Central Coast. After the run, the Hare hosts a meal for everyone or they arrange to eat out at a venue,

whereby the social element of the group kicks in and all enjoy each other's company. No matter what the weather conditions are, Harriettes of varying ages and fitness levels gather to exercise and enjoy each other's company. The Harriettes have a strong camaraderie, which boosts their membership and continues to grow their presence on the Central Coast. I thank them for their contribution to the Central Coast community.

Private Members' Statements

TRIBUTE TO MRS MARGARET DUFFY

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (16:32): It is with great sadness that I advise the House of the passing of Mrs Margaret Duffy on 29 May at age 81. Mrs Duffy was a remarkable and strong woman—and, indeed, a lady in her own right—who made influential contributions in Campbelltown and the broader Macarthur region for decades. Mrs Duffy was born on 22 January 1942 in rural Loughborough, Leicestershire, after her mother was evacuated from the bombing in wartime London. Margaret married Michael Edward Duffy in Watford in 1966 and promptly boarded the *Castel Felice* to come to Australia, arriving in late 1966. In 1967 Margaret and her husband bought a home in Bradbury, Campbelltown, which would be her home for the next 57 years.

Mr Duffy was a council worker and Mrs Duffy was a homemaker, raising their children and keeping the home together whilst also being a formidable contributor to the place she loved that we call Campbelltown. Margaret was heavily involved in education as a volunteer and later went on to become a teacher for 25 years at Holy Family Ingleburn. She was a very proud contributor and member of her faith at the parish of St John the Evangelist, my parish as well as that of my good friend Patrick. She became a pillar of the Catholic Church and, indeed, a pillar of the people of Campbelltown. Margaret also served for many years as a secretary of the 1st Bradbury Scout Group in the 1980s, where her children were active as well. In fact, I noticed that members of the scout group were at her son Patrick's place to get the beautiful Denfield House ready to honour her in an appropriate manner.

Mrs Duffy became a single parent in 1985. Her determination and selflessness whilst maintaining her work in the church and community and raising four talented children were deeply admirable. Margaret was also a member of the Campbelltown and Airds Historical Society and a long-time supporter and well-known face at the HJ Daley Library. She was a tireless supporter of education and believed it was the passage to prosperity and a good life for every child—something she instilled in each and every one of her four children. In honour of her support of all children and many of those who confront more difficult socio-economic backgrounds, the Margaret Duffy Law Scholarship was established by the law faculty at Western Sydney University in 2020. The award is presented each year to a student of outstanding academic potential to help them overcome financial hardship.

Like I said earlier, Mrs Duffy passed away on 29 May. Her funeral was yesterday. I was not able to be there as Parliament was sitting, but my heart, thoughts and feelings were with Mrs Duffy and her four children—Luke, Patrick, Joanna and Nick—and her 12 grandchildren as they remembered an amazing and resilient woman, a beautiful mum, a good soul and one of Campbelltown's greatest. People such as Mrs Duffy are the bedrock on which our communities are often built. But you do not find too many like her. Her legacy in our community and amongst her family and friends will be felt for many years to come. The Macarthur community has lost one of our greatest. We mourn her loss but we remember her well. We remember her beautiful nature, her toughness and her selfless contribution to the people of Campbelltown. Whilst Margaret may have passed and is in heaven now, she will forever remain in the hearts, minds and feelings of all her loved ones, including me and the good people of Campbelltown.

AUSTRALIAN DIY FAMILIES INSTITUTE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn) (16:37): Today I acknowledge James Fitzgibbons and Isabella Lambert-Kenney, who are the co-founding members of realty group Real Estates Funding Charities Australia [REFCA] and Australian DIY Families Institute. James and Isabella met several years ago when they shared a vision and aspiration to create two business models, the first being a real estate agency and the second a not-for-profit Australian families institute—a charity funded by the real estate from its sales. The model for the REFCA realty group sees 15 per cent of the commission received by the agent for properties sold under \$500,000 and 20 per cent of the commission for properties sold over \$500,000 go directly to the second part of the business model, the institute.

The notion was based on the observation of Australia's economy over the past 10 years, where there have been marked profits in mining and real estate industries, with many properties doubling in price, along with agent's commissions, making it a very viable concept. The income received through the real estate business cascades to the second business model of the families institute, which aims to assist and support single-parent families in several ways. Through pure diligence and an altruistic drive to assist and support sole-parent families and the most

vulnerable in the community in times of need and hardship, James and Isabella have now successfully established the real estate and charity in my electorate of Goulburn. It is based in Bundanoon in the Southern Highlands. The institute is a registered not-for-profit organisation whose mission is to meet the short- and long-term needs of vulnerable sole-parent families and individuals during times of crisis. Its vision is that "all vulnerable sole-parent families and individuals are safe and supported during times of crisis".

The organisation is fully committed to providing its service through the five core values: reliability, enthusiastic, family-orientated, respect and empathy. The underlying principle of "reliability" is the ability to provide required and appropriate services to people where and when they are needed. If Australian DIY Families Institute is unable to provide those services, it works in partnership with other community services that can provide the appropriate service. "Enthusiastic" describes members' drive to serve, which is inspired through lived experience. Members embrace the opportunity to serve and give back to those in need. "Family-orientated" expresses the focus on vulnerable sole-parent families and members of the community experiencing hardship. The institute treats clients as though they were family. "Respect" involves valuing all sole-parent families and members of the community who are in crisis, and treating everyone equally. "Empathy" is showing compassion and sympathy to all clients, notwithstanding their circumstances.

The op shop and food pantry services assist sole-parent families and the most vulnerable in the community, with the charity's doors opening and receiving tremendous support from the local community and other local businesses and organisations in the area. Developing networks and partnerships is pivotal to delivering the services required. A partnership with Foodbank—another not-for-profit, non-denominational, federated organisation—provides the ability to purchase food for the food pantry and other necessary supplies at low cost. SecondBite, another vital partner, rescues and redistributes wasted food through access to food hampers, community meals and breakfast programs. The Australian DIY Families Institute's partnerships with SecondBite and Coles have seen the delivery of over 660 kilograms of fruit, vegetables, bread and frozen goods to vulnerable families and individuals who need them the most.

The institute currently services nearly 40 clients from Bundanoon to Goulburn either weekly or fortnightly. Having created an effective, low-cost formula to deliver that service, it is seeking to expand services in Goulburn and other regional areas. I reiterate the vision and fortitude that James and Isabella have demonstrated to forge ahead and see their vision come to fruition, as well as the resilience and tenacity they have shown through the challenges they faced to effectively get their business models operational. To date the real estate agency has donated over \$31,000 from 10 sales directly to the charity in the past 15 months. I admire and acknowledge James and Isabella's vision, life experience and strong sense of community. They give back and serve those in need, which has seen their models become operational and beneficial for all.

The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li): Before we proceed, I welcome some guests in the public gallery. I acknowledge the students and staff from Stewart House, who are guests of the member for Manly.

ILLAWARRA ABORIGINAL MEDICAL SERVICE

Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (16:42): I welcome those students and hope they enjoy their time in this place. An important local health service in the community that Minister Scully and I are lucky enough to call home is the Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service [AMS]. It is an inspiring local organisation that provides much-needed health services to First Nations people across the entire Illawarra region. The service has been in place and providing quality primary health care for almost 40 years, working to ensure that First Nations people in the Illawarra have access to holistic health care informed by Indigenous perspectives.

The team acknowledge that health care goes well beyond just seeing a GP, and they provide a real community to support those using their services throughout the healthcare system. Starting out in a small residential house in Wollongong in the 1980s, when the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces and I were just wee little boys, the service grew rapidly. Within a few years the team were working five days a week providing medical services for those who needed them most. Today the Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service is a truly impressive outfit. Through the tireless work of the team, led by CEOs Kane Ellis and Jade Hansen, they have continued to match and exceed our community's expectations for primary health services.

In addition to their longstanding GP services, the organisation has continued to expand and now offers, very importantly, dentistry as well as other cultural and community support services. The Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service now also runs a women's group and art therapy and offers counselling for those who need it. One of the programs is the industry-leading Koori SMART program, run in coordination with the Department of Community and Justice, which I am looking forward to seeing in action very soon.

Recently I had the opportunity to visit the clinic and meet the amazing team of dedicated staff. As the Minister for Health, it gives me great pride that our region is well serviced by that fantastic local organisation. While there, I was impressed with the breadth and quality of services they provided and the trust they have built within their community. Organisations like that are vital to closing the gap in healthcare access and outcomes for First Nations people and set the standard for care, outreach and governance for similar organisations across the State. I also recently had the pleasure of visiting the Walgett AMS, which is doing fantastic things in rural and remote communities.

This year we will take part in an important and long-overdue journey towards recognition of and reconciliation with our First Nations people. In that process, it is vital that we work with organisations such as the Illawarra Aboriginal Medical Service to ensure that we walk with the community to understand the challenges and find the solutions we need, particularly in relation to health care. Health care for our First Nations brothers and sisters is far worse than for the general population, and it has been for significant periods of time. Closing the gap presents some real challenges for policymakers at both Federal and State level, and organisations like the AMS are truly doing the on-the-ground work that is needed to close that gap. I wholeheartedly thank the team for welcoming me to the clinic and look forward to working with them to build a healthier and brighter future in our region.

BATHURST MEN'S WALK AND TALK

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst) (16:45): Last week was Men's Mental Health Week, and this week focuses on building healthy habits by identifying small changes that can benefit men's and boys' health and wellbeing. Men's Health Week is designed to encourage discussions about how we can work together to improve the physical, emotional and mental health of men and boys. Men need to keep an eye on their health by engaging with health services, having regular health checks, getting their blood pressure checked and connecting with their GP to help reduce the risk of diabetes, heart problems and bowel cancer.

We all have a role to play in encouraging each other towards good health, and a big part of that is around shared experiences like going for walks together, playing sport or even sharing healthy meals. Groups such as Bathurst Men's Walk and Talk are a great initiative for men to get together, be active and have a chat about all things in life. The walk and talk movement first kicked off in Manly in Sydney in 2016, with 200 people walking from Queenscliff lagoon to Shelly Beach and back. It started up in Bathurst a couple of years ago, when local Greg Sly and some mates got together and decided to meet once a week for a stroll that centred around the walking path adjacent to the Macquarie River between Evans Bridge and Gordon Edgell Bridge. The rest is history and now it is a regular event, with walkers meeting at Lions Berry Park on a Thursday evening at 5.30 p.m.

It begins with a complimentary coffee or hot chocolate and a chat. That is then followed by a walk that kicks off at 6.00 p.m. and lasts for about an hour or so. I have had the opportunity to be one of the weekly sponsors and then join the walk and talk blokes in Bathurst to see what it is all about. It is really refreshing to see it continuing to grow and flourish in our local community. Sponsorship was easy—just shout those present a beverage from the local movement's great mate Simon from Black Crow Coffee, and off you go.

Participating in a walk and talk reminds those involved that we all experience similar things in our lives. Not everyone is depressed and suicidal, but everyone is human and life's challenges are real and universal. For some people those struggles can become overwhelming and scary, which often leads to separation and loneliness. By gathering for a walk and talk, those present can show the community that they are not alone in their lives and create an environment where there is always someone to listen to, hug, cry with, chat to and, most importantly, to feel connected to by simply walking and talking together. I take my hat off to our local walkers, to Greg and his team, and I plan to join them as regularly as I can in the future. The Bathurst Men's Walk and Talk is another example of the wonderful community spirit that is displayed across my electorate where people come together from all walks of life, with different backgrounds, skills and life experiences, to show support for one another and to lend each other a helping hand.

WESTERN SYDNEY DIABETES ALLIANCE

Mr STEPHEN BALI (Blacktown) (16:49): On Monday the Western Sydney Diabetes Alliance held a community meeting to beat diabetes in the Blacktown area. A heap of community leaders, or probably in this modern era I should call them influencers—

Mr Paul Scully: Particularly if you were there.

Mr STEPHEN BALI: I was there. I was even on the panel. Thank you, Minister. Some 123 influencers were there for the pre-launch of a campaign to lose weight to reduce the risk of diabetes. To make any campaign about losing weight successful in any area, it needs community support. A lot of people talk about it but then nothing happens. We understand that losing two kilograms can massively reduce either your exposure to diabetes

or reduce its impact. In fact, research shows that losing two kilograms reduces the chance of getting diabetes by 30 per cent. Unfortunately, Western Sydney is a hotspot for diabetes. Therefore, mobilising key stakeholders and their communities is the best way to address it. By bringing people together they can talk about the potential of losing two kilograms, the different aspects of it and how to do it.

One of the co-chairs of the forum was Ray Messom, who is the CEO of WentWest Primary Health Network. It has hundreds of medical clinics that want to be part of this. The other was the great Jim Taggart, OAM—who else can conduct these forums? He is a man about town who is involved with community organisations across Sydney. And he is a better talker than anyone in this Chamber, I reckon. There were also guest speakers. Graeme "Buzz" Bidstrup is the CEO of Uncle Jimmy Thumbs Up app, which was designed mainly for the Aboriginal community but can be used by everyone. The app gives a thumb signal for food that either is plugged in or scanned using its barcode. Two thumbs up is good. A sideways thumb shows it is not that good. The thumbs down shows you should not be eating that food. It is a simple app. Most of my food would probably get the thumbs down!

It was a great thrill to have a live cross from Parliament House into our forum at the Blacktown Workers Club as the Minister for Health was able to squeeze us in for 15 minutes in his busy schedule before he went to a Cabinet meeting. To have a person like the Minister enthusiastically talking about government initiatives and encouraging everyone in the room to come together was a highlight of the event. Other guest speakers included Prevention Manager at Western Sydney Diabetes Janine Dawson, chair of the Western Sydney Local Health District Board Richard Alcock, and Dr Rebecca Nogajski from Western Sydney Local Health District.

The forum panellists were great. The member for Prospect talked about his life experience and how he lost 15 kilograms—probably during COVID he put it back on. That is on the record now, so I will be in trouble. He will do a response later! Another panellist was Simon Graham, representing Blacktown Workers Club CEO Morgan Stewart. The club has done a wonderful job and is putting in \$500,000 over the next five years to the health care program. Another panellist was Dr Shanthini Seelan, a GP at Bridgeview Medical Practice in Toongabbie, which is a leading local GP clinic that runs information sessions, healthy living classes and cooking demonstrations. Mark Scott is from Novo Nordisk Australia, which is a pharmaceutical company putting a lot of money into prevention programs. You would think pharmaceutical companies would want you to use their medicines, but it has established Cities Changing Diabetes in 40 cities around the world.

I notice the member for Castle Hill is here, but I want Blacktown to be the forty-first city and the first city in Australia. We will have a challenge whether it will be Blacktown or the Hills. I know the member is on the Hills council. Novo Nordisk Australia has established a good network around the world. Rowan Clifford, the CEO of Diabetes Australia, was another panellist. Panellist Professor Glen Maberly is a world-leading medical doctor based in Western Sydney who goes around the world delivering studies and results. If we do not come together and do not deliver outcomes then we will never beat diabetes.

HUDSON PEAR

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon) (16:54): Since 1788 there has been a terrible record of introducing animals and plants into Australia, and there have been some particularly nasty examples of cactus. On the First Fleet they brought prickly pear to feed the cochineal beetles that they also brought, which were supposed to be the basis of a lucrative dye industry. Those insects were the source of the precious red dye used to make the vivid scarlet uniforms of the British soldiers. That little venture did not turn out well: The bugs died but the cactus stayed to spread unchecked by the beetles, later becoming a serious pest species. Many other species of cactus followed. Hudson pear was brought to Australia in the 1960s. It was first reported to the Prickly Pear Destruction Commission by a Mr Hudson, which resulted in it being known as Hudson pear in Australia.

Hudson pear is a branched shrub cactus with cylindrical green segments and spines three centimetres to six centimetres long. In 1996, Walgett mayor Peter Waterford took a piece of the spiny cactus into a council meeting and said it was infesting around 10 hectares of Crown land near Lightning Ridge. Approaches made to Crown Lands to fund an eradication program went unanswered. By the time cries for funding were finally heard in 2006, Hudson pear covered about 60,000 hectares and had been found in almost every State. In 2023 it is challenging to quantify the spread of Hudson pear, but it is important that we no longer treat it with the same complacency we have done in the past. All lands are at risk, including prime agricultural land, Crown land and national parks. It infests and overwhelms vegetation. The threat of it spreading is magnified if it gets into our waterways. Narran Lakes is a RAMSAR-listed site, and the surrounding community has legitimate concerns it is at risk of infestation.

I warned the previous Government in 2019 that flood events would spread Hudson pear into our river system. My warnings went unanswered, just like those of Walgett's mayor in 1996. Hudson pear spreads by the movement of finger-sized segments. Just one of those segments can generate an entirely new infestation. Anything

can transfer them: humans, animals, vehicles and waterways. The spines can penetrate footwear and even tyres on cars and cause serious injury. Hudson pear proliferates and degrades the value of land and many landholders also report countless animals and birds impaled on the cactus, starving to death. It is a truly gruesome way to die. Some of the animals get the spines stuck in their mouth and, unable to eat, starve to death.

Landholders are frustrated about funding transparency and coordination of management plans, and they urgently await a real solution. Under the National Weeds Strategy, Hudson pear has been labelled a weed of national significance. This classification means the weed is regarded as the worst in Australia in terms of invasiveness, potential for spread and economic and environmental impacts. The Australian Weeds Strategy 2017-2027 is a guide to coordinating efforts across all jurisdictions and among affected stakeholders, and informs plans and actions by State and Territory governments, local governments and regional natural resource management agencies as well as by industry, landholders and the wider community.

Landowners and occupiers have a role in managing this weed under the Noxious Weed Act. Local Land Services and the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council do what they can to manage the spread within their jurisdictions. Still, they need to be better resourced to deal with the infestation size, the rate it proliferates and how fast it spreads. The strategic approach in the north-west region, outlined by Castlereagh Macquarie County Council, is the following:

- The plant should be fully and continuously suppressed and destroyed
- Establish agreed quarantine and/or hygiene protocol
- Surveillance and mapping to locate all infested properties and maintain currency of exclusion zone and objectives
- Monitor change in current distribution to ensure containment of spread—

that has not been successful so far—

- High level analysis of pathways to identify potential introduction areas and preventative options

This classification level and the required output should be backed by appropriate funding. Yet there are no full-time Hudson pear pest officer positions to continuously suppress and destroy Hudson pear. Our old friend the cochineal bug, which failed as the basis of the dye industry in 1788, is a biocontrol method used alongside chemical spraying. But even this program has no full-time staff and needs to be bigger to breed the quantities required to tackle Hudson pear, and it is less effective in wet conditions.

The Australian Weeds Strategy says coordination should be across all jurisdictions and affected stakeholders. If Hudson pear is found in the Lightning Ridge area, it falls on the individual's shoulders to alert either the LLS or the Castlereagh Macquarie County Council of its location. There is no office for either in Lightning Ridge. Out west, people prefer a physical presence because not everyone is on the internet or has a mobile phone. In a race against time, every option should be explored. If setting up offices can be part of the solution, let us set them up. We have seen the former Government either downplay or ignore Hudson pear and, because of that, it is out of control and still spreading. Let us get the communities involved in citizen science to assist in mapping the spread, create full-time positions for spraying and for the cochineal breeding facility, and set up offices so communities can report their findings. We can no longer afford complacency when it comes to Hudson pear.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): It being 5:00 p.m., debate is interrupted for the public interest debate.

Public Interest Debate

CHILDREN'S VOUCHER PROGRAMS

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:00): I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that from 1 January around 750,000 children across New South Wales will be ineligible for an Active Kids or Creative Kids voucher.
- (2) Notes that from 1 January the twice yearly Active Kids \$100 voucher and the yearly Creative Kids \$100 voucher will be replaced by two \$50 vouchers for those children who remain eligible.
- (3) Notes that from 1 July the \$100 First Lap voucher will be replaced by a \$50 voucher.

Every member in this House knows how important Active Kids, Creative Kids and First Lap vouchers are to our local communities. Many of us who have kids will have used those vouchers to help cover the cost of our kids' sports. No-one can understand why this Labor Government has decided to cut those vouchers for hundreds of thousands of struggling families right across our State. Shame on each and every Labor member. The Active Kids,

Creative Kids and First Lap vouchers are a brilliant initiative from the former Government. That Government knew how to support hardworking families in this State. Under the former Government, every single family and child was eligible for two \$100 Active Kids vouchers, one \$100 Creative Kids voucher and one \$100 First Lap voucher a year. Those vouchers were a lifeline for many families who are struggling with the cost of living. They ensured that their kids could run, kick, play and swim without financially burdening their families.

At the start of this year more than 4.85 million vouchers were redeemed, saving families \$481 million while helping to relieve the pressure on many struggling families' budgets. The vouchers were not just to ease the cost of living. They helped to boost grassroots sport and promote healthy and more active lifestyles for our kids. According to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 70 per cent of children fail to meet physical activity guidelines, leading to a poorer academic outcome and increased childhood obesity rates. We want to keep our kids off their iPads and Xboxes. We want them to get outside to enjoy the fresh air and teambuilding that comes with playing sport. Labor has gutted, slashed and cut this program. Under Labor, 750,000 families will now miss out on those crucial vouchers. Under Labor's plan the outlook is very bleak for the limited number of families who are still eligible, because they will not receive \$300 worth of vouchers that other families did under the former Liberal-Nationals Government. Labor has created an insignificant package that will do nothing to help to alleviate the cost-of-living pressures that so many families are facing.

Under Labor, families who receive the Family Tax Benefit Part A will now receive only two \$50 vouchers under the combined Active and Creative Kids vouchers scheme. The First Lap voucher also will be cut from \$100 to \$50. Under Labor, New South Wales families will always pay more and get less. The member for Bankstown and former member for Lakemba is a good guy. He is one of the good ones in Cabinet. On 10 June last year, the member for Bankstown said the price of everything is going up and we are in a cost-of-living crisis. I could not agree more with him. I think he needs to pick up the phone and speak to his Cabinet colleagues. We are still in a cost-of-living crisis, so why has the member for Bankstown endorsed a plan that will result in hundreds of thousands of families facing more financial pressure? At the next cost-of-living forum, the member for Canterbury and the member for Bankstown will have some very tough questions to answer from the many families in those electorates as well as those from right across south-west Sydney who have to pay more under Labor.

What makes this debacle even worse is that before the election the Premier assured the people of New South Wales that Labor would fund the Active Kids and Creative Kids programs. It seems that is not the case anymore. Labor is slashing the Active Kids, Creative Kids and First Lap vouchers. That is not a productivity savings; it is a brutal hit on the budgets of New South Wales families. Labor is not just crossing numbers off its broken budget spreadsheet. It is cutting a program that has helped hundreds of thousands of kids get active while enjoying their favourite sports. Why should families in New South Wales have to choose between having their kids play sport or putting food on the table? Opposition members on this side of the House know that Labor cannot manage a budget. When it runs out of its own money, it comes after ours.

My friend the member for Rockdale and Minister for Sport has struggled for months to give us a straight answer on whether he will keep the Active Kids, Creative Kids and First Lap vouchers. Are they in or are they out? In the Minister's electorate of Rockdale, one First Lap session for a three-year-old costs about \$23 at the Sans Souci Leisure Centre. Under the Coalition Government, a family living in the Rockdale electorate could have received just over four free lessons. Now the Labor Government has cut that in half. When it comes to helping young kids to get active and remain active in local sports we are seeing cuts and more cuts.

Mr Matt Cross: Think of the children.

Mr MARK COURE: Absolutely—think of the children. Members on this side of the House will always keep up the fight to bring back the Active Kids vouchers for all families in New South Wales.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (17:07): On behalf of the Government, I am delighted to participate in the public interest debate introduced by the member for Oatley. I thank him for bringing this discussion to the House because it allows Government members to put some facts into the discussion. What Government members know is that the only active juveniles in this State are members of the New South Wales Liberal Party because they did not fund those programs. Not even the children of this State are immune or protected from the tyranny of the conservatives, otherwise known as the decaying carcass—the New South Wales Liberal Party.

How desperate are they? When we go through the financial figures, my good friend in the other place and Treasurer Daniel Mookhey clearly outlined the facts of the serious and adverse situation this State finds itself in because of that mob opposite. I have said a number of things and made comparisons, but Government members know that Coalition members could not run a bath. Why should the people of New South Wales pay for the economic incompetence of the Liberals? But what is even worse is that it affects the children. They misled the taxpayers of this State. They misled this Parliament on countless occasions. They ripped off communities during

fires, floods, droughts and COVID with their pork-barrelling and grants, but misleading the children of New South Wales is a new low for the Liberals. They say, "We're going to give you these vouchers but, by the way, we're not going to pay for them." How does that work? What they did is what the Liberal Party does best: They will say anything before an election, and then they get elected and do nothing. That is exactly what they were planning to do.

Thankfully, we put a stop to that and we are now getting some facts into this story. But the facts are consistent with the other facts about the economic situation the people of New South Wales now find themselves in. In 2011, when the Liberals came to office, debt was \$22.5 billion or \$3,100 per person. The Liberals totally lost control of the budget. Debt is now projected to reach \$187 billion or \$22,000 per person by 2026. The cost of interest on that debt is said to be \$7 billion per year. That is bigger than the total budget for the NSW Police Force and our TAFE institutes. Looking at that comparison, it is no wonder that those opposite are so sensitive about anything to do with the budget. I do not think anyone in this House would reject providing activities and encouraging our children to do everything they can to excel in sport and reach their full potential—except for members opposite. They went around to the children and made a promise, but they did not fund it.

It is absolutely no wonder that we have a budget deficit of more than \$7 billion and a black hole that will leave us needing budget repair. Opposition members need to think about their approach to this. Why would they put themselves in the line of fire? They are just highlighting that they misled the people of New South Wales. In a new low for their mob, they even misled the children of New South Wales by saying, "We're going to fund these Active Kids vouchers but we're just not going to pay for them." The reality is that we have opened the Treasury coffers and the money for our kids is not in there. In addition, the previous Government also left an enormous amount of debt—into the billions of dollars—that the people of New South Wales will have to pay off because of its mismanagement.

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (17:12): I am glad to be following the member for Campbelltown, who threw out a lot of words like "misled". Prior to the election, the now Premier, then Opposition leader, was asked a direct question about whether he was going to roll over—

Mr Matt Cross: What did he say?

Mr GURMESH SINGH: I will tell you what he said. He said, "We're going to roll them over in a similar way to the New South Wales Government." What have we seen? Nothing. We have seen no rollover. We have seen a broken promise, not even 100 days into this term. We are 80-something days into their four-year reign and we see a broken promise. I echo the words of the member for Campbelltown in asking why they misled the kids. It is predictable: We have been hearing the same old lines for a couple of weeks now from the Labor Party attacking the finances of New South Wales.

I will correct some of the statements that were made over the past couple of weeks. The State final demand is at 3.75 per cent—the strongest economic growth of any State. Unemployment is at 3.2 per cent, which is the lowest rate of any State in the nation. We have half the ratio of debt to gross State product of Victoria. We are the only State to have two triple-A credit ratings from Moody's and Fitch and we have a pathway back to surplus in 2024-25. That is what an economically sustainable and responsible government does. Our State's net debt is currently 10 per cent and is projected to stabilise at 14 per cent. Compare this with Victoria at 26.5 per cent. These are not new figures; they have been around for a long time. We know that these arguments are academic in nature, but we need to discuss the choices the Labor Government is making. They are choices against our kids and against our future.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Government members will come to order. They will have their opportunity to contribute to debate when it is their turn to do so. The member for Coffs Harbour will be heard in as close to silence as possible.

Mr GURMESH SINGH: Look at the Queensland Labor Government and Annastacia Palaszczuk. No wonder she is so popular. She is increasing her FairPlay vouchers from \$150 to \$300 by adding swimming. That is foresight from a Labor government—unlike the Labor Government here. We had nearly 15,000 Active Kids vouchers created last year in the Coffs Harbour electorate, with a 49:51 female to male split. The top sport that was undertaken for both male and female kids was swimming. In a coastal electorate it is important for children to learn how to swim because a lot of kids play by the water and go swimming. We have warm weather and a lot of swimming pools, so it is fortunate that we are teaching the next generation of kids how to swim. In girls' sport, gymnastics was number three, with 673 vouchers.

Our regional electorates are not like the city electorates where you can go to the next suburb and play in someone else's club. Our nearest big city is over two hours away. If we do not have clubs with enough people in them to make them viable, guess what? They will disappear. That means that a whole generation of girls and boys

in Coffs Harbour will miss out. Gymnastics was actually number eight for boys while it was number three for girls. Without these vouchers, they will miss out. Who knows where our next Olympic gold medallist might come from? They might come from Coffs Harbour. I ask another question. Is the Labor Party full of closet Maroons fans? Rugby league was third for the boys. How are we expected to ever start winning State of Origin games if we are gutting our rugby league juniors? Without juniors, you cannot have seniors. You cannot import them all from New Zealand like Queensland does.

The Creative Kids vouchers are probably the most overlooked vouchers, but I was proud to attend an event only a couple of weeks ago at the National Cartoon Gallery in Coffs Harbour where, for the cost of one voucher, kids as young as four and up to their early teens could learn to draw cartoons. That is important. Cartoons often cut right through in a way that thousands of words cannot, especially in the political world. Programs like that will disappear. They will disappear under the watch of the Minns Labor Government.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (17:17): Over the past few weeks or so members opposite have been very vocal in this place about the Active Kids vouchers. They have been grandstanding on this matter, and they have been claiming that Labor does not care about New South Wales kids. It would be laughable if it was not so embarrassing. The facts speak for themselves. The fact is that the former Government never funded the Active Kids or Creative Kids vouchers beyond 30 June. That is simple fact. While the previous Government left the vouchers for dead, we have in fact saved the program. We have introduced a program that will make the vouchers sustainable. We know about providing relief to low- and middle-income families that are facing cost-of-living pressures. I have many of those families in my electorate of Leppington; I spoke to thousands of them during the campaign. They are reasonable people, and they are not fooled by the bluff and bluster of those opposite. That is why we are sitting on this side of the House and they are sitting on that side.

The new program will ensure that kids can play sport and stay healthy into the future in a more sustainable, fairer way. We understand that parents should be able to get their kids out and about and participate in the community. What we have not done is leave them in the lurch like those opposite. The Opposition left parents and kids in the lurch by not funding the Active Kids vouchers. It is disgraceful. I am a very strong supporter of community sport. It is a major part of my life as both a community member and a father. My son plays for the fabulous Liverpool Olympic Football Club, which celebrated its fortieth anniversary on the weekend. I was in attendance, and it was a wonderful event. Also in attendance were other parents, coaches, players and members of the local association. They came up to me and said, "Nathan, what is going on with these Active Kids vouchers?"

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Order! Opposition members will come to order.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Because they are reasonable, sensible people, we had a measured discussion and I told them what was going to happen. In fact, they said, "That is a sensible and measured approach, and we look forward to it. We look forward to seeing the soccer clubs throughout Leppington and the south-west grow as a result of these changes." What they were disgusted by—what they were shocked by—was the state of the budget and why we had to do what we had to do.

Mr Matt Cross: Tell us about cashbacks.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: What I will tell you about is the \$7 billion worth of unfunded programs that you left. First, there are the Active Kids vouchers. Then there are more than 1,000 unfunded public hospital nursing roles, 120 of which are in my local health district, the South Western Sydney Local Health District. We also have out-of-home care for vulnerable children—unfunded. We have emergency fire trail programs—unfunded. We have cybersecurity—unfunded. Speaking of cybersecurity, there was a big hack last year. Members might have been keeping an eye on the news. Medibank was hacked.

Mr Paul Scully: Service NSW was hacked.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Service NSW was hacked, probably as a result of the lack of funding here. If one is on a board or follows these things, one of the biggest issues for directors is cybersecurity. They have been told by their peak body and by the Government, "You've got to invest in cybersecurity." It is one of the biggest issues. It puts all of us at risk. Our private data is out there if we do not protect it, and the previous Government left it unfunded. The reckless and irresponsible management of the former Government does not stop there. The State is \$187.5 billion in debt. Rather than pay down the debt, the former Government came up with a hare-brained scheme called the debt recovery fund, where it would borrow more debt—\$25.3 billion of debt—to pay off the debt. To me, that sounds like some kind of multi-level marketing scheme—some kind of Ponzi scheme. Bernie Madoff would blush.

Mr Paul Scully: He's in jail for that.

Mr NATHAN HAGARTY: Yes. This is a kind of multi-level marketing scheme. Using debt to pay off debt is a big pyramid scheme. The previous Government was so into multi-level marketing, I am surprised that during the election campaign it did not come out with an election commitment to start selling vitamins and Tupperware via the Service NSW app. We have got bluster from members opposite; we have got a whole bunch of carry-on. But let us be honest here: The Government is funding this program into the future. [*Time expired.*]

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (17:22): Like the member for Leppington, I am a new member. I came to this place full of enthusiasm and excitement, in particular because I was listening to Labor's rhetoric before the election. It was all about integrity and about having a bright, bold vision and focus for the future of this State. Yet here we are. In the short time that I have been here, my observation has been that there is a vision, no doubt—but a vision for the rear-view mirror. There is a wafer-thin legislative agenda. At best, I can talk to the repeal of choices for housing. I have seen the Government try to take away regional travel cards for apprentices and people who are studying at university. What we are now seeing is a direct and targeted attack on children right across the State. But it goes further than that. It is not just about the kids, as important as they are. It is about families, and it is also about the businesses that have been thriving, particularly post-COVID, because of the wonderful program that the former Liberal-Nationals Government implemented.

Mr Stephen Bali: There's no businesses.

Mr JORDAN LANE: I will take the interjection that there are no businesses. I will tell Government members about a local business in Ryde, Galaxy Sports Coaching, run by a great local resident in Meadowbank named Ryan Buckley. Ryan runs sports clinics for local kids. He has talked about his business experiencing something like a 50 per cent uptake as a consequence of all the local families coming out of COVID and looking for something to do. What better thing to do than to get involved in a great sport like soccer? In the electorate of Ryde, among women, it is the sport with the third highest participation. Among young men, it is the second biggest sport in the electorate. It is an extraordinary performer for the electorate, and it was being sustained in a significant way because of these wonderful programs.

Now, let us put this into context. Families could previously rely on two \$100 vouchers a year. That meant that they could put a significant amount of funding towards the registration fees. It meant that they could take pressure off the family budget. It meant that kids who were in a lower socio-economic environment were able to participate and not be disadvantaged. In a sport like soccer, this is important.

Mr Matt Cross: Wollongong families loved it.

Mr JORDAN LANE: That is right; Wollongong families loved it. Families up in Cessnock loved it too. But what we have seen is not just a cut, but a deep slashing of this program. Families who used to be able to rely upon those two \$100 Active Kids vouchers are now, at best, getting \$100. But not just any family can get that; it is only those who receive Family Tax Benefit A. I would love to see the statistics for the number of families, in an electorate like Ryde, who can actually take advantage of this program. I would hazard that it is a pretty abysmal performance. I reckon that if I look across the aisle, it would be a pretty poor performance for the electorates of members opposite as well. It is more than just a cut to the value of the voucher; it is also a drastic slashing of the number of families who are even eligible.

I go back to my friend Ryan, because Ryan spoke about more than just what the vouchers meant to his business. He also spoke about what it meant for the quality of life for kids and families. He said, "Too many Australian children are at risk of poor quality of life, or premature death, due to unhealthy lifestyles." He shared a statistic from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare that is quite concerning. A massive 70 per cent of children aged two to 17 fail to meet the recommended physical activity guidelines. Almost 75 per cent of children aged two to 17 exceeded the recommended amount of sedentary activity—that is, sitting or screen-based time. What better way to get people away from those poor activities than to have them enrolled in something like swimming or soccer?

Ryan said that the failure to address these concerns is linked to a multitude of damaging consequences, both now and later in life. He spoke about reduced academic attainment, increased risk of some forms of cancer, increased incidence of being overweight or obese, and mental health challenges—we know how significant that is for local communities. All of these things can be tied back to active participation in sport and other things like creativity. I will come to the First Lap vouchers because I am conscious of the time—we are also cutting that, I see. Some 87 per cent of Australians live within 50 kilometres of a coastline. That is the vast majority of our constituents in this place. This is not just about having them involved and participating in sport; this is about teaching critical life skills. This is about life and death. This is not just about the bottom line for households. This is not just about the cost of living, as much as that is important. This is about the future and the lives of kids and families right across this State, and one cannot put a price on that.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (17:27): I find it very easy to speak in this Chamber when Opposition members make my arguments for me. Two Opposition members have given us the statistics that say 70 per cent of children fail to meet basic participation needs. Members opposite ran a program for five years—five years!—and they are getting up in this Chamber and telling us exactly what we know: that the program is not meeting the targets that it is meant to achieve.

Mr Matt Cross: Think of the children.

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ: I would not start thinking of the children, if I were you. I would give that a big miss. I would give that a huge miss, because the children who are missing out are the children who have the poorest parents. The former Government's program has not worked for them. I am surprised that one member had the hide to get up and ask, "How will the member for Bankstown justify it?" If one looks at the electorates that have the lowest uptake of the Active Kids program, one is looking at the electorates of Fairfield, Bankstown, Mount Druitt and Cabramatta. They are getting 40 per cent, 44 per cent and 45 per cent. They are getting under 50 per cent. The electorates that get the vouchers are Manly, with 69 per cent; Epping, with 69 per cent; Miranda, with 72 per cent; and Cronulla, with 72 per cent. The member for Ryde said, "I probably do not have many people on tax benefit A. I do not have anyone. It is going to cut out all of my people on tax benefit A."

We know that there is a huge uptake of Active Kids vouchers in wealthier electorates, but the kids we want to get into sport are those in the areas where the children have the least. That includes children in my electorate. I have given an example in the past where the principal of Birrong Boys High School has a student who lives with 18 family members in a two-bedroom flat. Members opposite should think about the children and schools that they have left behind. They were building indoor sports centres at Ku-ring-gai High School and giving regional sports funding to North Sydney Olympic Pool while our kids were not picking up the Active Kids vouchers. They never once said to themselves, "Let me go back to AusPlay and the Australian Institute of Sport and look at why people do not get involved in sport."

People who speak a language other than English were highlighted. There are plenty of those kids in Fairfield, Bankstown, Auburn and Mount Druitt. There are plenty of families in those electorates that have more than three siblings, like the one that has 18 children living in a two-bedroom flat. Meanwhile, members opposite were giving money to North Sydney Olympic Pool and Ku-ring-gai High School. Our kids were getting active by walking up the stairs at Chester Hill Station, which was number four on the priority list to get a lift but still does not have one. Mums were dragging prams up stairs while members opposite left the children of Western Sydney behind and rolled funds into their own electorates. The member for Coffs Harbour told us how many sports grants he got in his electorate. I can tell you how many we did not get in our areas, where the children are the poorest and unemployment is the highest. They are the parents who need the help, but they did not get it from the former Government.

Members opposite say, "There was 69 per cent in Epping and 69 per cent in Manly." What they do not tell you is how much of that 69 per cent was participating before the vouchers. Members opposite did not get the AusPlay participation figures and say, "These were the figures in 2017 and here are the figures in 2022. By the way, there is no difference." They did not give us those figures, because the participation numbers are not what it is about. It is about who was shifted from not doing sport to doing sport. The only data that we have, which was a very small survey, did not support it, except for people who were poor and on tax benefit A. That is why the Government has done this. I have an amendment. I move:

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

- (1) Notes that under the former Liberal-Nationals Government, from 1 July this year zero kids would have been eligible for Active Kids, Creative Kids or First Lap vouchers.
- (2) Notes the \$7 billion budget black hole left by the former Liberal-Nationals Government requires tough decisions to be made.
- (3) Notes the new Government has provided funding certainty in relation to its commitments on Active Kids, Creative Kids and First Lap.

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:32): In reply: I thank the member for Campbelltown, the member for Coffs Harbour, the member for Leppington, the member for Ryde and the member for Auburn for their contributions. As a father of two young boys, we are soccer crazy at home. I know how important these vouchers are to many families across my local community. Thousands of kids are active in sport for the very first time. In fact, the next Neymar Júnior, Messi or Ronaldo could come from the Oatley electorate. Since 2018 over 55,000 Active Kids vouchers have been created, with a take-up rate by families of over 70 per cent in my electorate. Sport is part of the fabric of our communities, and it is now under threat, thanks to members opposite.

Just this week I turned the first sod on a major upgrade of the netball courts and skatepark at Olds Park in my electorate, and one of the first questions I was asked on social media was, "How are my kids going to enjoy these new facilities if we cannot afford to register them to play sport?" That is the cost of Labor's broken promises

to hardworking families in my electorate and across New South Wales. Kids will miss out on weekend sports, all because Labor does not know how to manage a budget. Some 750,000 families now face the prospect that they cannot send their kids to play sport because money is tight. During a cost-of-living crisis, the Government decided to cut one of the most widely used cost-of-living programs in the State. It is up to Labor to now explain to the parents, the kids and the grassroots sporting organisations across New South Wales why it cannot manage a budget.

In the past 12 months we had the member for The Entrance supporting the Active Kids vouchers. Where is he now? He is silent. The member for Wallsend supported Active Kids vouchers. Now there is silence. The member for Heffron supported Active Kids vouchers. Where is he now? There is silence. The member for Port Stephens supported Active Kids vouchers, but she does not anymore. The member for Gosford supported Active Kids vouchers on social media last year. She does not anymore. It goes on. The member for Coogee and the member for Swansea both also supported Active Kids vouchers. They are some of my favourites. They are silent now. Shame on those opposite.

Mr Gurmesh Singh: Point of order: I ask that paragraph (2) of the amendment be ruled out of order.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): I will seek advice from the Clerk. On what basis is the member for Coffs Harbour seeking that the paragraph be ruled out of order?

Mr Gurmesh Singh: Paragraphs (1) to (3) of the original motion relate exclusively to Active Kids and Creative Kids vouchers. Paragraphs (1) and (3) of the amendment have a tenuous link to both Active Kids and Creative Kids vouchers, but paragraph (2) of the amendment has no relation at all to the original motion.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich): Taken holistically, the amendment is in order. We cannot pick it apart. I rule that the amendment is in order.

The member for Oatley has moved a motion, to which the member for Auburn has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment be agreed to.

The House divided.

Ayes49
Noes37
Majority.....12

AYES

Aitchison, J
Atalla, E
Bali, S
Barr, C
Butler, L
Car, P
Catley, Y
Chanthivong, A
Cotsis, S
Crakanthorp, T
Daley, M
Dalton, H
Davis, D
Dib, J
Doyle, T
Finn, J
Hagarty, N

Harris, D
Harrison, J
Haylen, J
Hoenig, R
Holland, M
Hornery, S
Kaliyanda, C
Kamper, S
Kirby, W
Leong, J
Li, J
McDermott, H
McKeown, K
Mehan, D
Minns, C
O'Neill, M

Park, R
Piper, G
Quinnell, S
Saliba, D
Scully, P
Shetty, K
Smith, T
Stuart, M
Tesch, L (teller)
Vo, T
Voltz, L
Warren, G
Washington, K
Watson, A
Whan, S (teller)
Wilkinson, K

NOES

Amon, R
Anderson, K
Ayyad, T
Clancy, J
Cooke, S
Coure, M
Cross, M

Hodges, M
James, T
Kean, M
Kemp, M
Lane, J
Layzell, D
Marshall, A

Saunders, D
Singh, G (teller)
Sloane, K
Speakman, M
Taylor, M
Thompson, T
Toole, P

NOES

Crouch, A (teller)
 Davies, T
 Di Pasqua, S
 Griffin, J
 Hannan, J
 Henskens, A

McGirr, J
 Perrottet, D
 Preston, R
 Provest, G
 Roberts, A

Tuckerman, W
 Ward, G
 Williams, L
 Williams, R
 Williamson, R

PAIRS

Saffin, J

Petinos, E

Amendment agreed to.

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

Division called for and Standing Order 185 applied.**The House divided.**

Ayes51
 Noes36
 Majority.....15

AYES

Aitchison, J
 Atalla, E
 Bali, S
 Barr, C
 Butler, L
 Car, P
 Catley, Y
 Chanthivong, A
 Cotsis, S
 Crakanthorp, T
 Daley, M
 Dalton, H
 Davis, D
 Dib, J
 Doyle, T
 Finn, J
 Hagarty, N

Hannan, J
 Harris, D
 Harrison, J
 Haylen, J
 Hoenig, R
 Holland, M
 Hornery, S
 Kaliyanda, C
 Kamper, S
 Kirby, W
 Leong, J
 Li, J
 McDermott, H
 McGirr, J
 McKeown, K
 Mehan, D
 Minns, C

O'Neill, M
 Park, R
 Piper, G
 Quinnell, S
 Saliba, D
 Scully, P
 Shetty, K
 Smith, T
 Stuart, M
 Tesch, L (teller)
 Vo, T
 Voltz, L
 Warren, G
 Washington, K
 Watson, A
 Whan, S (teller)
 Wilkinson, K

NOES

Amon, R
 Anderson, K
 Ayyad, T
 Clancy, J
 Cooke, S
 Coure, M
 Cross, M
 Crouch, A (teller)
 Davies, T
 Di Pasqua, S
 Griffin, J
 Henskens, A

Hodges, M
 James, T
 Kean, M
 Kemp, M
 Lane, J
 Layzell, D
 Marshall, A
 Perrottet, D
 Preston, R
 Provest, G
 Roberts, A
 Saunders, D

Singh, G (teller)
 Sloane, K
 Speakman, M
 Taylor, M
 Thompson, T
 Toole, P
 Tuckerman, W
 Ward, G
 Williams, L
 Williams, R
 Williamson, R
 Wilson, F

PAIRS

Saffin, J

Petinos, E

Motion as amended agreed to.*Private Members' Statements***SWANSEA CHANNEL**

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism) (17:51): Swansea Channel is the heart of the Lake Macquarie region—a pristine waterway that locals and tourists alike love to flock to for recreational activities. However, this House knows all too well that the former Liberal Government failed to carry out vital dredging works, which has limited the community's ability to take advantage of all that the lake has to offer. For more than two years now, the channel has not been dredged, and it has experienced recurrent silting, making it too shallow for boaties to get through. In July 2021, \$6.2 million was allocated to one of the former Government's biggest-ever dredging programs. Swansea Channel was the priority out of five New South Wales waterways set to benefit from this program. We are yet to see a single cent spent. The former Government then went on to promise that emergency dredging would take place in the channel before last Christmas. This was then pushed back to February 2023. The Government well and truly failed to ensure that dredging took place at that time.

The Liberals' negligence has not only inconvenienced boaties but it has also been a handbrake on Lake Macquarie's economy. The region's yacht clubs have been significantly impacted by the lack of dredging in recent years. I know that many clubs have had to cancel or postpone sailing regattas because dredging has not taken place. For example, the Royal Motor Yacht Club Toronto has experienced a drop in participants for its annual Heaven Can Wait regatta, which raises money for the Hunter branch of Cancer Council NSW. Surfing and fishing events have also been hindered. Businesses that look after boat maintenance, like marinas, have also suffered a blow. This is because we have seen nowhere near as many boats and yachts sail in and out of the channel as we did in the past. I know that Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie has also felt the strain from the lack of dredging as it has experienced a major increase in the number of rescues it undertakes. I thank it for its efforts in keeping those using the lake and surrounding waterways safe.

The people of Swansea, and the State as a whole, are quite frankly fed up with the diabolic state in which the former Liberal Government left Swansea Channel. However, I am here to assure them and members of this House that the Minns Labor Government has listened to their pleas for action. I am a long-time advocate for a permanent dredging solution for the Swansea Channel. Prior to the State election, Labor committed to undertaking dredging in Swansea Channel as a matter of urgency if it was to win government. Now the new Labor Government is delivering directly on that promise. The Minister for Transport advised Transport for NSW to commence the procurement process, with the tender to engage a contractor for dredging published and closing on 1 June 2023.

The Maritime Infrastructure Delivery Office is planning to carry out the first dredging campaign in July, and the second in autumn next year. This is significant progress—and we have been in government for only a few short months. This has been an ongoing issue for far too long, and this announcement makes clear that the Minns Labor Government is delivering on our commitment to dredge Swansea Channel, delivering for the people of Swansea. It will continue to deliver for every person in New South Wales.

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (17:55): There was the 2014 report of the Joint Select Committee on Sentencing of Child Sexual Assault Offenders, the NSW Ombudsman's report *Responding to Child Sexual Assault in Aboriginal Communities* and, in 2017, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Years of research have drawn attention to the difficulties that child victims and complainants experience as witnesses in the criminal justice processes, and the negative impacts on both their capacity to give evidence and their wellbeing.

A new, fierce focus on the issue and impacts came to us through the advocacy of Albury teenagers Rose and Pippa Milthorpe, two sisters who were abused as children and who have waived their right to anonymity to share their story to bring about reform. The sisters were aged five and eight years at the time the abuse was first reported to police. The consequent trial took place more than two years later. After a harrowing court experience, Rose and Pippa fronted the Justice Shouldn't Hurt campaign. Pippa goes straight to the heart of the matter when she says:

My experience with the court system was quite traumatic. I was under questioning for five days. I couldn't understand half the language that was used. It was very scary, especially as an 11-year-old talking to mature adults that you've never met before about something that personal.

Working with the family, an ePetition was prepared and lodged with the New South Wales Parliament. In brief, the key issues for the State's justice system were: the time between events and judgement; the taking of evidence from children; availability of trained judges and lawyers; the terror to children from courtroom processes; and the restrictions on parental or other support at these times. It was with a sense of relief, therefore, that we all listened to the media conference on 1 February this year when then Premier Perrottet and then Attorney General Mark Speakman, now Leader of the Opposition, announced profound changes that would take place in this State. Dominic Perrottet said:

Child sexual abuse is one of the most heinous crimes, and those children who have already endured the unimaginable should not have to suffer further at the hands of a justice system designed for adults.

He also said:

As soon as I read it, [I thought] we're going to fix this, and we're going to roll it out so that no other child ever has to go through what Pippa and Rose went through.

Legislative reform would build upon the Coalition's pilot Child Sexual Offences Evidence Program, which has been in action since 31 March 2016 in Sydney's Downing Centre District Court and in the Newcastle District Court. Earlier this year, the New South Wales Coalition committed to invest \$64.3 million over four years to expand the Child Sexual Offences Evidence Program to every district court and police district in New South Wales. Under the program, young people are able to pre-record their evidence. They are provided with intermediaries to assist them during police interviews and hearings, as well as supports to spare them the trauma of facing their alleged attacker in court. Dominic Perrottet gave this commitment:

Our Government led the nation when we piloted this program and now we want to make sure that every child—no matter where they live in our state—can access this support.

Through the Justice Shouldn't Hurt campaign, Rose, Pippa and their parents spoke at the 6th National Child Protection Forum in Brisbane this week. They spoke of their "commitment to improving the process from disclosure to conviction for young people". The forum will focus on supporting and empowering children to have a voice in the delivery of services. It will accelerate the implementation of existing commitments made to children and advocate for discussions between government, community services and legal and justice systems.

I am pleased to say that on Tuesday Michelle received an email that confirmed Premier Minns' commitment to implementing the Child Sexual Offence Evidence Program. New South Wales is just the start. I have made representations to the Attorney General to take this policy to the Standing Council of Attorneys-General and make it national. Care must be taken to see that all regions of the State benefit; that the program is well resourced and training delivered statewide; and that it is supported by providing education for our communities, schools, the legal profession, counsellors, police and all of those who are involved with children and their rights. Rose and Pippa should be proud of the changes they have brought about. This is an extraordinary achievement. As the former Attorney General said, "Re-traumatising a complainant does not advance justice". For all children, let us move swiftly towards a new era of justice that should not hurt but heal.

The SPEAKER: In accordance with the earlier resolution of the House, the presentation of the inaugural speech of the member for Cabramatta will now proceed.

Members

INAUGURAL SPEECHES

The SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Cabramatta, I warmly welcome those who are seated in the public gallery to watch the member for Cabramatta's inaugural speech. I am sure you will all find it a wonderful experience. Welcome to the oldest Parliament in Australia. I acknowledge Mr Cuong Vo, Mr Than Nguyen, Mr Xem Huynh, Mr Song Huynh, Mr Vincent Kong, Mr Bountham Vongsaya, Mr Son Lam, Venerable Abbott Por Savoeung, Mr George Barcha, Mr Kien Ly, Mrs Carmen Lazar, Mr Kevin Lam, Mrs Jennifer Tran, Mr Hung Ly, Mr Walter Robinson, Mr Michael Foulkes, Mr Le Anh, Mrs Therese Le-Dang, Mr Joseph Hung Hoang, Mr Rox Molavin and Ms Mary Venus. I know there are many more people who undoubtedly deserve to be recognised, but I welcome each and every one of you here. You are amongst friends. With a sense of great honour, I call the member for Cabramatta to make his inaugural speech.

Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (18:03): First of all, I acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional custodians of this land, and pay my respects to Elders past, present and emerging. It is a bit late, but this is the only chance I have had to properly congratulate the member for Lake Macquarie on being unanimously appointed as the Speaker of this House. My congratulations also to Madam Deputy Speaker, the member for Wallsend; Mr Assistant Speaker, the member for Strathfield; and all of the other Temporary Speakers of this House. As a new member in this House, I feel that we are in a good place and in good hands. We have

speakers who are diverse in all its meanings—backgrounds, heritage, gender, city and country. They are fair and are seen to be fair and independent. Do I get a tick?

The SPEAKER: Yes. You were doing all right anyway.

Mr TRI VO: I acknowledge all of the members, special guests in the gallery, family and friends, and members of the community. Today is 21 June 2023, in the middle of winter here in Sydney, Australia. Today is one of the shortest days in the Southern Hemisphere. Thinking of 21 June, I am reminded that this week in Australia we are celebrating Refugee Week; its theme is "Finding Freedom". About one month ago I asked the Government Whip's office and the member for Monaro to kindly allocate me a day to do my inaugural speech. I said I could do it quite soon if required. I understand that we have quite a number of new MPs this time and therefore the allocation process may take a little longer. I was allocated today and I was so happy, realising that today is part of Refugee Week, as I was also a boat refugee. That is something I am very proud of.

In a lot of my CVs I would state that I was a refugee, a boat person, as if that is one of my qualifications—one of my work experiences or life experiences. I think to myself sometimes that you don't choose your path, a special position or special date, but the path, position or date chooses you. The only complaint I have is that tonight is the same night as the State of Origin Game 2. I have had the privilege over the past month or so to hear so many excellent inaugural speeches by new members. The standards of speeches have gone higher and higher and higher. Sometimes, being a new MP in this Chamber feels like going back to high school or university. Question times are more like high school.

Being new MPs, we look around, guessing the other person or persons in the room, as if we are looking at the cover of a book and guessing the story in the book. But I quickly realised that we cannot judge a book by its cover. Through these inaugural speeches I realised all of the members are in many ways exceptional leaders in their local area, and in many ways deserve to be here. This reminds me of a quote I learnt in high school by Thomas Edison:

Genius is 1 per cent inspiration and 99 per cent perspiration.

Those inaugural speeches have been informative, educational, funny, entertaining, emotional, inspirational and much more. I hope to have a combination of all of that, to live up to the standards of this House so far and to please the difficult MPs and the special guests here in the gallery today—I have my tissues ready. I am also advised that this will be the only time that MPs will be well behaved, will not interrupt me or interject on me. What I can say from the outset is, I may not be the best speech maker or the best speech writer, but I do have a real story to tell you and this House. My story is not unique but is quite common in south-western Sydney and in many other major cities in Australia, America, Canada, France, England, New Zealand and other free nations.

My father, Mr Cuong Vo, a former President of the Vietnamese Community in Australia and New South Wales and current Chair of the Vietnamese Former Pilots Association of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam, is here today. He was a helicopter pilot, trained in America for about two years and participated in the Vietnam War, which ended in 1975. In March 1975, about one month before the end of the Vietnam War, his helicopter, with about 14 people on board, was shot down in central Vietnam near Da Nang. He was imprisoned as a political prisoner for a total of about seven years. After coming out of prison, like many others in the country, we knew we could not live under the Vietnamese Communist regime, and so we planned our escape from Vietnam.

Nearly one year passed, and towards the end of 1982 our parents planned to escape Vietnam. They would not tell us young kids, just in case we would unintentionally reveal it to the authorities and they would capture us. Our parents would tell us that we were going on a holiday to visit our grandparents. Us kids were quite excited: "We are going on a holiday?" However, in our first attempt, in September 1982, we did not succeed and my mother and my three older brothers, all under 18 at the time, were captured by the Vietnamese authorities. I remember we were sunk in mud, sometimes to waist deep. Also, I could remember vividly the sounds of the gunshot to the sky to alert and threaten us before they captured us. Lucky for us, all the grown-up men over 18 years old in our family, including my father, left the scene before we were captured, so my mum and us four boys only stayed in the police cells for one night and were released home. They took all my mother's gold and money before releasing us.

Soon thereafter we planned for another escape, and this time we were successful. This time, in 9 December 1982, my family—which consisted of my parents, the four boys, including me, and one uncle—escaped Vietnam in a small boat of about 128 people. The boat was 12 metres long and three metres wide. We went on a journey for about four days and four nights. We did not have a lot of food but mostly drank water, and there was not a lot of water going around. During the nights we would hear people praying to Jesus and Buddha and whichever God would help us get to the shores of freedom. I am told by my mother, An Ly, who is here today, that there were many dolphins that followed the boat. She believed this was a sign of luck or at least safety from the sharks. She also told me there were heavy rains and dangerous storms, and the boat was nearly broken.

At night we saw an oil rig and waited until the morning before doing anything. In the morning my father jumped down and swam across about 100 metres from the boat to the oil rig. When he got to the other side, all the people on our boat clapped and cheered. I can clearly remember this moment of hope. He spoke to the people there inside the oil rig. Then a big Dutch commercial ship came by and we were very lucky to be rescued and taken to Malaysia. I consider we were the lucky ones, as we have heard and read on Google the many stories of other leaking and rickety boats drifting in the high seas for weeks, sometimes months. We have heard many stories of pirates who robbed or violently assaulted and sexually assaulted the innocent people on board, killed them and threw them overboard. We also have heard of starving people resorting to cannibalism, eating the flesh of dead humans on board to survive, especially on boats that drifted for weeks or months.

Between 1975 to 1995 the number of boat people leaving Vietnam and arriving safely in another country totalled almost 800,000. This is just by boat. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR, between 200,000 to 400,000 boat people died at sea. We would never know the exact numbers and the exact names as the Vietnamese authorities would never provide the information of the people who tried to escape the country. Just based on these figures, this means that, for every two or three people who arrived safely by boat, at least one person had died. This means that choosing to be a boat refugee is a very risky and dangerous decision to make. You would be very lucky to be alive, safe and physically and psychologically normal.

When we were rescued on the Dutch commercial ship, I can remember we were given food, congee and water, and kids were given condensed milk. I felt the love between human beings again. We did not receive this from our own people, or at least not from the authorities in power. We were taken to Bidong Island, a refugee place in Malaysia. I can remember the waterfalls, the beaches, the endless grass fields and the plants, and all I can remember was happiness and feeling safe. Even though it was a modest refugee area, my memories were as though we were all in paradise. Sometimes when I eat instant noodles or drink condensed milk, my subconscious mind remembers the time of me being on the ship that rescued us and at the refugee camp in Malaysia.

After about two months in the refugee camp, we were taken by boat to Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. We then flew to Australia in February 1983, which is about 40 years ago. I was six years old at the time. We were welcomed with open arms. We were treated with the love and respect that we could not find in our own motherland. We stayed at Endeavour hostel in Maroubra in the eastern parts of Sydney. The charitable organisations, such as The Smith Family, St Vincent de Paul and the Salvation Army gave us necessities like clothes, kitchenware, wardrobes, toys and so much help. Sometimes it was hard to find our sizes and the clothes would have been a few sizes bigger, but we were always so happy and so grateful.

Since our hostel was in the eastern side of Sydney, like many other refugees we settled in Marrickville, a suburb not so far from the hostel and which has a community similar to us and shops that sold food and groceries that we needed. I went to public schools, both primary and high school, in Marrickville. When I was in year 1 and year 2, my friends, also former refugees, and I would draw pictures of boats on high seas, soldiers and guns et cetera. Other children, like my own children right now, would draw animals, parks, houses, cars, planes and toys. However, deep inside me, I thought I was very lucky, and our stories were always more adventurous and interesting.

I did not go to preschool or kindergarten but started school in the middle of year 1. I repeated year 2, and to this day I do not even know if this was due to me having learning difficulties or if it was because a classmate of mine unfortunately got run over by a car and was in hospital for a few months, so I needed to repeat with him to keep him company and to recover. I actually excelled in class after this—from always being at the bottom of the class to one of the top students in the class. During my adolescence—my boys will like this—we watched a lot of Hong Kong movies, including Jackie Chan, Chow Yun Fat, Andy Lau and Bruce Lee. I told them I would mention Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan. They really like it. I told them I would make a speech and mention a lot of important people; they were not interested. They were more interested in Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan.

At the time I idolised Bruce Lee and respected him for revealing and teaching his martial arts to the Western world and for being so successful in the Western film industry. During my prime—with more hair, of course—some people thought I looked like Bruce Lee. But many more people thought I looked more like the comedian in the film *They Call Me Bruce?* During the first few years of high school, my grades dropped. Therefore, my dad asked a family friend named Mr Pat, a former English teacher, to teach me, mostly English. At that time I was not interested in learning. Mr Pat told me a quote: "I can walk a horse, but I cannot make it drink." I did not understand it at the time, but I think he meant he could try to teach me but he could not make me learn. I still was not much interested in learning.

The weeks went by. He was very patient. He told me another quote: "A pen is mightier than a sword." He explained why. That interested me a little bit more. He also sang songs by Elvis Presley. Now, that interested me. From this point, my wife, My Linh, who is here today, who is a very good singer, might think that is probably where I got my karaoke singing skills from. From then on, I studied hard and listened to everything he said. I also

found my love of learning and reading books again. My parents' words then changed from "Remember to study more" to "Don't study too much, son. Remember to take care of yourself too, okay?" I got into Sydney University and studied double degrees—a Bachelor of Commerce and a Bachelor of Laws. In class the students were more interested in doing the summer clerks and getting into the top five companies. During the holidays I was more interested in reading my self-help books or psychology books. At the time I was so fascinated by these self-help books and the human mind. The human mind controls everything in your body and also controls how we interact with people.

When I started finding work in 2001, I started out in Bankstown for one year and then two years in Fairfield. This was when I truly used my law studies and applied it to the real world. I learnt so much; there were so many interesting cases in south-western Sydney, and especially in the Fairfield city area. In 2004, at the age of 26 years old, I started my own law practice in Canley Heights, which is near Cabramatta. At the time, I moved there because of work and the love of the area and its people. At the time, I moved there not to have the letters "MP" next to the name "Tri Vo", but purely to have the name "Tri Vo" next to the area "Cabramatta"—its people, its communities and its vibrant culture and activities. This was just after the time when many people were moving their families out of Cabramatta, trying not to mention that name or be associated with anything to do with its communities.

Shortly after that I became the youngest president of the Vietnamese Community in NSW, at the age of 28, and then the youngest president of the Vietnamese Community in Australia at the time, at the age of 35. My love for the community and the local area continued. I joined the Labor Party in 2010, held many executive positions in the party and became the Cabramatta branch secretary in 2017. All of my three children were born in our local Fairfield Hospital. They are here today. In 2019 I was number 10 on the upper House ticket for the Labor Party. In 2021 I was on the ticket running for Fairfield council. However, many people knew my aim and love were always to represent Cabramatta.

Sometimes I think, after 40 long years since arriving in Australia as a boat refugee, I—or we—have finally reached our destination. We have found the freedom to think, to speak, to believe, to participate and to choose the paths and the political party we want—the Labor Party for me, of course. I am so privileged and honoured to be the first MP in the New South Wales Parliament to have Vietnamese heritage. New South Wales is the most populous State in the country. This House is the people's House, the oldest Parliament in Australia, the place where democracy in this great nation started. During my time in this Parliament I want to be a voice for my local area, to be a strong advocate for the issues that really matter in my area and to try to get the necessary funding where it is needed the most.

During my election campaign I heard so many suggestions for our Fairfield Hospital—suggestions from many members and residents, including from the current councillors and mayor. I commend the Labor Party for realising that Fairfield Hospital needs the necessary funding. We do not need to be like Liverpool Hospital, Westmead or the Royal North Shore Hospital, but we need to provide the essential services necessary to help local residents and save lives. As I said before, I went to public schools. I am a beneficiary of our public education system; therefore, I will always advocate to help our public schools and give every child and student in this State the same opportunity, regardless of their postcode, their parents' backgrounds and their personal situation. We will help them be the best that God has created them to be.

Some of my concerns for the short term are hospitals, schools, communities, small businesses, housing affordability, cost of living, building infrastructure and maximising the potential in south-western Sydney, especially with the coming of the second airport—a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. For the long term, I will continue to introduce people and the public to the positive things in Cabramatta, such as our diverse communities all living relatively harmoniously, like a mini-world reduced to a small area—an example of multiculturalism at its best. I will introduce the vibrant cultural activities, the delicious food, the people with so many stories ready to share with you and the world, and many, many more reasons. If that does not work, maybe the last thing you could try is to come and visit Cabramatta. Tri Vo, the State member for Cabramatta—he seems okay. He might even be good! I have only 10 minutes left—we have to watch the Origin after this!

I admire Pope Saint John Paul II, who died in 2005, was beatified on 1 May 2011 and canonised on 27 April 2014. By pure chance, two weeks after he was canonised and became a saint, my second son, Christian, two months old at the time, was baptised. We gave him the saint name John Paul. During the time that Pope Saint John Paul II died, got beatified and canonised, I had opportunities to read, watch and know more about him. Not only was he a great religious leader; he knew how to apply it practically to the real world. I give an example that may be relevant to us now, this year. Nearly 40 years ago, on 29 November 1986, Pope John Paul II was in Alice Springs, Australia. He addressed the crowd as follows:

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is a great joy for me to be here today in Alice Springs and to meet so many of you, the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders of Australia. I want to tell you right away how much the Church esteems and loves you, and how much she wishes to assist you in your spiritual and material needs.

He said a few other things, and then he went on to say:

Your culture, which shows the lasting genius and dignity of your race, must not be allowed to disappear. Do not think that your gifts are worth so little that you should no longer bother to maintain them. Share them with each other and teach them to your children. Your songs, your stories, your paintings, your dances, your languages, must never be lost.

On 3 May this year, 2023, we had a seminar run by New South Wales Parliament on making inaugural speeches, and there was a great book suggested to us to read titled *On Speaking Well* by Peggy Noonan. She wrote some of President Ronald Reagan's speeches. On the same day, on 3 May 2023, I went to three bookstores in the city. They said they had to order it from overseas and it might take one month. So I could not get the book, but I found a book that I had wanted to buy for the past 30 years. The book was called *The Road Less Travelled* by Scott Peck.

More importantly, the other thing I got was that by pure chance I ran into Stan Grant, for my first and only time in real life. This was before he stepped down from *Q+A*, on 22 May 2023. At one of the bookstores near the QVB he was quickly looking for a book, and his body language told me he was in a rush and not comfortable with people recognising him. I asked the person at the bookstore whether that was Stan Grant and they confirmed, "Yes, yes". I went over and told him how much I liked his work and to please keep up all his wonderful work. I then asked him whether he supported the yes campaign for the First Nations Voice to Parliament, and he said yes. I told him that I will also be voting yes. He said, "Thank you, brother". I said I will try to encourage others to vote yes, and he said, "Thank you, brother" again. I knew he did not know who I was so, before I went, I introduced myself as "Tri Vo, the new member for Cabramatta".

There you go—my answer to the yes campaign was answered. But soon after, I asked myself the question of why he said, "Thank you, brother" twice. I think there may be four possible reasons. Possibly (a) after just a few months campaigning and being in State politics, I was looking much older and so he referred to me as around his brother's age; or (b) it is just a way that people refer to each other, just like the Aussie way of saying, "Thanks, mate"; or (c) it was like when Saint John Paul II referred to the crowd as all brothers and sisters in the eyes of God, as I referred to earlier; or (d) by acknowledging the Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders, I had been accepted into their country and treated as a brother. I like to think the answer is (c) and (d). In the eyes of God, we are all brothers and sisters, and I have also been accepted into their country. Aboriginal Australians have lived in Australia for more than 65,000 years. Therefore, Australia is home to the oldest continuing living culture on Earth. This is something we should always preserve, cherish and celebrate.

I could not get here without the help of so many people. I would like to thank my wife, My Linh, and children Brandon, Christian, and Evelyn; my parents, Mr Cuong Vo and Mrs An Ly; my brothers Tien and Darren and their families; and Mai Luu and Amanda Vo. I would like to thank Nick Lalich, the former State member for Cabramatta, who gave me so much valuable advice and guided me through the way. He was a longstanding and respected politician in our area. I thank Del Bennett, a former councillor of the Fairfield City Council, and Guy Zangari, a former State member for Fairfield, for their valuable support. I thank Councillor George Barcha, who helped manage the campaign, and Councillor Kien Ly and Councillor Carmen Lazar, who are all here today. Also, I thank the Hon. Jason Clare, the Hon. Chris Bowen, the Hon. Tony Sheldon, who all helped me during the campaign, and Anoulack Chanthivong for his valuable advice.

I thank the many volunteers, including Daniel Griffiths, Ang Phour, Darren Vo, Tien Vo, Phuoc Nguyen and Lan Nguyen, Mickey Ngo, Donson Phetrasy, Joseph Huang, former councillor Sera Yilmaz, former councillor Adrian Wong, Domenic Leonello, Grace Siciliano, Alain David, former councillor Nhan Tran, My Tyack, Anh Ngoc Dang and Huy Tran, who unfortunately is not here with us anymore, but I believe his twin sister is in the gallery today. Huy Tran was always very supportive of me. I also thank many others. I thank our leader Chris Minns and Deputy Premier Prue Car for their leadership and vision. I would also like to thank Rhys Patton from the NSW Labor head office, and especially Bob Nanva and Dom Ofner for being quiet operators but very effective, making decisions based—mostly—on science, facts and evidence.

I also thank the many organisations and communities supporting me during the campaign. I thank Andrew Nguyen and all the members of the Labor Party's Cabramatta branch; Bountham Vongsaya from the Lao Community; Walter Robinson of the Cabra-Vale Diggers club; Anh Le from Viet Tan; Decheng Sun and the Australian Workers' Union in New South Wales; Jennifer Tran and the Chin Lien Chinese Association Incorporated; James Chan and Vincent Kong from the Australian Chinese Buddhist Society; Sawathey Ek from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations; members of the Vietnamese Community in Australia - New South Wales and its community radios and media; the Assyrian National Council of Australia; Hung Ly from the Australian Chinese Teochew Association; Davy Nguyen, and many others. I thank everyone helping me along the way—so many to name all, but I know who you are, and I think of you.

People in the area might say they are proud of me, but I want to let everyone in the gallery know that I am so, so very proud of you all—your stories, your ideals, your courage, your sacrifices, your resilience, your hard work, and what you have all done for your families, communities and your area. You, your families, your communities and your members are the reasons why I will always continue to work for the local community and for our local area. This House, the people's House, is your House as much as it is my House. We will always welcome you. This country, Australia, is the best country in the world. We have been calling Australia and this wonderful State of New South Wales our home, and will continue to do so. We will continue to contribute and treat this country and State as our home. Finally, I want to acknowledge and thank God for God's blessings, and grace to this world and to this country. Thank you for listening.

Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.

The SPEAKER: I thank the member for Cabramatta for his inaugural speech and I trust that everybody in the gallery enjoyed it as much as we did in the Chamber. It was wonderful. Once again, I welcome people in the gallery of the New South Wales Legislative Assembly Chamber. I hope to catch up with some of you later on in the evening.

INAUGURAL SPEECHES

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery): In accordance with the earlier resolution, the presentation of an inaugural speech by the member for Fairfield will now proceed. Before I call the member, I acknowledge those present in the galleries tonight. I acknowledge the member's friends and family. There is a very special guest present, former Premier Morris Iemma. I welcome him back. I welcome the member's supporters and everyone here to listen to his speech. He has his water ready and his speech is going to be terrific. I call the member for Fairfield.

Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (18:50): People from all over the world have travelled long distances to make Fairfield their home. Fairfield is a crucible of all that is good about multiculturalism, but we all acknowledge and celebrate the fact that Fairfield was Cabrogal land long before any of us came along. I acknowledge the Elders of the Cabrogal clan of the Dharug nation and also pay my respects to the Elders of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation, the traditional owners of the land on which this Parliament sits. There is an ancient African proverb that it takes a village to raise a child. For me, Fairfield city is my village and I am its product. To begin my story, my parents fled the civil war in Lebanon in the 1970s to start a better life in Australia. About a decade later, I was born at Fairfield Hospital. I grew up in a public housing complex with my single mother and my sister in Cabramatta.

As a kid, I knew nothing but diversity. My friends were first- or second-generation migrants from across the world. I explored many cultures, ate the best food, learned cheeky phrases in different languages and loved exploring my neighbourhood. Cabramatta had its challenges. Drug and gang crime was rampant. People openly used heroin, even within the corridors of my apartment complex. Kids avoided playgrounds for fear of getting pricked by syringes in the sand. Robberies and theft helped purchase that next score. The most common victims of theft were the family members of those suffering from addiction. Overdoses would follow, in full view of children. Drugs, crime and violence were normalised for us kids. My friends and I adapted to keep ourselves safe and watch out for each other. From my personal experience drug addiction truly destroyed lives, not only of the person succumbing to addiction but also of their family and friends. It would turn an innocent young person against their loved ones. It would break our hearts.

Despite those dark days, I saw the New South Wales Government's impact in healing a struggling community. The Carr Government, alongside our police and healthcare workers, worked side by side with the public to lift Cabramatta out of the abyss. It showed the pivotal role government plays in society, how governments can change lives for the better, the power of action and the influence this Parliament truly has on New South Wales. Sport was my avenue to escape the lure of crime that trapped so many other kids. Whether on the football field, the cricket pitch or at the Fairfield-Cabramatta PCYC, I learned about teamwork and overcoming hurdles, and how to accept losses and be empathetic in victories. I witnessed some inspirational moments on the field, though what was truly amazing were the coaches and volunteers who gave up their time to enable us kids to play. They are the heroes of my childhood—the enablers of so many happy memories for kids who truly needed them.

Sport is paramount to personal growth. It helps keep kids fit and mentally healthy, gives them purpose and is an important outlet to have fun. Even more, sport needs to be viewed in an economic context. It teaches kids employability skills critical to addressing the youth unemployment crisis gripping Western Sydney. As such, strategic planning to coordinate sporting code structures to facilitate more grassroots-level activities must occur. Volunteers are also vital in ensuring equality of access. In all, wealth should not determine a child's access to the sporting field. Education was my ticket to escape poverty. It inspired me to learn that we are not perfect but to treat every day as a learning opportunity, to strive to be better, to help others, to be a positive force in this world.

I owe a great deal to my teachers at Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School Cabramatta and Patrician Brothers' College Fairfield. They challenged me to dream big, to keep on chasing, to be the first in my family to go to university. So began my adventure at Western Sydney University.

UWS, as it was then known, was an important legacy from our predecessors in this very Parliament who rightly advocated for a university footprint in Western Sydney. That decision gave many local kids the chance to break the academic ceiling and transition from high school to higher education. For me, it facilitated my enrolment in a combined law and economics degree. I had a strong sense of justice given my firsthand experiences witnessing the law-and-order efforts in the streets of Fairfield city. I also wanted to learn more about the levers of economics that profoundly impacted lives. My mind matured at university. As kids, we avoided studying because it was not perceived as being cool. At university, that mindset completely shifted and the library became my second home. I persisted over the years to finally become a university graduate. Even more, I had the opportunity to teach at university. This was only possible because of the investment Australia made in me, for which I am eternally grateful. It is also a testament to the structural fairness within our society in placing education at the forefront of shaping lives—though, I admit, we still have work to facilitate more kids entering tertiary study should they wish. As Jason Clare puts it, postcodes should not determine access to education and opportunity.

Professionally, I entered the workforce in my teenage years. My first job was at McDonald's Lansvale as a kitchen hand. It taught me the value of hard work and introduced me to the concept of financial literacy: work, receive a wage, pay tax, save and then buy things within your budgetary limits. I later learned how to factor in investments, home loans and superannuation. We all know young people are up to the task in the labour market. They are passionate, energetic, willing to learn and hungry for opportunities. I will be calling on this Parliament to not only facilitate the transition of more young people into jobs but also inject financial literacy training programs across the State to bolster our collective economic resilience. We need to promote a culture of being proactive rather than reactive in the ever-fluctuating business cycle, enabling us to bounce back quicker and stronger when domestic and international markets falter.

I joined the Army Reserve at the age of 18 and served for more than 19 years. I wanted to protect others and prevent the breakdown of societies so evident across the world. As an infantry officer, I paid heavy attention to the concept of moral courage—doing what is right irrespective of the consequences. It would guide my moral compass in all facets of my life for years to come. I had the privilege of working with some of the best soldiers in the army, contributing to operations and learning more about myself, especially under physical and mental adversity. We owe it to our veterans to look after them during and post their careers. As a nation, we ask a great deal from them, and they readily answer the call. They have endured the traumas of war and many other hardships. Their families also bear significant burdens derived from their service. Like many in this Chamber, veterans' affairs is very important to me, and I will be a strong advocate in that space.

After university, my strong desire to continue to protect people led me to become a Federal agent in Australian Federal Police. Attached to the Sydney office, I worked in areas tackling organised crime and corruption. I later worked in the Sydney Joint Counter Terrorism Team, doing our bit to stop terrorist attacks on domestic soil. The people I served with are nothing short of exceptional. They go above and beyond to protect us, and I assure you they risk their lives in the process.

Policing is becoming increasingly complex, with the evolving sophistication of criminal organisations, alongside the public safety risks posed by violent extremism. We need to ensure we set our police up for success; to give them the legislative powers and resources to keep both them and us safe; to look after them when they succumb to the horrors they face on the job; and to build and foster an agile police force capable of meeting current and future threats. To all the police and emergency services staff out there, you have our backs. With my colleagues in this Chamber, I will do my best to have yours and, in the process, make New South Wales safer.

My thirst for knowledge did not stop in my early 20s. I developed the research bug and enrolled in a PhD examining business power and public policy at UNSW Sydney. To me, it was truly my academic Mount Everest. It was an ultra-marathon of reading, writing, re-reading and rewriting. With the help of my supervisors, I learnt the value of asking the right questions, seeking the answers through a robust methodology and reporting my results. These lessons are not only critical to academia but also to decision-making more broadly, including within this Parliament. We need to incorporate cutting-edge data collection and analysis methodologies in our public policy efforts. We need to quantify problems and be data driven in the solutions we pursue. We need to bolster and harness our research capacity at all levels of government and promote that across academia and industry. After all, research is the gateway to progress and innovation, to a better tomorrow. I say this because New South Wales cannot pave the way for other economies to follow if we lack innovative rigour.

Before entering this Parliament, I was fortunate to work at KPMG Australia as a management consultant, providing change management advisory services. Most of us treat change as a bulldoze-through process. Embarking on significant reform is complex. McKinsey and Company estimate that 70 per cent of change

programs fail. We need to avoid being ad hoc but factor the second, third and subsequent order effects when embarking on a change agenda. And in regard to that agenda, for reasons discussed later, Fairfield needs reform. It needs a strategic vision as well as a robust change strategy to get there. This requires us to utilise the intellectual brain power from government, the private sector, universities, think tanks and the broader community to make meaningful change not only happen but also stick.

I have already mentioned the impact that volunteers had on my life. I sought to follow that tradition by pursuing various voluntary projects to give every kid I could the chance to chase their dreams. My main outlet to deliver this goal was through forming a voluntary group called Youth Pathways Network. For more than nine years, we did our best to reduce pressures pertaining to youth unemployment and crime in Western Sydney. In that time, I mentored so many awesome kids who were determined to make a difference but lacked support. These brave kids have had to overcome language barriers, digital illiteracy, the lure of gangs, drug addiction, exposure to violence, the breakdown of families, financial stress and traumatic memories from escaping the Islamic State in the Middle East.

Intervention via mentorship is critical to change lives for the better here. While I will continue to engage high school students in my new parliamentary capacity, we need to collectively organise strategies to foster mentorship pathways between high school students and representatives from industry. More broadly, we also need to harness the voluntary capacity of our respective electorates to supplement and plug gaps in our public policy efforts. It has been my experience that people want to help make our community better. We need to be that spark that transforms that intent into a reality.

Overall, my life journey has been one of experiences and friendships and a genuine desire to help make lives better within Fairfield city and more broadly across the State. In being here tonight, I must make mention of how I see Fairfield and how I intend to work with you to make a difference. The electorate of Fairfield is the summation of diversity, new beginnings and hope. It is one of Australia's most multicultural and multi-faith communities; a community that has continuously welcomed newly arrived families from across the world, often in tragic circumstances such as escaping the traumas of war, persecution and the brutality of truly evil people and a community that has hopes for a better tomorrow, not just for themselves but broadly across the State and nation. But to achieve that better tomorrow, we must first accept the current reality.

In doing so, I refer to research conducted by the NSW Parliamentary Research Service leveraging Census data from 2021. I must warn you, it is not a pretty picture. Out of the 93 electorates in New South Wales, Fairfield is ranked number one in the following categories: lowest individual income, rental stress, unemployment, youth unemployment, lowest labour force participation rate, lowest female labour force participation rate and persons requiring assistance with core activities. Furthermore, Fairfield is ranked number two in the following categories: persons not fluent in English, persons with no post-school qualification, households with nil income and mortgage stress.

On top of those rankings, Fairfield is suffering from gambling-related harm. Using data published by Liquor and Gaming NSW and the Australian Bureau of Statistics, I calculated that in 2022 alone clubs and hotels in the Fairfield local government area made a net profit of approximately \$651 million from gaming machines. In return, the State Government received \$197 million in taxation revenue. This equates to a \$1,256 gambling tax for every person over the age of 20. This scale of activity is of great concern, raising questions about the extent of problem gambling, money laundering and what we are doing to help our most vulnerable.

I say with confidence that gambling has linkages with drug addiction, depression, domestic violence, physical illnesses, unemployment and crime. The impact of gambling affects not only the individual but also their spouse, children and friends. Fairfield is bearing the brunt of all of these adverse effects and, despite the revenue generated, the response from government, clubs and hotels is severely lacking. After all, we are the most socio-economically disadvantaged region in the State, and I spend every day fighting an uphill battle to get Fairfield its fair share. It should not be that hard.

I can go on with even more challenges confronted by my electorate, but the picture is quite clear. I acknowledge that the public interest is multifaceted, but I will add that data is concrete. Government plays an important role in setting the conditions for communities to thrive. The people of New South Wales look to every single one of us in this Chamber for leadership and to do what is right. In this context, if we are serious about making New South Wales better for all and truly pursuing the public interest, then we must turn our attention to Fairfield. And that means we must accept that structural reform is needed, and ignite that change now.

I do not call for this action on the basis of some pipedream but as a critical economic growth strategy for the State. Fairfield's competitive advantage is its untapped potential: its people, its geographical position and its ability to expand. While other CBDs have had their stories written, Fairfield has barely put pen to paper. Its capacity for growth far surpasses other areas in New South Wales. We have the opportunity to transform Fairfield

to become the powerhouse of Western Sydney, an engine of growth for the State and an exemplar for transforming underdeveloped cities for the better.

Now it is one thing to throw around problems; it is another to talk about solutions. The road map to this better Fairfield is not an abstract concept but a realistic and reasonable nine-step plan tailored towards the very problems confronted by the electorate. This includes the following actions. The first is to progress the Minns Government's committed upgrade of Fairfield Hospital to ensure that the needs of not only Fairfield but Cabramatta, Prospect and Badgerys Creek are met. I add a caveat to this point by saying that constructing hospital buildings is meaningless without populating those rooms with doctors, nurses and critical healthcare workers. This requires coordination with the Federal Government, medical bodies and tertiary education providers to lift the cap on university places and train more healthcare workers to meet healthcare demand. We also need to strategically recruit and train more multilingual doctors and nurses from Western Sydney to cater for our culturally and linguistically diverse population. I say this because breaking down communication barriers is critical for accurate medical diagnosis. This is a must as it will save lives.

The second is to implement measures to reinvigorate the Fairfield CBD and surrounding commercial hubs to stimulate aggregate demand and job creation. This can only be done through leveraging a whole-of-government approach, working with local and Federal governments to identify, develop and fund key infrastructure projects to encourage private investment and capital formation. We need to set the economic conditions for businesses to flourish, filtering all the way through to the labour market and then helping family quality of life. The third is to bolster Fairfield schools to ensure that teachers and support staff get the resources they need to set our kids up for success and facilitate transition pathways to tertiary study, apprenticeships, traineeships and other employment. We also need to develop and execute financial literacy training programs across Fairfield to reduce the wealth inequality gap between Fairfield and the rest of the State.

The fourth is to enhance measures to settle newly arrived families into our community, to develop their language skills, to make them competitive in the Australian labour market, to give them access to opportunities and to give them a chance of living their best lives. This includes mapping existing economic and social programs delivered by all government and non-government entities to identify and plug gaps in service delivery. The fifth is to relocate essential government services to Fairfield. This must include establishing a Services NSW branch within the electorate.

The sixth is to stimulate measures pertaining to affordable housing inclusive of addressing public housing supply constraints across the electorate. According to data published on the Department of Communities and Justice website, I calculated that, as of 30 June 2022, the number of applicants on the general waiting list for public housing in the Fairfield allocation zone was 3,641—the highest in New South Wales. The State average was 209. That is 17.4 times the State average. What makes matters worse is that the NSW Parliamentary Research Service and Census data I mentioned previously suggests that, from 2016 to 2021, public housing dwellings in Fairfield declined by approximately 10 per cent whilst our population grew by 8 per cent. We need to correct this imbalance as a matter of priority.

The seventh is to ensure that we do what we can to facilitate disability access within Fairfield. This includes the provision of lifts at Carramar, Villawood and Yennora train stations. It surprises me that in 2023 we still have train stations without lifts to facilitate access for those who need them. To justify the business case regarding these lifts, these are suburbs that are commercially and residentially underdeveloped, are situated on key train lines and are geographically placed between key CBDs across Sydney. In other words, they are prime examples of suburbs we need to develop if we are to reach our population and economic growth goals.

The eighth is to create more open spaces and parks to promote health, fitness and positive wellbeing outcomes. This includes enhancing the ability of local sports providers to involve more kids in sports. The ninth is to boost government and non-government infrastructure to help our most vulnerable members in Fairfield—those who are homeless, those experiencing trauma and those who need our help. This includes the funding of research and implementation of gambling harm-reduction measures, inclusive of initiatives to help not only gamblers but also their families. In totality, these nine measures are not ambitious. They are core public goods and services required by any electorate. I must add that the Premier and Ministers of this Government have been supportive of hearing my concerns and genuinely attentive in wanting to secure positive outcomes. Thank you. I am also well aware that other electorates are in dire need of support and that the scarcity of resources means prioritisation must occur. I will work with all of you to ensure that no electorate is left behind.

On that note, I address the importance of the media in propelling a public policy agenda that Fairfield and New South Wales needs. This is very much a partnership. New South Wales has been shaped by the reporting you do, the power of your words and their ability to spark the most defining moments in this State's history. You are very much a part of this journey—the people's eyes, ears and voice. I look forward to being held to account, to working with you to make a difference, to galvanising the public to achieve outcomes and to truly show that

politics should transcend the chasing of votes and, rather, be directed to the pursuit of the public interest, to serving the electorate, to doing right by them and to improving lives. After all, where you come from or how you vote should not determine whether this Parliament has your back or not.

To members of the public, both within and outside Fairfield: We are at our strongest when we work together. I know we share the same vision for a better future for all. I promise that I stand here tonight to do just that. Electoral outcomes give mandates. It is the expression of your will. It is the very definition of democracy. This Parliament cannot help to make lives better without you. In terms of expressing my thanks and gratitude for being here tonight, my life is based on others investing in me. I have done my best to personally reach out to as many people as possible to let them know of their impact on my life. My family, friends, neighbours, academic supervisors, teachers, sporting coaches, work colleagues and students have truly made a difference. You mean a great deal to me, and I will do my utmost not to let you down. I give special mention to my mum. Thank you very much for being there every step of the way. Sincerely, I do not say it enough, but I seriously love you and thank you. As a side note, I did offer to take mum to the movies last week, but she turned me down. So I will take her out next week. I will not say what the movie was.

Politically, I thank the New South Wales Labor Party for its endorsement. I joined the party 20 years ago, at the age of 18, and what a roller-coaster ride it has been. It has matured me as a person and reinforced the sense of duty I owe in serving the electorate. One of the most important roles of a member of Parliament is to foster sustainability through mentoring tomorrow's political leaders. I need to acknowledge a parliamentarian in Fairfield city who truly cared and did just that. Chris Bowen has been a source of advice to many young political aspirants. He saw it as an obligation to ensure the future viability of our city. Thank you, Chris. I will do my absolute best to not let Fairfield down and to mentor the next generation of leaders so that our city gets the political representation it deserves. I also thank the Premier of this State, Chris Minns. Thank you for your confidence in having me as part of your team. I am proud to be here and am very excited to work with you and everyone else to achieve positive public policy outcomes.

In terms of the Fairfield campaign, I need to acknowledge the Fairfield Labor volunteer campaign team led by Raff and Nour. There are too many other people to acknowledge, but you all know who you are. Thank you for being there for me and for your dedication in serving the people of Fairfield. To all my colleagues here in Parliament, both elected and supporting staff: Thank you for welcoming me here. I have been truly impressed by the calibre in both Chambers and on all sides of politics. I look forward to forging strong friendships and working with you to do good things, and I sincerely do mean that. To the bureaucracy at all levels of government, local, State and Federal, to non-government entities and businesses and other invested stakeholders, I take this opportunity to thank you for your contributions to Fairfield and New South Wales. If I have not already, I will be knocking on your doors shortly to collaborate on that better tomorrow.

To the people of Fairfield, thank you for selecting me as your representative in this Parliament. I am a firm believer that trust is hard to earn and easy to lose. I will do everything I can to earn and keep your trust. In closing, I see my time in this Parliament as a chapter in the book that is Fairfield. Working with the people of this great State, my job is to now transform the idea that we can make Fairfield and, in turn, New South Wales better into a reality. And that starts now. Thank you.

Members and officers of the House stood and applauded.

TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell): I congratulate the member for Fairfield on his inaugural speech.

Private Members' Statements

LONDONDERRY ELECTORATE

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (19:25): I begin by saying to the people of Londonderry that it is an honour to be re-elected to this place as your local member for another four years. I am humbled by the trust the community has again placed in me to be their representative in Parliament, and by their overwhelming endorsement of the new Minns Labor Government after 12 years of neglect by those opposite. From Marsden Park to St Marys to Llandilo, people across the community—the community I am humbled to represent—voted decisively to end the privatisation of State assets, stop the Liberals' forever tax on our homes and end the chronic teacher and nurse shortages.

In many previous contributions in this place, I have said that my constituents were just asking the former Government to deliver basic infrastructure to meet the needs of our rapidly growing community—something the previous Government was unwilling to provide, time and again. I recommit to my community that the new Government hears them. As their representative in this place, I will be focused on delivering for the people of

Londonderry. I will be a strong voice in government for them, fighting for them and delivering on my promises for the local area.

I have spoken ad nauseam in this place over the past eight years about the uphill battle against multiple Premiers, Treasurers and Ministers to get schools opened in some of the fastest growing areas of my electorate. I pay tribute to the communities of Marsden Park and Jordan Springs in particular. I have stood alongside them in those battles, and I want them to know those days are well and truly over. I am pleased to advise those communities that we have made more progress on the delivery of high schools in Marsden Park and Jordan Springs in the past three months than the former Coalition Government did in twelve years. The Marsden Park temporary high school will be open for 400 year 7 and year 8 students from term one next year, with enrolments to begin shortly. The permanent school is on track to be open from mid-2025. This is a testament to the community, which has been fighting for this school to be opened after the previous Government promised it on the eve of the 2019 election.

There will be community drop-in information sessions on Wednesday 5 July and Thursday 20 July between 3.30 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. in the courtyard area at Elara Village Shopping Centre. I encourage everyone in the local community to get involved and attend the session for more information. I know that there will be lots of keen people getting involved in that. I also note that the Government has commenced the process to identify a site for Jordan Springs High School, with expression of interest applications for a site launched in April and closed in May. School Infrastructure is now in the process of assessing the expressions of interest received, and we will have an important update for the community in the coming months.

As well as delivering on our commitments to local education, we are getting on with the job of ensuring that the western and north-western suburbs have adequate access to public transport and with our commitment to deliver a metro station for Marsden Park. The Minns Labor Government has committed \$40 million to fund a final business case to extend the Sydney Metro Western Sydney Airport Line from St Marys to Tallawong via Marsden Park and Schofields. I know how interested the community is in this, and how desperately we need it. I look forward to working with my colleagues, including the Minister for Transport, to ensure that we provide a fast, reliable public transport link to Marsden Park.

And how could I forget about Rouse Hill Hospital? It is something that the member for Riverstone and I have both talked about ad nauseam. Now, thanks to his election, he gets to talk about it in this place. The previous Government loved re-announcing that infamous project. I think it did so at three elections. It felt like members opposite were announcing it on a fortnightly basis at one point, but they never made any progress on it. They promised it in 2015, then in 2019 and then again in 2023, but there is still no hospital at Rouse Hill.

The new Labor Government is getting on with the job of delivering the Rouse Hill Hospital with an emergency department. The member for Riverstone and I will be working hard to make sure that happens. I reiterate to my community this evening that the Minns Labor Government has got to work on righting the wrongs of previous governments in the booming north-western suburbs of Sydney. I once again thank the people of my community for giving me the opportunity to represent them for a third term. I will not let them down.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (19:30): I endorse everything that the Deputy Premier said in her private member's statement. She is a daughter of Western Sydney. She was born and raised there, and she understands the needs of the people of Western Sydney and the importance of ensuring that those growing communities get the services and resources they need. There is no greater fighter for Western Sydney, particularly for areas like Penrith and Londonderry, than Prue Car. I have known her for a very long time—probably longer than she might like. There is nothing more important than a good local member that fights for their local community to deliver the schools and infrastructure they need, and that is Prue Car.

COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION STATE CONFERENCE

Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (19:31): The 2024 Country Women's Association [CWA] of NSW annual State conference is coming to the Coffs coast, and preparations are well underway by members of the CWA zone one hosts, the North Coast Group, for the anticipated visitor influx. All roads will lead to Coffs Harbour from 6 May to 9 May 2024, when 600 delegates and their partners will inject much-needed funds into the local economy, including accommodation, refreshments, sightseeing and shopping. I welcome the massive boost this significant gathering will present for local businesses. The local CWA branch members are extremely excited to have the conference at C.ex Coffs, and our community will warmly embrace our visitors, most of whom will spend up to a week in the region.

The State conference is about presenting and debating motions on topics that branches across the State see pertinent to become CWA of NSW policy. I take this opportunity to applaud the outstanding community work and outreach undertaken by each of the CWA branches in my electorate. I heartily thank branch members from

Coffs Harbour, Woolgoolga, Sawtell and Bonville for their ongoing community activities. They truly are unsung heroes. Members of the Coffs Harbour branch are: Jodie Williams, Deidre Simpson, Sue Irving, Roslyn Hopwood, Miranda Golden, Alison Bailey, Robyn Kerr, Stephanie Davidson, Suzanne Merrick, Sylvia Jones, Marie Gordon, Ailsa Rolinson, Ann Rehwinkel, Claire Artuso, Darelle Swan, Elizabeth Shires, June Kelly, Katherine Mulholland, Mary Wray, Sharon Edman, Sue Robertson, Valerie Young, April Van Bladel, Christine Hughes, Dianne Mansbridge, Gwen Gillies, Kerry Wills, Lorna Gear, Lynne Vincent, Val Ellem and Ann Finlay.

Members of the Sawtell branch are: Jackie England, Margaret Tees, Jean Beby, Heather Antaw, Lesley Berry, Christine Betts, Fay Counsell, Kaye Crockett, Lorna Dawes, Sandra Ellicott, Rhonda Fenton, Ingrid Gardiner, Denise Hunter, Sheila Latham, Margot McLeod, Carmel Mordaunt, Elsie Morrison, Kyra Quin, Janelle Sanson, Jenny Snodgrass and Kathy Tindall. Members of the Woolgoolga branch are: Joyce Osborne, Jennifer Smith, Trish Stabback, Carol McIntyre, Kerry Webby, Vicki Chetwood, June Newitt, Marge Hopwood, Helen Deighton, Diane Rawlins, Gloria St Leon, Marion Smart, Bernie Osborne and Carolyn Ortel. Members of the Bonville branch are: Ellen Adams, Sylvia Robson, Deidre Vanderveer, Robyn Barnett, Muriel Beasley, Karna Bourne, Elaine Bull, Daphne Dutton, Helen Fuller, Michelle Harrison, Eileen Moody, Pam Rice, Coco Pereira, Fran Robertson and Mary Ironfield.

The Country Women's Association is renowned for its warm hospitality and unsurpassed cooking, but it is much more than that. When the association formed in New South Wales last century, it was fighting isolation and a lack of health facilities. Within its first year, the fledgling association was already a unified and resourceful group that was going from strength to strength. The members worked tirelessly to set up baby healthcare centres and the first blood banks; fund bush nurses; and build and staff maternity wards, hospitals, schools, rest homes, and seaside and mountain holiday cottages.

The women of the CWA have been initiators, fighters and lobbyists. They have made localities into communities by providing social activities and educational, recreational and medical facilities. The CWA is the largest women's organisation in Australia, which aims to improve conditions for country women and children. It achieves that aim by lobbying for change, helping the local community, creating a support network and meeting together in towns and cities. In fact, the CWA of NSW is a member of the international organisation known as the Associated Country Women of the World, which supports rural women around the globe.

I know that our local CWA branches on the Coffs coast would warmly welcome more members to join their ranks. I encourage anyone who would like to meet with other women in their community or who is interested in improving conditions for women and their families to visit the CWA of NSW website to join the movement. It is an influential organisation that will help them improve the world in which we live. Our communities are certainly all the richer for having the Country Women's Association, and I thank it for all of its inspirational work.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (19:35): I thank the member for Coffs Harbour and acknowledge his passionate contribution and representation of the CWA in Coffs Harbour, and the important role the CWA has played more broadly around New South Wales. Many people may recall that the CWA became really active in 1946, following World War II, to look after women, many of whom were war widows. The member for Coffs Harbour passionately engages with the CWA, as do all members of this House. The Government is committed to ensuring that the CWA gets the support it needs to continue to thrive and deliver its objectives. The Country Women's Association of NSW has a long and proud history.

WESTERN SYDNEY COMMUNITY LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (19:36): I am a proud member representing the vibrant and multicultural communities that have chosen Western Sydney and the electorate of Prospect as their home. We are fortunate to have a rich tapestry of community language schools that cater to the linguistic and cultural needs of our diverse population. Community language schools are a testament to our rich multicultural heritage, and they play a crucial role in fostering social cohesion and harmony in our diverse society. They provide an invaluable resource for thousands of students from various backgrounds to learn and maintain their ancestral languages, while also promoting cultural exchange and understanding among all Australians.

Across New South Wales, over 220 after-hours community language schools service some 26,000 students, with over 2,500 teachers who teach 72 languages. The Tamil, Armenian, Assyrian, Maltese, Arabic, Dinka and Hindi community language schools are among those that form an essential part of our educational landscape and contribute to the cultural fabric of our society in the Prospect electorate and throughout Western Sydney. We are fortunate to have the Wentworthville Tamil Study Centre in the Prospect electorate. In neighbouring electorates we have the Tamil Study Centre, Homebush and the Balar Malar Tamil Educational Association, which are instrumental in preserving and promoting the Tamil language and its rich literary heritage and culture among younger generations.

The Looyce Armenian Saturday School and Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society have been steadfast in their mission to preserve their rich cultural heritage and foster a sense of belonging and pride for the Armenian community in Western Sydney. We are also lucky to have numerous Assyrian community language schools—the Urhi School, the Assyrian Nissibin School Sydney, the Assyrian Diqlat School and the Assyrian Resource Centre, which preserves a linguistic legacy that is over 3,000 years old.

The Maltese Language School of NSW plays a significant role in nurturing the Maltese language and culture and provides several online classes to support individuals throughout the Prospect electorate. The Seven Hills Arabic School is one of my many community language schools that is empowering students with the linguistic and cultural tools necessary to engage with this vital and influential language. The Dinka Literacy Association is another shining example of the essential role, for cultural expression and identity, that community language schools play in our society within our South Sudanese and Equatorial African communities. We are lucky to be home to the Australian Hindu Multicultural Association and the South Asian Australian Association that provide high-quality Hindi language instruction.

Those community language schools are not only places of learning but also centres of cultural exchange and understanding. By promoting cultural diversity and understanding, community language schools are playing a vital role in building a stronger, richer society and promoting these languages for future generations. Community language schools are an essential resource for our diverse multicultural society, particularly in Western Sydney and the Prospect electorate. I am committed to supporting community language schools and promoting their importance and contribution to our society. I thank all the volunteer teachers, administrators and staff members who make our language schools such a rich part of our local community.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (19:40): I acknowledge the member for Prospect's private member's statement tonight. He is passionate for his local multicultural community and believes in the importance of having language skills for a multicultural community. That means those communities have the capacity to communicate adequately, and my good mate the member for Prospect does that every day. Making sure that in Western Sydney we have representatives who represent our multicultural communities and multilingual agendas is so important. That means we can have more equity and more balance throughout our society, particularly in education. I commend the member for Prospect for his contribution and his passion in this cause.

MURRAY-DARLING BASIN WATER OWNERSHIP

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (19:41): Today I address the Federal Government's disastrous and illogical plan to try to buy 450 gigalitres of water in the Murray-Darling Basin. This plan is completely unacceptable and will devastate regional communities in New South Wales, especially many communities in my seat of Murray. To understand how completely mad this plan is, you must understand where this plan came from, how the Murray-Darling Basin Authority [MDBA] came up with this plan and who helped it to make up this 450-gigalitre figure. I have long criticised the MDBA for being unscientific and unaccountable. Farmers in the Murray, like me, often scratch our heads and ask ourselves, "Are they just making up these figures? Where on earth do they get these bizarre numbers from?"

It turns out we were right to ask this question. That is because the MDBA has been relying not only on the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. It has been relying on also the disgraced accounting firm of PricewaterhouseCoopers. That would be the same PwC that was recently caught out selling Federal tax secrets to the tax-dodging companies the disgraced accountancy firm represents. Put simply, PwC has no morals, no scruples and should not be trusted by any government department or authority to do anything. How on earth can any of us trust the department when it says that PwC has decided that it needs to buy back 450 gigalitres from the Murray-Darling system? Who would trust PwC with anything? This is yet another reason why the New South Wales Government must commit to not transferring a single drop of water to the Feds for this mad, unscientific scheme that will devastate our regions.

It is not just me saying the MDBA cannot be trusted. The Inspector-General of Water Compliance, Mr Troy Grant, recently told a Federal Senate committee that the laws governing the MDBA are pathetic. The Inspector-General is independent. He has been given powers under the Federal Water Act of 2007 to watch where water goes in the Murray-Darling system. But he recently told a Senate inquiry that he simply cannot do that because he does not trust the very rules governing the MDBA. When talking about water theft and water-trading irregularities, he said "the legislation is rubbish". He also said:

The legislation has got more get out of jail clauses and opportunities than a Monopoly board ...

The Inspector-General told the Senate inquiry that the pricing report put together by the MDBA with the help of PwC was "absolute rubbish" and not fit for purpose. He went on to say:

You would have to be a moron to get caught doing anything wrong under that legislation.

When one Senator asked him, "How many morons have you caught?", Mr Grant replied, "None at this stage." If the Inspector-General thinks like this, why would any State Government listen to anything the MDBA or PwC says?

I do not know how the Federal water Minister, Tanya Plibersek, keeps a straight face when she says that she trusts the MDBA's advice and that we need to flush 450 gigalitres of precious water out to sea. I repeat my call to the Minns Government to follow in Victoria's footsteps and tell the Federal Government that the 450-gigalitre environmental buyback will not be happening. We need a moratorium on water transfers to the Feds. New South Wales' regional communities deserve a moratorium now. The MDBA's plan, which is based on PwC's advice, is unscientific, illogical and will be devastating to regional communities. For all our sakes, the New South Wales Government must commit to a moratorium on water today. This is essential if we are going to protect our communities from the devastating harm that would be caused ultimately by the Federal Government.

HOUSING SUPPLY

Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (19:46): I speak in regard to the Productivity Commission's recent report on housing, which recommended more infill and higher density in creating housing where the jobs are and where people want to live. This is an important principle for the people of Auburn because, if there are more properties and dwellings built closer to the city, in that inner circle, then we get filtering. At the moment, people are starting to move from the inner city to the Auburn electorate because it is within the 20-kilometre ring. That is forcing our people out of what has been affordable housing, further out into Western Sydney.

This is pretty disastrous, and not because we come from an area where our councils have said no to more housing. In fact, if you look at last year's figure and the projected five-year housing supply against the minimum targets, you will see that the only council that was providing more houses above its target than us was the Hills. The Hills had a minimum target of 9,000 but was in line to deliver 14,375—that is 5,375 more. Cumberland Council had a target of 7,000 and was on target to deliver 8,905—that is 1,905 above the target. Not many councils deliver above. Last year Blacktown, Wollondilly, Waverley, Liverpool, Georges River, Burwood, Sutherland, Cumberland and the Hills were the council areas that were delivering above the targets. But that has created a huge problem in our area.

The problem is that, while the councils that said yes were putting up the housing, the previous Government ignored the infrastructure needed to support our communities. Everybody knows that Parramatta Road at Auburn is the worst road in Australia. It has been officially voted the worst road in Australia, and it was voted that way because of the former Government's decision to start the tolls on the M4 at Church Street, capturing Silverwater Road and the Sydney Markets. That means all the traffic that would normally go to the jobs in the big employment precinct in Silverwater and the Sydney Markets is now trying to get off the road before the toll at Church Street and coming down Parramatta Road.

The other piece of infrastructure they said they were going to build is the Metro West. They talk about the inner city and the stops that are not there, but no-one is talking about the lack of stops across two Labor electorates, Granville and Auburn. There is one stop at Rosehill Racecourse and one stop at the Sydney Olympic Park stadium. There is no stop at the employment precinct at Silverwater, which has a higher turnover than Parramatta, and the Sydney Olympic Park precinct. Some of our most advanced manufacturing sites are at Silverwater and our workers want to get there, but there is no stop whatsoever for nine kilometres along that stretch. This is a project that was going to cost \$25 billion and has already blown out by \$12 billion.

What we need in our communities is infrastructure to go with housing. There were no budget line items for a public school in the Carter Street precinct, and there was no money for lift upgrades at train stations that were at the top of the access program list. In fact, they took trains off the train lines at Auburn, Granville and Chester Hill stations. To travel from Chester Hill to Parramatta—a distance of seven kilometres—will take one hour and 10 minutes. These are typical ways that people get to work. If a person lives at Sefton or Chester Hill and goes to the markets, which is where people in our area work because it is a big employer, they used to get one train. Now, under the changes made by the former Government, they have to catch four. The Opposition may not like hearing us talk about the budget blowouts, like the Metro blowouts of \$12 billion. But what the blowouts mean for my electorate, which has actually been taking on housing, is that the infrastructure we need, which was not provided to us but to other areas that were not meeting housing targets, is now harder to provide.

The Labor Government is committed to making sure that infrastructure goes to where it is needed. If we want to do that, we have to get the budget right and we have to stick to our core Labor values around schools, hospitals, public service and public transport. That is what underlies all the arguments. That is what has happened with debt in the budget and what will need to happen in the future if we are interested in getting housing for people.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (19:56): I thank the member for Auburn for her private member's statement that highlighted a very serious issue. I acknowledge her passion to ensure that when we have development and growth, we get the resources and infrastructure that we need in the right places, at the right time, for the right people. There are no people more important than our patients and our students. The member for Auburn has advocated very strongly on housing supply over a long period. Quite frankly, if it is good enough for a government to put people into a suburb, then it is just as good for that same government to deliver the infrastructure and services that they need—something the previous Government did not do. I thank the member for Auburn.

PROFESSOR MARY-LOUISE MCLAWS

Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (19:52): I acknowledge the outstanding work and achievements of Professor Mary-Louise McLaws, a highly respected epidemiologist and a true hero of our community who devoted 36 years of dedicated service to the University of New South Wales and the broader community. Professor McLaws has made an immense and long-lasting contribution to the field of epidemiology. On behalf of the people of New South Wales, I thank Professor McLaws for her incredible work keeping us all safe over the past four decades. At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, she provided comforting, important and lifesaving health advice in Australia and across the globe. During that time, her expertise and advice was sought by the world's leading health organisations.

Professor McLaws has been a regular feature on national broadcast programs, providing important and timely public information in the uncertain and volatile COVID-19 landscape. Professor McLaws has been influential at the World Health Organization, including working with teams on the emergencies program; infection prevention and control; and critical preparedness, readiness and response to COVID-19. She was also a member of the NSW Clinical Excellence Commission COVID Infection Prevention and Control task force. As an honorary adviser to the Clinical Excellence Commission, she collaborated on statewide patient safety interventions, improving hand hygiene of healthcare workers, reducing central line-associated bloodstream infections and detecting and treating sepsis early in patients presenting to emergency departments. She developed the first surveillance system for healthcare-associated infections as a pilot for NSW Health. Professor McLaws has proudly supported PhD candidates throughout her career and focused on infection control in many countries, including Cambodia, China, Bangladesh, Mali, Indonesia, Iran, Vietnam, Taiwan and Turkey.

Last year Professor McLaws was recognised in the Queen's Birthday honours list and appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia for "distinguished service to medical research, particularly to epidemiology and infection prevention, to tertiary education, and to health administration". There could not be a more fitting recipient. The people of New South Wales and indeed our country are forever indebted to her for her work, her research, her calm and assuring advice, and her expertise. I thank Professor McLaws for guiding millions of Australians. Last year Professor McLaws revealed that following her experiencing severe headaches, doctors found a brain tumour. Despite this devastating news, which has shocked many in our community, Professor McLaws has continued to give back, encouraging those following her journey to support future brain cancer research by donating to Carrie Bickmore's Beanies 4 Brain Cancer foundation. This is testament to Professor McLaws' strength, resilience and passion for helping others in need.

Professor McLaws' incredible career and achievements will be honoured at a special morning tea hosted by the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies on Thursday 22 June. I thank the board for putting on this event to recognise an incredibly special and much-loved person in our community, who has given us so much. On behalf of the people of New South Wales, I wish Professor McLaws and her family strength at this difficult time, and thank her for the outstanding contribution she has made to our country. That contribution will be recognised for years to come.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (19:56): I sincerely thank the member for Vaucluse for her private member's statement acknowledging Professor McLaws and her efforts during COVID. I was not aware of the challenges that she is going through with brain cancer. I personally wish her well and let her know that my thoughts and indeed the Government's thoughts are with her and her family. We wish her a speedy recovery and hope that she is able to continue her good work. Amongst people who have the Order of Australia, there is no-one better than Professor McLaws. She served us then, and we should serve her now. I thank the member for Vaucluse.

RED BUS HYDROGEN FUEL TRIAL

Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (19:57): I acknowledge the fabulous Red Bus company in the electorate of The Entrance. The member for The Entrance and I had the absolute pleasure of riding on New South Wales' first zero-emission hydrogen bus during its trial just a few weeks ago. This is a very exciting time for our State, with such incredible potential. The opportunity came about in 2020 when Red Bus put in an application to trial a collaboration between the energy, transport, manufacturing and finance sectors to explore and develop the most

innovative, effective and sustainable new technology and approaches for our local transport needs. With its collaborative partners, Red Bus was successful in obtaining the opportunity to deliver one of these trials to demonstrate the capabilities of different zero-emission bus technologies in some of the most challenging operating conditions in New South Wales, including extreme daily distances and operating hours with minimal overnight and daytime downtime.

Red Bus partnered with the Aluminium Revolutionary Chassis Company [ARCC], which did an amazing job building an incredibly light and easy to put together bus, much like a Meccano set, that will be used again in the future. It also partnered with Origin Energy, which did incredible work in sourcing the best possible method of refuelling at the facility. The fantastic people at Red Bus are so excited to share this opportunity with us. The ARCC Hydrolight bus was conceived, designed and built in Smithfield, New South Wales. It is the first Australian designed and built hydrogen fuel-cell electric bus. It is constructed with an aluminium chassis and body, resulting in a net weight of 11,000 kilograms on a 16-ton platform, with a length of 12.5 metres. It looks pretty much like a bus, even though they would not say that. As a 16-ton bus, the Hydrolight is able to carry the same number of seated and standing passengers as a conventional diesel bus and is lighter than any electric bus in Australia. It is equipped with five Type 3 carbon composite tanks, with a total capacity of 38 kilograms of hydrogen at 350 bar pressure.

Since the start of the trial, the bus has travelled 5,000 kilometres—and I am sure more now—has an average energy use of 0.71 kilowatts per kilometre and an average hydrogen efficiency of 16 kilometres per kilogram. At an average speed of 32 kilometres an hour in service, the energy recuperation has averaged 35 per cent. The bus has been in service for a complete day on a 13-hour shift. The longest distance travelled between refuelling was 460.1 kilometres and at that point the batteries had 74 per cent state of charge. It was an amazing experience and so good to join the staff, who were all very excited to show off this new product that has been tested at various locations across the community.

From an Origin Energy perspective, a prominent international vendor was engaged for the supply of a containerised air-driven HRS that could supply three to five buses per day with 20 kilograms at 350-bar, with refuels taking approximately 10 to 15 minutes. Unfortunately, during Origin's design assurance process, it was discovered that compliance with Australian Standards did not fit with that international manufacturer, so they had to take alternative routes to locate hydrogen transportation with safety and storage and two separate pumping systems to manage the pressure to get the hydrogen out of the fuel tanks—literally tubes of hydrogen under huge pressure—into a compressor and then into the bus.

It has been an incredibly challenging process to get that through after the international company let them down, but they have persevered to make that happen in The Entrance, which is just amazing. It was originally anticipated that Origin would source green hydrogen from the Jemena Western Sydney Green Gas Project. However, due to delays with scope at its facility, this was not possible, and hydrogen is now being sourced from the Core Gas facility at Port Kembla. It is an incredibly complex process to get this up and running. Initially, the trial was to compare a hydrogen fuel-cell bus and an electric bus in the same operating environment, while also proving the hydrogen fuel-cell bus could meet the demand of over 16 hours out on the road and over 400 kilometres between refuels.

Whilst they have not had the opportunity to compare the hydrogen fuel-cell bus directly with an electric bus on the coast, they have managed to demonstrate that a hydrogen fuel-cell bus can meet the 16 hours and the over 400 kilometres target. I cannot say how proud I am to be part of a community that has taken the gamble to achieve an absolute first in Australia. Whilst it has been very expensive, and transferring that to a repeatable and economical model, it is the responsibility we have as a society to move forward to minimise our emission outcomes. Congratulations to Red Bus and the team involved.

BOWRAL AND DISTRICT HOSPITAL

Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (20:03): Bowral and District Hospital serves the community in a wide area of the Wollondilly electorate, including the shires of Wollondilly and Wingecarribee, but it also treats patients from surrounding areas, as well as interstate and overseas visitors. The hospital has had a capital works budget of \$55 million in the last three years of State budgets for stage two of its redevelopment. This hospital also has an advocacy group that is second to none in this State. To this end, I thank and recognise the work of Edna Carmichael and Peter Edwards of Public Health First for their ongoing work and advocacy. The stage two upgrade of Bowral hospital was promised initially under the former member for Wollondilly, Jai Rowell, and has been announced over and over again, but there is little physical evidence of redevelopment since stage one was opened in 2020.

The community has been told that a new sterilising unit and pharmacy in stage two have been completed. These are inside the stage one building but have been funded out of the \$55 million stage two budget. The

community has expressed its concerns about what is happening at Bowral hospital. The renal dialysis unit opened last year inside the former children's ward of the old hospital. That is a good example of the concerns raised. The unit was principally funded with \$750,000 raised by the community for renal services equipment but was located in a refurbished area at minimal cost to NSW Health and nevertheless claimed as a stage two achievement by the former Government and the local health district. This funding and the gathering of support by the community was on the assumption of the original stage two redevelopment, which would see an increase in bed numbers.

Stage two of Bowral hospital's redevelopment was identified in the clinical services plans in 2015 and 2017 as requiring 129 beds in the next 2½ years. That clinical services plan also projects the need for 142 beds by 2031. The community and I wait with bated breath for how this will be achieved. There was a shortfall of 15 beds even in stage one at its opening in December 2020 and there are only 94 of the planned 109 beds. The planning target now should be 50 additional beds to deliver the planned 142 beds in 2031. This is without the staggering growth projections in the southern part of Wollondilly and Wingecarribee shires.

Bowral and District Hospital serves the community across those areas and three-quarters of the patients come from other areas. The planned growth will be nearly 71,000—an increase of 35.6 per cent in Wingecarribee, and an even greater population increase of 73.6 per cent in Wollondilly—and much of this to be delivered at the swipe of a pen by the previous planning Minister and the former New South Wales Government. But there is no increase in beds or clinical services evident in the announced stage two of Bowral hospital to match this population explosion. Planning has not progressed beyond 2031, ten years sooner than the current planning horizon of both the local council and the planning department, and the current announced stage two project has no additional beds or clinical services to address that target.

The Southern Highlands community has been short-changed by the announcement of this so-called redevelopment, which amounts only to refurbishment of old buildings and relocation of existing health services, hospital administration, a loading dock and a mortuary. An unattributed media release from the South Western Sydney Local Health District on 24 May 2023 stated:

The scope of Bowral & District Hospital Redevelopment Stages 1 and 2 remains largely unchanged since their 2018 approval, with a continued focus on expanding clinical services and capacity to meet future healthcare needs of the community.

The media release also stated:

The Hospital's Clinical Services Plan, including estimated bed numbers and service provision, is regularly revised to ensure care meets the needs of the community ...

Mind you, the only place that you can find this information is in the clinical services plan on the hospital's website, which was updated in November 2017. Stage one has provided modern physical facilities for patient care, but there are still vast gaps in services and corresponding facilities at Bowral hospital that should now be addressed to develop stage two of the master plan, which seems to have been discarded and abandoned in favour of retaining existing old hospital buildings that will stand in the way and prevent future expansion of the hospital.

I call on the Government to fulfil stage two as originally planned and listen to the community, and I look forward to working with the office of the Minister for Health on the upgrade. I look forward to speaking on this matter again with updates and highlighting the needs of my community and services as they are delivered.

TEA GARDENS PUBLIC SCHOOL PARLIAMENT

Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens—Minister for Families and Communities, and Minister for Disability Inclusion) (20:08): Way back in 2015, when I was first elected to this place, I stood here and spoke about the opening of the twenty-sixth parliament of Tea Gardens Public School. Back then I said, "Wonderful things often happen in our schools because children are capable of the most amazing things." My wonder and amazement continue as I stand again in this Chamber after attending the opening of the thirty-fourth parliament of Tea Gardens Public School, having attended every opening of the school's parliament in between. This year's opening was a bit chilly. The kindy kids were tucked under their crocheted blankets in the front row as they excitedly watched on, eager to witness their first parliament opening. The opening ceremony commenced with serjeant-at-arms Jackson Alderton confidently welcoming us to country in Gathang, the traditional language of the Worimi people.

Then all attendees stood whilst the speaker, clerks and Hansard reporters entered the House—also known as the school's covered outdoor learning area, or COLA. Usher of the black rod Jarred Armstrong, dressed in a black gown and wielding a specially made wooden black rod, then sought entry and led the new ministers, shadow ministers, governor-general and parliamentary advisers into the House. Now let me explain how the parliament is structured. The government comprises year 6 students. The opposition is the year 5 students. The governor-general is of course Mr Mark Clemson, the school principal. The senators are the teaching staff. The members of

parliament comprise the remaining 150 students, with their electorates listed as their surname—for example, I would be the member for Washington.

Tea Gardens Public School is leading the way as usual. It already has a voice to parliament with the school's junior AECG, the Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, incorporated into the student parliament for the first time this year. The governor-general—Principal Mark Clemson—officially opened the school's thirty-fourth parliament. The minutes were read and each of the ministers capably set out their portfolio responsibilities. I congratulate prime minister Kade O'Neill, deputy prime minister and minister for the environment Talia Sloggett, minister for transport Havana Mobbs, minister for sport and recreation Jaiver Murphy, minister for education Amarni Reynolds, minister for building and health Isabelle Yuswak, minister for student wellbeing Rhani Genner and minister for special events Lavidia Fenwick. Each of the ministers revealed in their speeches a sense of responsibility and genuine care for their fellow students and the school community.

The dedicated parliamentary adviser—also known as year 5/6 teacher Ms Caitlyn Kelly—reflected on her pride in watching what she stated was a particularly shy and quiet group present themselves on the day as confident parliamentarians. I also congratulate the shadow ministers: Ali Partridge, Alicia Mitchell, Kora Constantino, Lachlan Mills, Pippa Bradley, Asher Gimbert and Stella Jacobsen. They were capably led by leader of the opposition Ebony Hestelow. During the formalities, it was obvious that the honourable members were looking forward to something else—and it was not just recess. It was their opportunity to participate in democracy, where notices of motions were put and questions with and without notice were asked. Honourable members spoke for and against motions with gusto and genuine interest.

I acknowledge those who made the opening of the thirty-fourth parliament run smoothly: Hansard reporters Ocean Hancock, Sienna Peckham-Jones and Layla Wyvill; serjeants-at-arms Jackson Alderton, Cooper Fischer and Shooter Storey; and deputy speaker Kobi Harvey. Parliamentary proceedings were all kept under control by the very capable speaker of the house, Noah Mahoney. Well done, one and all. I would be remiss not to mention Mr Darryl Martin, a former principal at Tea Gardens Public School. He is the man behind the great tradition of the Tea Gardens Public School Parliament and its very first governor-general. In fact, it was because of an excursion Darryl took with school students to Parliament House in Canberra 35 years ago that the seed was sown for the school parliament.

Darryl has attended every one of the 34 official parliamentary openings at Tea Gardens Public School. On this occasion it was his seventy-ninth birthday. It provided us with an awesome opportunity that we could not resist, to sing *Happy Birthday* to Darryl. I thank Mr Clemson, Ms Kelly and all the teachers and staff of Tea Gardens Public School for continuing this tradition that engages students in a fun and exciting way with civics and citizenship and, importantly, gives them a voice. Their investment in this event and these children empowers and engages young people who see their voice make real-time changes within their world. Mr Darryl Martin established the school parliament to be "the voice of the children". Thirty-four years on, I am so pleased to report to this Parliament that the voice of the children is going stronger than ever at Tea Gardens Public School.

HUNTER NEW ENGLAND HEALTH DISTRICT

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands) (20:13): Tonight I talk about, unfortunately, a topic that I have spoken on in this Chamber many times before. That is the appalling way in which our communities are being treated by our local health district, "Hunter New England Against Health", because that is exactly what it is. A few months ago a lot of people in our community were overjoyed when the previous CEO announced that he was departing the organisation. Everyone, including myself, welcomed that departure as a fresh start. It was a good opportunity for the health district that tries to deliver health services across rural and remote areas from a metropolitan location in Newcastle. It is the largest health district with the most staff and—I would argue—the most failings and problems. But, unfortunately, in the months after the new CEO was appointed, it is the same old Hunter New England Against Health. Sadly, we still have a huge staff shortage in our hospitals. Local staff are trying to do the best they can.

In particular, I mention Dr Elizabeth Gowan, who is an emergency department staff specialist at Armidale. She came back to the community with her husband, who is a maths teacher, to build a stronger workforce in that emergency department, but she is actively blocked from doing so by Hunter New England Against Health management. They are happy to see that emergency department staffed from here to kingdom come with locum doctors. They refuse to provide money to actually employ other staff specialists and build a nucleus of expertise and local medical knowledge. They seem intent on turning all of our hospitals—not just the district hospitals and multi-purpose services but now even Armidale Rural Referral Hospital—into glorified transit stations for patients as all roads lead down the New England Highway from Tamworth right the way to Newcastle.

The motto for Hunter New England Against Health is not about providing first-class health care wherever you live. It is about providing first-class health care at Newcastle and the rest can go to buggery. They say, "We

will not invest the time, money or effort in building the spokes. We will continually cut the limbs off to keep the beating heart of the health district—Newcastle—alive." I think that is absolutely deplorable. The sooner that we can split our health district and get our own New England area health service back the better. I have said on the record many times that I am as parochial as anyone will find about the Northern Tablelands, but I am very happy for the headquarters of the new health district to be based in Tamworth. That is as it used to be, prior to the creation of this Hunter New England Against Health district.

Centres in Inverell that have had a \$60 million new hospital have fewer services provided than they did when they had an old hospital of 100 years old where the roof leaked and the staff had to push around gas bottles because there was no reticulated gas. We have seen huge investments and improvements to infrastructure and yet the services have gone back backwards. This is not a partisan comment. This happened well before the last election and I have spoken about it many times, but the trend has continued. Something serious needs to be done. I was pleased to have the newish health Minister in the Northern Tablelands not that long ago at Moree Hospital. I was delighted to take him through the emergency department to hear from frontline staff.

The acting CEO of the health district was there and the staff confronted the acting CEO about nurse incentive payments; they are being offered only \$5,000 when they are supposed to get \$10,000. It was wonderful to see the health Minister turn around to the acting CEO and say, "No, these people are entitled to the \$10,000 and you will make that happen." Well, hallelujah and thank goodness. Finally, those bureaucrats from Newcastle are being told to do what they should always have done, and that is to support their own frontline staff—their own employees. They need to start bolstering our rural and regional hospitals to improve healthcare outcomes and not just shovel everyone to Newcastle where it is convenient for the fat cats there.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (20:18): I thank the member for Northern Tablelands for his passion for health services. I know that not only as a local member but also as a Minister and indeed a Parliamentary Secretary he has long advocated to ensure that health services are in place. I note my good friend the health Minister has been in his area and is very committed to ensuring that we take a holistic approach to providing better health services throughout New South Wales, whether it be in Campbelltown, the Northern Tablelands, Inverell, Armidale, Tamworth, Dubbo or indeed the Upper Hunter. We are committed to ensuring that everyone is treated equally. I commend the member for bringing this to the House. I acknowledge the Minister's commitment to ensure that we enable that and deliver for everyone.

DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour) (20:19): Over the past few years I have met with numerous victim-survivors of domestic and sexual violence, particularly in my electorate of Shellharbour, to hear about how hard they have found the current complaints system. The stories I have heard over the years are both numerous and tragic. Survivors of domestic and sexual violence are often frustrated by a complex and draining system that renders them voiceless during the long time it takes for an investigation to be completed and a trial to take place. The issue of feeling voiceless is particularly relevant for those victims who make allegations against a public figure or local hero. The local hero might be a top sports player who kicked the match-winning goal. The public figure might be a politician who secured funds for local infrastructure projects, or they might be a church leader who runs a local soup kitchen—heroic achievements in the eyes of their supporters.

The current nature of our society and legal system is such that we often unintentionally silence those who make the allegations, whilst the alleged perpetrators are free to use their hero status to directly or indirectly label the victims as crazy, as liars or as being vindictive—the list goes on. When survivors do speak up and make a complaint, supporters of the public figure go to work to defend their hero, often at the expense of the person making the allegations. They defend the football star. They defend the religious leader. They defend the politician. Tragically and unfairly, in the vast majority of cases they attack the victim, leaving them feeling destroyed and damaged. It is just shameful. It is no wonder so many survivors of domestic or sexual violence at the hands of public figures either never come forward to make a complaint or are bullied into submission soon after doing so.

I am fully supportive of our long-held legal principle of the presumption of innocence, which provides fairness for the accused. However, fairness should work both ways. Those making the allegations should also be treated fairly. They should not be attacked by the supporters of an alleged perpetrator. People who come out and defend alleged perpetrators before the allegations are tested in court are essentially saying that those who made the allegations are liars, yet those defenders have no evidence to support their assertions. They back their hero no matter what. One of the main problems with the current system, under which victims make allegations against public figures or local heroes, is that an alleged perpetrator's media profile can instantly tip the scales in their favour. The hero can go on television and announce to the world that they are completely innocent. They can call a radio station to say they cannot wait to clear their good name. They can chat with the friendly local newspaper journalist to highlight all the amazing work they have done for the community.

It is always implied during these media performances that those who made the allegations are liars, in an attempt to bring down a completely innocent person. It makes me sick. The public are encouraged to take a side, knowing only the hero or public figure's version of events. Unfortunately, the public often does take a side. I have seen that happen. Supporters of the alleged perpetrator—whether they be supporters of the alleged perpetrator's football team or political party—have no incentive to sit on the fence. In their minds, their hero has been clearly and falsely accused, and they attack. They might not know the victim, but they know for sure that he or she must be a liar.

I fear for the wellbeing of each and every person who makes an allegation against someone with the ability to gather hundreds of supporters to publicly label the accuser as a liar before the allegations can be investigated or heard in a court of law. I am committed to continuing to support those people in our society who are put in limbo by this deeply flawed and unfair system. Unfortunately, very few survivors of domestic and sexual violence will get the swift justice they seek or deserve. To those people, please know that I will always be there for you. You will always have my support. I will be your voice.

Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (20:24): I commend my good friend the member for Shellharbour. This is an issue that she is very passionate about. She has led on this issue since she entered this Parliament. No member or friend has more passionately pursued this matter for as long as I have been in Parliament, which I entered in 2015. Why has she done that? It is because this issue matters, and it affects people's lives. Whether it be coercive control or other acts, the member for Shellharbour has advocated and fought for those victims and, most importantly, she has fought against those perpetrators, who should be held to account. I thank the member for Shellharbour.

1ST PORT MACQUARIE SEA SCOUTS

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (20:25): I extend my congratulations to the 1st Port Macquarie Sea Scouts on celebrating 90 years since the organisation was founded in our community on 16 June 1933. From a once humble beginning at Pilot Boathouse, the 1st Port Macquarie Sea Scouts gathered on 4 June at the Buller Street Sea Scout Hall to commemorate a legacy of Scout training from ages five to 14, with the Hastings River providing a stunning backdrop. Generations of past and present Scouts joined in the celebrations over a barbecue lunch, followed by a special ceremony that presented snippets of pictorial history, representing Scouting over 90 years in the Port Macquarie-Hastings region.

Group leader Tracey Walsh-Shada coordinated the Sea Scouts' ninetieth anniversary, which, by all accounts, was a huge success that was enjoyed by everyone in attendance. She was assisted by parent support group committee members including chairman Mr Adam Rumble, secretary Mr Andrew Mitchell, treasurer Mr Mircea Paraschiv, quartermaster Mr Paul Weatherby and fundraiser and hall hire coordinator Mr Andrew Anderson. As one of the oldest enduring organisations in our community, the 1st Port Macquarie Sea Scouts formed as an unregistered group at Pilot Boathouse before accepting a generous offer by St Thomas' Anglican Church to convene their meetings at the church hall. A temporary home to host their meetings resulted in the 1st Port Macquarie Sea Scouts officially registering their organisation on 16 June 1933, with two units open to train both Cubs and Scouts.

It took a little over 20 years before the Sea Scouts established their own home and permanent premises at Buller Street in Port Macquarie, with the official opening taking place on 25 July 1955. To commemorate that momentous occasion for the community, the Chief Scout, His Excellency the Governor of New South Wales, Lieutenant General Sir John Northcott, officiated the proceedings, which marked a new era for scouting on the mid North Coast. With a growing membership base and the registration of the Rover Unit on 17 July 1961, the Sea Scouts secured land at McInherney Park in Port Macquarie, where they constructed a boatshed fronting the Hastings River. That was completed in 1962 to the excitement and jubilation of the members. That year also saw the formation of the Ventures group for adult members who had aged out of Scouts but wished to stay connected to the group and share in the outdoor activities and fellowship.

Like any organisation, the Sea Scouts understood the importance of evolving with the times to ensure that Scouting remained alive, vibrant and relevant for the communities on the mid North Coast. That was achieved in various ways, from the demolition and rebuild of both the Sea Scouts Hall and boatshed to the introduction of the Joeys group in February 1991. This year I was honoured to attend a sod turning for the new boatshed, which was made possible through funding of \$109,733 from the New South Wales Government's Stronger Country Communities Fund. The new boatshed will ensure the continuation of youth water safety training, while increasing storage capacity for a range of equipment. Today the 1st Port Macquarie Sea Scouts has a strong membership of 35 youth across four units, and is part of the North Coast region, from Tweed Heads to Laurieton and as far west as Bellingen.

Sea Scouts offer a wide range of activities, ranging from kayaking and sailing to orienteering and camps. Each group is focused on achieving their Scout badges. The leadership team and uniformed adults include: Joey Unit leader Miss Naomi Walsh/Kanga, supported by assistant Cub leader Mr Samuel Walsh/Singum; Cub Unit leader Ms Kelly-Ann Evans/Akela, supported by Mr Samuel Walsh/Singum; Scout Unit leader Mr Mark Pritchard/Rusty, supported by Miss Shakira Evans-Weatherby/Waratah; and Venturer Unit leader Mr Daniel Sarno/Daniel, supported by Mr Brian Walsh/Brian. Scouts live and breathe founder Lord Robert Baden-Powell's vision:

No-one can pass through life, any more than he can pass through a bit of country, without leaving tracks behind, and those tracks may often be helpful to those coming after him in finding their way. Happiness is open to all, since, when you boil it down, it merely consists of contentment with what you have got and doing what you can for other people.

I commend Tracey Walsh and her hardworking members. I congratulate them on celebrating 90 years of operations in the Hastings and commend them on diligently providing the necessary life skills to our children to assist them into adulthood and beyond.

WESTERN AND SOUTH-WEST SYDNEY CRIME

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (20:30): I bring to the attention of the House a matter of utmost importance concerning the fast-growing region of western and south-western Sydney. As my community continues to expand, it is crucial that the Government address the concerns of my constituents and work towards creating a safer and more secure environment for all. In my electorate, thousands of homes are being planned for construction, master planning for new housing estates has been finalised and new housing construction is well underway. That development has been fuelled by the construction of the Western Sydney airport, which is due to open in 2026, plus the surrounding development and investment triggered by the airport announcement.

Families are being established at exponential rates across the region, building a community working, playing, studying in, and contributing to, our great State. Every individual deserves the right to feel safe, to feel protected and to know that they live in a safe community. There is a real need for an increased police presence in our growing communities and it is crucial to address the concerning statistics that have been reported on in recent years. Those statistics shed light on the prevalence of domestic violence, robbery, sexual offences and disorderly conduct in that region of Sydney. They serve as a stark reminder that our constituents' safety and wellbeing must be our utmost priority.

According to the data provided by the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research—commonly known as BOCSAR—incidents of domestic violence have reached alarming levels in the Oran Park community. It is distressing to acknowledge that the rates of such offences have on too many occasions been higher than the State average over the past three years. In addition to domestic violence, instances of robbery have also posed a significant challenge to the security of my community. The BOCSAR data highlights that those incidents have occurred on too many occasions at a higher rate in the west and south-west region of Sydney compared with the rest of New South Wales. Equally disturbing are the statistics concerning sexual offences. The data indicates that suburbs such as Oran Park and surrounding areas have experienced an unacceptably high number of such incidents, on occasion surpassing the average rates seen throughout New South Wales.

As members in this place, it is our moral duty to protect the vulnerable and ensure that every individual can live free from the scourge of sexual violence. Furthermore, there has been a recent surge in disorderly conduct in the Oran Park community, reaching a rate that is twice the average for the rest of New South Wales. It is essential that we take concrete steps to address the issue, ensuring that my community is safe and that families and individuals can thrive without fear. The people in my electorate deserve nothing less than safety, security and assurances that their community is shielded from those who seek to harm them.

Today I call for the establishment of a new permanent police presence in the south-western Sydney region of the Badgerys Creek electorate. That presence must be a brand-new police local area command, including the establishment of a new police station and a Police Citizens Youth Club. A new police station will serve as a symbol of safety, offering reassurance to residents that assistance is more readily available within their immediate vicinity, and it will enable swift response times in those growing areas. Furthermore, a local area command will effectively address the unique challenges associated with the rapid growth and changing demographics of the region. It would serve as a strategic hub, coordinating the efforts of our police officers and ensuring the effective implementation of law and order.

Additionally, it is imperative that we bring a Police Citizens Youth Club to the area. The PCYC serves as a powerful instrument in positively influencing our youth, fostering a sense of community and discouraging anti-social behaviour that threatens the wellbeing of individuals and families. The PCYC will help to create a supportive environment that promotes personal growth, resilience and respect for the law. Crime can affect anyone, regardless of background. People deserve to live in a safe community where they can thrive without fear.

I urge the New South Wales Labor Government to collaborate with me towards that end. By investing in the necessary resources, infrastructure and personnel, we can create a safer environment that promotes growth, prosperity and peace of mind for all residents. Finally, I take the last few moments of my speech to express gratitude to our brave men and women of the NSW Police Force, who tirelessly serve to protect our State. Their dedication and unwavering commitment to upholding the law deserve our utmost appreciation.

EASTWOOD KOREATOWN

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (20:35): At my first meeting as the mayor of Ryde we passed an important resolution to establish a Koreatown in Eastwood. Eastwood is known for its rich cultural diversity, yet few efforts have been made throughout its history to specifically lean into those strengths. A year and a half later, I am delighted to share that the small spark that was once the ingenious idea of my colleague Ryde councillor Daniel Han has now ignited into a bold plan for the eastern side of Eastwood—importantly, now backed up with substantial funding from both the local and State governments. As the member for Ryde, it brings me great joy to announce that Koreatown has successfully secured \$200,000 from the New South Wales Government, following a successful bid made by our wonderful steering group committee. The grant is on top of an initial \$100,000 contributed by the City of Ryde council, a small part of the legacy that I am immensely proud of on council.

With real resourcing, we can now empower our local Korean business chamber and community to transform small pockets of Rowe Street into dynamic representations of everything that is good about Korea and Korean culture. By doing that, we will put Eastwood on the map, making it a destination for commerce, community and tourism. That was all made possible thanks to the work of a small group, some of whom I met with just last week, namely the Korean chamber president Jay Ko and local business owner Marie, with whom I announced this momentous grant alongside my West Ward councillor colleagues Daniel Han, Trenton Brown and Justin Li. Together, we celebrated the significant investment, which will undoubtedly transform Koreatown and Eastwood into premier destinations in Sydney, offering a rich tapestry of Korean cultural experiences, culinary delights, fashion trends, exciting pop-up events and a whole host of engaging activities.

I take this opportunity to extend a heartfelt appreciation to the dedicated individuals who have played a vital role in the success of Koreatown, some since the very inception of the idea: the Koreatown working party, including Councillor Han, Councillor Charles Song, Jay Ko, Jason Koh, Brian Park, Jimmy Park and the fantastic designer Jennica Seo. She has done some incredible work creating a whole host of drafts that have been displayed throughout the local Korean community. They have shown unwavering commitment and dedication in shaping the vision and driving the purpose of the project. Their tireless efforts have brought the entire thing to fruition. That is something to celebrate. I must also acknowledge the invaluable support of the Korean Chamber of Commerce Ryde, particularly the secretary, Marie Song. Marie's expertise and dedication have been instrumental in propelling Koreatown's growth and solidifying its status as a vibrant cultural and economic hub. It is a place that is already thriving. With the investment, it can go even further.

The generous funding from Ryde council and the New South Wales Government will pave the way for significant investments in both Eastwood and Koreatown. It will position them as prominent attractions—hopefully for tourists from around the world—in Sydney. The financial support will fuel the creation of an all-encompassing marketing campaign, captivating millions of viewers and drawing them to our community, where they can immerse themselves in the richness of Korean culture. As we embark on this exciting journey, it is appropriate that we come together to celebrate the diversity and vibrancy of our community. Together, we can build a prosperous future, where Eastwood and Koreatown shine as examples of multiculturalism and economic prosperity.

In conclusion, today signifies a turning point in the journey that is Koreatown. With the backing of Ryde council and the Government, we are embarking on a remarkable adventure that showcases the very best of Korean culture to attract visitors from near and far. I extend an invitation to members of this place to come and see the extraordinary things that we are about to unveil. I extend my deepest gratitude to everyone who has contributed to that remarkable achievement, and I encourage everybody to spread the word and share: Koreatown is coming and it is very exciting.

WAVES FITNESS AND AQUATIC CENTRE

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (20:39): I inform the House that The Hills Shire Council in my electorate has achieved national success for the development of the Waves Fitness and Aquatic Centre in the cohesive community category at the National Awards for Local Government, which were held on 12 June 2023. I pause to note that the member for Auburn also acknowledged that The Hills Shire Council has exceeded its housing targets, and I thank her for acknowledging that earlier tonight. The announcement of the 2023 National Awards for Local Government recognised:

The Hills Shire Council (NSW) in the Cohesive Community category for its redevelopment of the Waves Fitness and Aquatic Centre focusing on inclusivity, accessibility and functionality.

The 2023 national awards received 139 eligible entries across 11 categories from local government bodies right across Australia. The success of The Hills Shire Council in achieving the number one position in the category is a tremendous achievement. All those involved in the redevelopment project should be acknowledged and congratulated.

I take some time to explain the redevelopment of the Waves complex so that members of this House understand the project. Waves is located on the site of the original Baulkham Hills War Memorial Swimming Centre. The original memorial swimming centre was opened on 11 March 1967 and was 50 years old when it was redeveloped. In 2017 the council determined to commence a feasibility study to renovate or to demolish and create a new complex. The community were consulted and the development of the complex commenced. On 12 May 2020 councillors resolved to redevelop the existing site to construct what is now the new Waves Fitness and Aquatic Centre. The resolution recorded that the budget was \$52,505,158. The contractor was ADCO Constructions.

I recognise the important contributions of the mayor at the time and the councillors who consulted with the community and made the decision. The councillors of that time should be acknowledged: Mayor Dr Michelle Byrne; Deputy Mayor Reena Jethi; and councillors Robyn Preston—who is now a member of this House—Dr Peter Gangemi, Brooke Collins, OAM, Alan Haseldine, Jacob Jackson, Michael Thomas, Elizabeth Russo, Frank De Masi, Tony Hay, Ryan Tracey and Samuel Uno. They should all be congratulated. I also recognise the importance of the councillors after the elections in 2021, who continued the good work of the former councillors to complete the construction of the Waves complex: Mayor Dr Peter Gangemi; Deputy Mayor Mitchell Blue; and councillors Virginia Ellis, Dr Mila Kasby, Jerome Cox, Reena Jethi, Ryan Tracey, Rosemarie Boneham, Frank De Masi, Barbara Burton, Jessica Brazier, Tony Hay, OAM, and me.

To understand why the complex achieved the number one position at the recent national awards, it is necessary to understand that it consists of a 50-metre Olympic-standard pool, a 25-metre outdoor pool, a 25-metre indoor pool, a children's pool and a world-class fitness centre with about \$1 million worth of equipment inside. The Waves Fitness and Aquatic Centre was officially opened to the public on 3 September 2022 and is a much-loved venue within the Castle Hill electorate and the wider area, including The Hills Shire Council.

The final cost to complete the project was within budget, notwithstanding that COVID intervened. All those involved can be extremely proud of the fiscal responsibility of the decision made by the council. I also acknowledge the work and involvement of the general manager of The Hills Shire Council, Mr Michael Edgar; as well as Mr Stephen Cullen, the manager of special projects, property and buildings. They deserve a special mention for the completion of the project. The decisions made by the councillors were guided by the diligent and complete work of council staff during the entire process. In closing, the national award achieved by The Hills Shire Council for the construction of the Waves Fitness and Aquatic Centre represents the collaborative work of the councillors at the time, the council officers and the contractors. All those involved in the construction should be congratulated on their work and the award the council has received.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 20:44
until Thursday 22 June 2023 at 10:00.**

Written Community Recognition Statements

According to Standing Order 108A, the following written community recognition statements were submitted.

KEEP AUSTRALIA BEAUTIFUL NSW 2022

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—Great win for Bowraville, which proved itself once again to be a neat niche in the Nambucca Valley, winning four categories in the Tidy Towns Awards. The Keep Australia Beautiful NSW 2022 Sustainable Communities Tidy Towns Awards were celebrated at a presentation in Singleton in March. The certificates were brought home to Bowraville, framed, hung for all to see in the Bowraville Theatre and are now going to stakeholders in the winning categories, who will show them with pride at their organisations. Nambucca Valley Landcare, under the capable hands of Logan Zingus, took out the Waterways and Marine Protection award for all the diligent work on restoring the banks of the Nambucca River and planting hundreds of trees for stabilisation. The Resource, Recovery and Waste Minimisation award went to the Nambucca Rangers based in Bowraville, working under the guidance of Patricia Walker and the Miimi Mums. The Bowraville Lions and the youth from ShoreTrack were involved in the restoration of the Town Clock in Main Street and the heritage Dray, for which they were recognised with a highly commended Heritage In Culture Award. Congratulations to all our local winners, exceptional work by many.

MACKSVILLE VIEW CLUB

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—I'd like to congratulate the Committee at Nambucca Macksville Evening VIEW Club committee, who recently held a Mother's Day fundraiser for The Smith Family's Learning for Life program, which provides students with financial, educational, and personal support. VIEW is the largest community sponsor of The Smith Family's Learning for Life program, which provides students with financial, educational, and personal support. Members do this through community fundraising, spreading awareness and volunteering. VIEW members volunteer their time for The Smith Family in a variety of ways, all of which have a lasting impact on a child's life. They help raise funds for programs like Student2Student, which pairs younger children with reading buddies, and they sponsor students through the Learning for Life program so they are supported throughout their entire education. VIEW is a leading women's organisation with 14,000 members in 300 communities across Australia, all dedicated to supporting children in need with their education through The Smith Family. The VIEW Club are always looking for women of all backgrounds and ages to join. It's a wonderful organisation who hold monthly meetings on the first Wednesday of each month at Macksville Ex-Services Club, 5pm for a 5.30pm start.

BELLINGEN MEMORIAL HALL OPENING NIGHT

Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)—Tomorrow night is the Bellingen Memorial Hall's opening night. Mayor Steve Allan, Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley, Companion of the Order of Australia, King's Counsel, Governor of NSW, the Bellingen Shire Council councillors and staff, along with the community will be at the celebratory event. The heritage-listed Bellingen Memorial Hall, with the support of State funding, has undergone an extensive refurbishment, boasting exciting new features. These include a new multipurpose studio with a kitchenette and AV capability, upgraded green room facilities for large performances and stage productions, new seating on a stepped platform to increase capacity and improve the view to the stage, and additional parking and accessibility improvements such as upgraded bathroom facilities, stage lifts, and ramps. This upgrade will enhance various activities and attract more events, support business and the economy through regional, state, and interstate patronage creating quality experiences for all who attend. The hall is the largest venue in the Shire and will host numerous events throughout the year ranging from international film festivals to music festivals, cultural festivals, and arts events. The venue is a great asset and will be a central place to bring the community together.

CAROLYN TOWNSEND, OAM

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate Carolyn Townsend of Burraneer on her appointment in the King's Birthday Honours as a recipient of the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM), for service to the community through charitable organisations. Mrs Townsend has volunteered with Ronald McDonald House Charities since 2000 and has held a variety of positions as an executive in the organisation. Mrs Townsend has served as the President and Chair since 2019 and has had previous stints as Chair and Vice Chair. In 2014 Mrs Townsend was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the organisation in recognition of her service. Mrs Townsend has also served as a board member of Ronald McDonald Australia and her dedication and efforts were recognised with the Chairman's Excellence Award in 2020 by Ronald McDonald House Charities. Ronald McDonald House Charities provide a range of programs to help families stay together and close to the care they need when a child is diagnosed with a serious illness, including 18 Ronald McDonald Houses, 19 Ronald McDonald Family Rooms and 5 Family Retreats.

ANNE CATERSON, OAM

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate Anne Caterson on receiving the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the King's Birthday Honours, for services to surf lifesaving. Anne is a volunteer with Wanda Surf Life Saving Club. Anne has been the club's director of finance and an executive member of the club's team of management since 2016. She was captain of the club's Rescue and Resuscitation competition from 2011 to 2015, course coordinator for the iconic 'Sutherland 2 Surf' fun run and walk from 2004 to 2016 and chair of the club's Junior Activities Group from 2004 to 2007. The club made her a Distinguished Service Life Member in 2020. Anne on average volunteers eight hours each week through Wanda Surf Life Saving Club. Volunteers like Anne are the backbone of our local communities.

ROBERT WILSON, ESM

Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)—I congratulate Robert ('Bob') Wilson on receiving an Emergency Services Medal in the King's Birthday Honours. Bob is a volunteer with Marine Rescue Botany Port Hacking, based at Hungry Point Cronulla, and has served the community of NSW with distinction for over 15 years. Bob has served in a variety of leadership roles in the Botany Port Hacking unit such as operational Marine Rescue crew, deputy commander, treasurer and public engagement and fundraising officer. Bob also served in organisational positions for Marine Rescue NSW including inaugural company secretary from 2009 to 2014,

Director of the Board for the Greater Sydney Region from 2010 to 2014 and General Director from 2018 to 2023. Bob is highly respected for his skill and professionalism in the exercise of his roles. Bob has also recorded hundreds of hours in search and rescue operations. His involvement in many challenging operations in response to traumatic emergencies demonstrates his commitment to ensuring the people of NSW are safe on its waterways.

MEALS ON WHEELS CELEBRATE 60 YEARS

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I recognise Meals on Wheels, which celebrates 60 years of service to the Orange community. Meals on Wheels has been an institution in Orange since June 1963, providing nutritious food to the elderly and people living with a disability, and by doing so enabling its clients to maintain an independent lifestyle in their own homes. Part of Orange City Council's Choices at Home service, Meals on Wheels has thrived because of the hundreds of volunteers who have been involved in its 60-year history—volunteers like 94-year-old Edna Sharpe, who has been delivering meals since 1963! Now approximately 450 meals, catering to a variety of dietary needs, are delivered across the community by around 80 volunteers each week. While a food service, Meals on Wheels also helps combat loneliness - volunteers are always up for a chat - and provides support for people who may not be as mobile as they once were. I congratulate Meals on Wheels and its amazing volunteers, current and past, for their commitment to helping the vulnerable members of the Orange community and by doing so, help them live full and independent lives in their own homes.

EDNA SHARPE

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—I wish to recognise the enormous contribution to the Orange community by Edna Sharpe. At the age of 93, Mrs Sharpe remains a volunteer with Orange Meals on Wheels after coming forward in 1963 when the service first began to become one of the founding volunteers. By anyone's standards, Mrs Sharpe has made an incredible contribution – that is 60 years of volunteering! When she began, she took her baby daughter along with her to deliver meals. Mrs Sharpe is among a group of valued volunteers who deliver around 450 meals a week to Orange and district residents. Meals on Wheels however is more than just delivering a meal; for many people who are isolated at home and particularly those who live alone, a friendly face such as Mrs Sharpe appearing at the door, provides a vital link to the outside world. In many instances, the Meals on Wheels volunteer may be the only person the frail or elderly are able to talk to on any given day. It is volunteers like Edna Sharpe who enrich our community and make a real difference in the lives of people who access services through the Choices at Home program.

JACINDA AND AARON ACHESON

Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)—Speaker, I wish to recognise Forbes business owners Jacinda and Aaron Acheson. The Achesons are the epitome of hard-working small business owner in a rural community in times of hardship. As the operators of Acheson's Mitre 10 Forbes, the couple have endured enormous challenges over the last few years and come through with flying colours. Recently, their business was acknowledged as the National Timber and Hardware Association winner for excellence in relation to the operation of the garden centre within their business. At the height of the Covid pandemic, Jacinda and a colleague worked around the clock to keep the plants alive as she posted every single one online in an effort for the business to remain sustainable -and it worked! The couple were just getting their business back on their feet when the devastating floods hit Forbes late last year. Not only was their home inundated during the disastrous floods which hit Forbes, but their business also bore the brunt of damage with floodwaters sweeping through the premises. Jacinda and Aaron's story is one of resilience and what truly embodies the work ethic of many hard-working rural Australian business owners. Congratulations, Jacinda and Aaron.

CITIZENSHIP CONGRATULATIONS

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—The great tapestry of Ryde is now brighter, bolder and stronger for the contributions of our newest citizens who officially became Australians on the 8/6/2023. To the following, I thank you for choosing Ryde: Jacqueline Mary Kharsyiemiong; Jae In Kim; Li Kong; Andrea Koppany; Herlin Kristina; Aiken Kwan; Yong Weon Kwon; Sunia Lablabjian; Bhavna Lalwani; Siu Ming Lam; Jeong Mee Lee; Qinqi Li; Zeyu Li; Tian Li; Chunming Liu; Mehrangiz Mesbahatababaei; Shreya Narula; Nazifa Nawal; Vinod Ramchandran Panicker; Vinali Prafulkumar Patel; Ivan Plostica; Meghana Poludasu; Nattapat Prompanya; Ester Rui Quan; Pooja Ratra; Rimsha Razzaq; Ashkan Saadat Talab; Mohammad Muhsen Safie; Rona Angela Sanchez Sagaral; Augie Czar Salas Sagaral; Pragati Saini; Meenakshi Saini; Sowmya Seshadri; Ashkan Shafee; Saeideh Shahheidari; Shuai Shao; Swati Sharma; Allen Shroo; Astha Sindhvani; Gyeongsu Song; Jing Song; Dennis Sukau; Eddy Suki; Jiaqi Sun; Lai Chun Tan; Yi Tang; Juan Rafael Canasa Tangonan; Marwa Abogabal Mohamed Tolba; Yuen Yee Tsang; Tuck Wai Wong; Jiang Yong Wong; Yechen Zhu; Zibibula Zulipikaer. Congratulations and best wishes!

ANN DAVIES, OAM

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—Congratulations to Ms. Juanita Ann Davies on receiving the prestigious Order of Australia Medal (OAM) for her exceptional service to aged care. Ms. Davies' dedication and contributions in the field are truly commendable. As a volunteer and director of Leigh Place Aged Care since 2013, Ann has displayed unwavering commitment to providing compassionate care for the elderly, fostering an environment of dignity and support. In her role as the CEO of Ainsley Residential Aged Care Quality Assessor, Ann has exhibited exemplary leadership, ensuring the highest standards of care across the sector, improving the quality of life for countless residents. Ann's former position as the Coordinator of St Basil's Nursing Home student placement program highlights her commitment to nurturing future healthcare professionals, leaving a lasting impact on the aged care workforce. Throughout her nursing career spanning from 1986 to 2015, Ann has made a positive difference in the lives of numerous individuals through her expertise and compassion. I once again congratulate Ms. Juanita Ann Davies on this well-deserved honour. Her outstanding service to aged care serves as an inspiration for all, her achievements continue to inspire us to prioritise the well-being of our elderly population. Once again, congratulations!

PETER STROUD, OAM

Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)—Congratulations to Mr. Peter Stroud for his well-deserved recognition with the Order of Australia Medal (OAM). This esteemed honour celebrates Peter's exceptional service to rowing, both as the State Selector of the NSW Rowing Association from 2022 and from 1987 to 1992, as well as his role as a director from 1988 to 1989. Peter's remarkable contributions extend beyond his administrative duties. As the Head Coach of the Drummoyne Rowing Club since 1981, he has been the driving force behind the club's success, shaping it into a breeding ground for world-class athletes. His guidance and expertise have nurtured multiple Olympians, showcasing his profound impact on the sport. Through his unwavering dedication and commitment, Peter has not only elevated rowing in our community but also instilled the values of perseverance, discipline, and teamwork in countless individuals. His leadership and coaching have inspired generations of rowers to pursue their dreams and reach new heights of excellence. I commend Peter Stroud for his outstanding service to rowing and for being an exemplary role model for aspiring athletes. His contributions have enriched the sporting landscape of our nation and left an enduring legacy. Once again, congratulations!

JAMBEROO VALLEY RATEPAYERS AND RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges that Jamberoo is set to get a dedicated dog park in the next financial year. This comes following lobbying by the Jamberoo Valley Ratepayers and Residents Associations (JVRRRA). At their June meeting, Kiama Council Executive's Jessica Rippon and Joe Gaudiosi confirmed that monies had been allocated for the dog park in the 2023/24 budget. Over the past decade, the community and Kiama Council have prepared reports, reviews and surveys. A June 2022 survey led by local resident Kate Troy, collecting 223 responses, showed that 65 per cent of residents would use the dog park a couple of times a day to multiple times per week. The survey also identified preferred locations for a fenced dog park: between the tennis courts and the golf course and two specific areas along Hyams Creek opposite Gibson Crescent and Peace Park. The approval of capital work funding for this long-awaited facility represents an achievement stemming from years of persistent efforts. It will create a secure environment for dogs to receive training, exercise, and socialisation and foster a sense of community and wellbeing among Jamberoo dog owners.

KIAMA HIGH SCHOOL

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges Kiama High School who on Thursday 15th June 2023 had six teams competing at the Netball NSW Schools Cup Netball Gala Day held at the Illawarra Netball Association. All of Kiama High School teams represented the school with excellence, demonstrating great enthusiasm and sportsmanship during competition. Kiama High School had three teams enjoy victories on the day, and are progressing to the Regional Finals which will be held in August 2023. Congratulations and well done to the 7/8 Boys, 7/8 Girls and 9/10 Girls Kiama High School teams who took out their divisions. A big thank you to the amazing umpires Isabella, Ava, Lola, Anja, Dana and Lauren. Congratulations and well done to Kiama High School which continues to produce great sporting athletes and strong student representatives and strong role models for our region.

ASHTON LENARD

Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)—Today the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges Mr Ashton Lenard from Nowra. Mr Lenard was among the big winners at the TAFE NSW Excellence Awards - he was just named CPALES Student of the Year. It's an immense achievement for the Nowra student, who has turned his life around in recent years. After enduring a tough time at high school, Mr Lenard bounced around between four local

schools, before leaving in year 11. Finding out about TAFE's Certificate IV in Tertiary Preparation was a game changer. The more adult learning environment at TAFE was an ideal fit, and he finished his course in 2022. A Tertiary Preparation Course is an HSC alternative and gives graduates an ATAR equivalent. Mr Lenard graduated with a strong enough ATAR to be accepted into a Bachelor of Psychology (Honours) at university. Now he's embarking on the next step in his extraordinary journey. In the future, Mr Lenard hopes to work as a psychologist at Headspace - an organisation which helped him in his teens. Congratulations and well done to Ashton Lenard from Nowra.

SCHOOL OF ROCK THE MUSICAL, CASTLE HILL HIGH SCHOOL

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I recently attended Castle Hill High School where the audience was treated to an incredible performance of the musical 'School of Rock'. The performance of 'School of Rock' was a two hour, two act musical performance based on the paramount movie starring Jack Black. The original music score was based on the Broadway stage production produced by Andrew Lloyd Webber. The musical production was an opportunity for students to showcase creative and performance skills. The production at one point included at one hundred students on stage. The lead acting and musical roles were performed by students Josh Dickenson; Hazel Olivera, Toby Purches, Gemma Camwell-Farran, Mia Gallard, Zac Danckert, Alisha Pillay, Elyssa Tedesco, Keira Chiu, Radu Vasile, Kii Vasile, Midhish Ponnala, Holly Spinks, Alexis Ly, George Nutting, Nina Barr, Tom Lord, Chloe Yan and Imogen Taylor. The roles of the band No Vacancy Band were played by Bode Wilson, Callum Secheny, Aryan Roozebehani and Dominique Hussin. A special note to congratulate the lead cast Josh Dickenson and Hazel Olivera who provided audiences with an amazing performance. I recognise and extend my congratulations to all students and staff involved in the production.

CASTLE HILL HIGH SCHOOL, SYDNEY WEST CROSS COUNTRY

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I congratulate the students from Castle Hill High School who represented Castle Hill High School and the Hills Zone at the Sydney West Cross Country which was held on Wednesday, 14 June 2023. The students who completed were: Maria Huerta Nunez, Grace Knight, Taylor Hills, Ashlyn Kelly, Lisa How, Isabella Chau, Holly Howard, Roxy Jephtha, Olivi Bloem, Pyper Marchant, Ella Munroe, Marley Mackenzie, Sasha Johnston, Anna Liu, Alina Hawron, Catherin Richter, Payton Hardey, Satvik Emmanni, Adian Pham, Mason Abram, Ryan Baker, Riley Johnston, Cameron Bloem, Cameron Johnston, Christopher Biviano, Harrai Bhangu, Thomas Hills, Will Zollinger. I also give a special mention to the following students who placed in the top 3 of their races: Taylor Hills- 3rd - 14 Years Girls, Cameron Bloem- 1st - 13 Years Boys, Ella Munroe- 1st - 17 Years Girls, Marley Mackenzie- 3rd - 17 Years Girls, Thomas Hills- 1st - 17 Years Boys. It is a terrific sporting achievement to represent your school in any sport and as such I extend my congratulations to all students who represented Castle Hill High School at the cross-country event.

CULTURES OF THE HILLS

Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)—I attended Cultures of the Hills event held at the Pioneer Theatre on 8 June 2023. Cultures of the Hills showcased key cultural communities within our society including First Nations, Filipino, South African, and Malaysian cultures. Cultures of the Hills was organised by Melissa Monteiro from Community Migrant Resource Centre (CMRC) in partnership with Hills Community Aid, Hills Multicultural Network and Multicultural NSW. Cultures of the Hills brought together key cultural groups through cultural stories, food and performances. I recognise Hills Community Aid Chief Executive Officers and Program Director Mici Beer who was instrumental in the success of Cultures of the Hills. I am honoured to be able to recognise and thank the truly inspirational and the remarkable accomplishments of the President of Hills Community Aid, Alan Gibson OAM and the Chief Executive Officer Mici Beer for their work in our community. The success of this year's event ensures that next year the event will be again a much sought-after event within our community.

NSW POLICE FORCE STATE CRIME COMMAND EXCELLENCE IN POLICING AWARD - DETECTIVE INSPECTOR RICHARD HOWE

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to Detective Inspector Richard Howe on receiving a NSW Police Force State Crime Command Excellence in Policing Award on Tuesday 16th May 2023, presented by the Rotary Club of Holroyd. Detective Inspector Howe has 20 years of service with the NSW Police Force, with 17 of those years attached to the State Crime Command. He is currently serving with the Homicide Squad and was nominated for his role as Officer in Charge for the investigation under SF Tutt, a triple homicide investigation. In March 2022, three individuals sadly lost their lives and 10 others suffered minor to critical injuries due to a deliberately lit fire in a boarding house. Detective Inspector Howe demonstrated strong leadership and guidance to a team of investigators, which subsequently resulted in a 47-year-old man being charged with three counts of murder and destruction of property by fire. Thank you, Detective Inspector Howe, for your commitment to preventing and responding to crime, and for helping to bring justice for victims. Congratulations again on your receipt of this Award.

NSW POLICE FORCE STATE CRIME COMMAND EXCELLENCE IN POLICING AWARD - MR KAZI HOQUE

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to Mr Kazi Hoque, Senior Forensic Accountant – Financial Crimes Squad, on receiving a NSW Police Force State Crime Command Excellence in Policing Award on Tuesday 16th May 2023, presented by the Rotary Club of Holroyd. Mr Hoque is a Chartered Accountant and Forensic Accounting Specialist and has provided six years of service with the NSW Police Force - State Crime Command. He is currently serving with the Financial Crimes Squad and was nominated for his investigation under SF Karson where the accused was charged with manufacturing a large commercial quantity of prohibited drugs and laundering \$4.1 million. He prepared a detailed statement outlining how cash was moved and laundered, and upon receipt of this statement the accused pleaded guilty. Mr Hoque was further nominated for his professionalism, dedication, and hard work under SF Evesham where he prepared a detailed expert report containing data to investigate complex fraud and account takeovers. Thank you, Mr Hoque, for your commitment to preventing and responding to crime and for helping to keep our community safe. Congratulations again on your receipt of this Award.

NSW POLICE FORCE STATE CRIME COMMAND EXCELLENCE IN POLICING AWARD - DETECTIVE SERGEANT WOODS

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)—Congratulations to Detective Sergeant Jonathan Woods on receiving a NSW Police Force State Crime Command Excellence in Policing Award on Tuesday 16th May 2023, presented by the Rotary Club of Holroyd. Detective Sergeant Woods has 33 years of service with the NSW Police Force, with 22 of those years attached to the State Crime Command. He is currently serving with the Organised Crime Squad and was nominated for his oversight of the Asset Confiscation Unit where he was the Subject Matter Expert. In this role, he developed important relationships with the NSW Crime Commission and Office of the Director Public Prosecutions where he is highly regarded. Detective Sergeant Woods has also led the newly established Unexplained Wealth Team, which examines individuals involved in organised crime who have assets well above their means and income. He is also commended for his commitment and dedication to set up the new Drug Trafficker Declaration process. Thank you, Detective Sergeant Woods, for your commitment to preventing and responding to crime and for helping to keep our community safe. Congratulations again on your receipt of this Award.

REBECCA TANCEVSKI

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Rebecca Tancevski, from Dapto, on her selection to participate in the World Powerlifting Championships in Malta in June. Rebecca will compete in the women's 84 kilogram and under division at the Championships that are run by the International Powerlifting Federation. She prepared for this event training 4 to 6 times a week under instruction by her coach Joey Zinghini. On behalf of the entire Illawarra community, I would like to express our warmest congratulations to Rebecca and wish her well in her future sporting endeavours.

SMITHS LN DAIRY

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Lube Markovski, as well as his daughter and son-in-law Melissa and Rob Gorgievski, who have taken over Smiths Ln Dairy, a wonderful café, located under the magnificent Illawarra escarpment at Wongawilli. The café, inside an old dairy, features a paddock-to-plate menu courtesy of local farmers and producers. The café also contains a general store where 80 per cent of its goods are sourced from the local area. Visitors can buy free-range, locally farmed eggs, homemade relishes, handmade artisanal breads and award-winning cheeses produced by South Coast dairies. Reusable milk bottles can even be used for locally sourced full-cream milk straight from dispensers. The reusable glass bottles are part of a focus on sustainability, which also includes fully recyclable products and composting. The history of the place has been captured beneath a glass floor inside the dairy, with artefacts from the original dairy farm owners placed underneath for viewing. I wish Lube, Melissa and Rob all the best on this new endeavour and hope that Smiths Ln Dairy continues to thrive in this most beautiful part of the Illawarra.

BE CONNECTED YOUNG MENTORS PROGRAM - WARILLA HIGH SCHOOL

Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)—I would like to congratulate Warilla High School for offering the Be Connected Young Mentors program to build a connection across the generations. This is a six-week program offered to participants 50 years and older. A group of Warilla High School students are being trained as Young Mentors so that they may support older people in our community to build confidence in the use of technology and engage safely and socially in the digital world. These mentoring sessions are either be one-on-one or in small groups. Participants can use their own devices, so the new skills they learn can be put into practice straight away, or we will have access to laptop computers that can be used if participants do not bring their own. Participants can

ask their Young Mentor to show them specific digital skills and it could be things such as using a smartphone, sending emails, video chatting with family online, getting directions from Google maps and much more. Congratulations to Warilla High School and their students for providing such an important program that will assist older people in our community with the use of digital technology.

HUNTER HALL SELECTED FOR U17 NSW COUNTRY CRICKET ACADEMY

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to recognise the exceptional talent and hard work of Hunter Hall, a 15-year-old cricketer from Howlong and Year 10 student at Xavier High School. Hunter has been selected in the U17 NSW Country Academy squad. This is testament to his dedication and skill, as well as guidance and support from his coaches, Steve Wright and Dylan Weeding, and continuous support from the local club the Howlong Cricket Club. Programs like these reward and develop young players who show high levels of potential, within the Cricket NSW and Country Cricket Pathways. I congratulate Hunter on his accomplishments to-date, and wish him all the best as he continues to pursue his dream of playing professional cricket.

COROWA CONFERENCE 130TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I would like to extend my appreciation to the Corowa District Historical Society for their work to remember historic local events such as the 130th anniversary of the Corowa Federation Conference. The Federation Conference was a pivotal moment in Australian history and set the stage for federation of the Australian colonies. To celebrate this occasion, the Corowa community is planning a dinner in July as well as other activities, bringing the community together. It is much to the community's benefit that the Historical Society supports our community memories, bringing them back into focus at critical times and anniversaries. In this way we can all join in honouring the contributions of those who gathered in Corowa to participate in the conference of such ongoing significance. It is inspiring to see the pride that the people of Corowa have for their town and for its role in modern Australian history.

HOPE IS "HUNGARY" FOR MORE SUCCESS AT TITLES

Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)—I extend my congratulations to Albury teenager Hope Chater who will be representing Australia this week in the WKSF 2023 Kettlebell Sport World Championships in Hungary. Hope is one of several border athletes who will be competing in the championships. Last year, Hope travelled for competition in Maia in Portugal and brought home a gold and silver medal. I would like to acknowledge Hope's trainer Cheryl Schneider at Lonedog Personal Training in Lavington. Cheryl has been working closely with Hope to help her prepare for the championships and has played a significant role in Hope's success. I wish Hope all the very best in the upcoming championships this week, and that she learns and develops her skills from her experience competing on the international stage.

MOWANA

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—I pay tribute to MoWaNa, short for Mona Vale Warriewood and Narrabeen. MoWaNa is a Safe Space, open 5pm - 9pm Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights for anybody in our community to come to if they are in emotional distress. There you will find caring peer support volunteers who will provide comfort, a cuppa, safety and to listen with no judgement. MoWaNa meets at The Mind Café in Narrabeen. Ultimately, the aim of MoWaNa is to support and help ease the burden on those with mental health challenges, including suicidal ideation. I was pleased to attend MoWaNa's recent fundraising evening at the North Narrabeen Surf Lifesaving Club, which was very well attended with significant community support. They aimed to raise funds so they can spread their word of their wonderful service so that all who need support can receive it. Thank you to Guy and Anne, owners of The Mind Café, for your generous support, and to Melani Kypri and her volunteers for their selfless service. I am pleased that these words of recognition will now be preserved in the records of the oldest Parliament of our country, as a small recognition this wonderful organisation.

APPRECIATION OF NEWPORT SURF LIFESAVING CLUB

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—I pay tribute to the Newport Surf Lifesaving Club and its volunteers on a wonderful season. Thank you for hosting me at your recent "Bernies" awards night. Congratulations to major award winners: Nipper Chairman's Award – Ben Carroll; Tim Francis Junior Competitor of the Year – Abigail Capell & Alannah Paul; Tom Guthrie Rook of the Year – Niamh Murphy; Peter Dawson OAM Best New Member – Janet Dunn; John Holland Senior – Committee Member of the Year – Nicole Fasseau; Inaugural Menzies' Educator of the Year – Jess Menzies; Hans Trumm OAM Award for Patrolling Excellence – Eric Cooke; Inaugural Gary Cook Surf Sports Official of the Year – Darren Warrenner; Competitor of the Year – Conner Maggs; Michael King Surf Sports Team of the Year – Zoe Warrenner, Zach Paul, Bella Cox, Dom Melbourne, Olivia Clues, Max Barbour, Anthony Doyle, Luke Chaffer, Grace Osborne, Isabelle Osborne, Jess Walton, Conner Maggs; Paul Stevens Junior Club Member of the Year – Emma Carroll; Michael Hill Memorial Trophy Club Member of the

Year - Brendan Capell. Well done to all your volunteers on an extraordinary 2022/23 season: nearly 9,000 volunteer hours, nearly 800 preventative actions and 25 rescues! Thank you all for your service!

WOMEN'S RESILIENCE CENTRE

Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)—The Women's Resilience Centre (WRC) was founded in 2020. It's a place of hope, healing and recovery for women who are survivors of domestic abuse and the associated trauma. Many services provide housing and support for survivors but, too often, many women return to unsafe environments which perpetuates the cycle of abuse and trauma. Amongst other things, the WRC was established to fill the gap by offering programs, facilitating longer-term recovery through a lived-experience peer-to-peer Mentoring Program, delivered nationally online and face-to-face. Last week, WRC held a fundraising lunch with inspiring leaders, Erin Molan, Stephanie Rodriguez, Police Commissioner Karen Webb, and Christine Holgate. The lunch was attended by some 400 supporters. The support of corporate organisations and individuals was breathtaking. Our community is proud that WRC is based in Pittwater and is the product of visionary local and founder, Simone Allan. Simone well done to you, your volunteers, and your board: Dr Maree Gosper, Penny Atwells, Peter Casey, Amanda Choularton, Jenny Fardoulis, Lyn Lewis-Smith and Ann Whitelock. I am pleased that these words of recognition will now be preserved in the records of the oldest Parliament of our country, as a small recognition of all involved.

NICK BOLTON

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote)—There are plenty of people who live in the Heathcote electorate who have graced our television screens over the years. Some of those people include: Anh Do; Deborah Mailman; and David Field. Now another resident from the Heathcote electorate is making waves in the film industry – this time behind the camera though. Film-maker Nick Bolton, from Bulli, was recently named one of 13 people who were selected for a one week long workshop run by For Film's Sake. Nick, who is also chair of Screen Illawarra, has been a very vocal advocate for the industry in the Illawarra. That's why it came as no surprise that Nick said he would be using his time in the workshop to speak to others within the industry about the benefits of filming in the Illawarra. The appointment to the workshop was the latest accolade for Nick whose film, *Mate*, was long-listed for the 2022 Oscars. Congratulations again Nick on a wonderful achievement. I cannot wait to see what projects you will be involved on in the future. You are not only a champion of the film industry, but also a champion of the Illawarra.

DR JAMES RENWICK, AM

Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote)—Dr James Renwick has achieved many things throughout his life. A senior counsel, member of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal, and the head of Australia's Independent National Security Legislation Monitor. Now, as of June 2023, he can add AM to his name. Dr Renwick was one of several residents throughout the Heathcote electorate to be recognised in the King's Birthday honours. Speaking to the Illawarra Mercury, Dr Renwick AM said he had some advice for those who were up and coming in the legal profession. 'My message for young lawyers... is that security and cyber law should fire their imagination and provoke their interest in practising in that area whether in government, in uniform or in private practice.' It was a thought provoking message from someone who has such an incredible standing in the legal fraternity. On behalf of all the residents throughout the Heathcote electorate, I would like to again congratulate Dr James Renwick AM on his King's Birthday recognition. It was incredibly well deserved and fitting for someone who has given so much time and energy to their profession. We are lucky in Heathcote to call you one of ours.

CASINO ALIVE FOR BEEF WEEK

Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)—Beef Week in Casino was a big deal. The community came together to celebrate an industry that in my electorate supports thousands of jobs and provides food for many thousands, hundreds of thousands; after all, Casino is the beef capital of Australia. I attended the Beef Week Ball, where Kara Porter was announced as this year's Beef Week Queen and Rachael Redman was announced as the runner-up. What an incredible ten days of community celebration, including breakfast with the butchers, the Greyhound Beef Week cup, and the family fun day in the CDB with woodchops, street parade, beef week rodeo, and family fun on Walker Street most of the day, in total, in total over 100 events in 11 days. This is a community event that is much loved and is growing every year and has been since 1982. My congratulations to President Brody Lisha, Grant Shedden, Georgie King, Tony Dean, Stuart George, Cherie Holdsworth, and Janelle Stenner. Well done, a great community event you should be very proud of.

ZAINAB ZAHR

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I would like to acknowledge and celebrate local volunteer, Ms Zainab Zahr, for her commitment and dedication to the Bexley North Football Club. For over seven years,

Zainab has selflessly volunteered her time and effort to help the Club and its players. Ms Zahr has developed a strong reputation for building a positive and supporting team culture with an emphasis on fair play and always shows respect to the team, Club and opposition. Zainab's commitment to the girls' teams over the years has been unwavering as she often went above and beyond to ensure her players felt supported and cared for. She regularly organises additional training sessions, social events and even invite teams into her home all during her own personal time. Remarkably, Ms Zahr is often willing to incur out of pocket expenses to hire indoor venues during ground closures and wet weather to ensure our children still get the opportunity to play and train. Ms Zahr is the ultimate role model for not only the Club but for our local community and I thank her for her the dedication and commitment she has shown to ensure our children enjoy playing sport.

YOKE YEE

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—As part of National Volunteer Week, I would like to acknowledge the work of Bald Face Public School Volunteer Ms Yoke Yee. Ms Yoke Yee is an integral part of the Bald Face Public School community, she willingly and enthusiastically shares her time as a scripture teacher, coordinator of the Anglican scripture program as well as running a Friday afternoon youth group at the local church. Whether it is baking treats and co-hosting our recent Mother's Day morning tea or coordinating the annual Christmas scripture event Yoke is always ready to lend a hand in the local community. She is an outstanding role model for the students and is loved by all the students, staff and parents at Bald Face Public School. She has contributed so much to creating a caring community and does everything in a happy, positive and fun way. I would like to thank Yoke for the time she has dedicated to her community.

MARIAM BAZZI DEEB

Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)—I wish to acknowledge and recognise the hard work and dedication of prolific volunteer Mrs Mariam Bazzi Deeb. Mrs Deeb has been an active member of the Arkana Parent Council for over fifteen years and currently serves as the Council's President. Along with her team of volunteers, Mariam has organised and led numerous fundraising schemes which have raised much-needed funds to help those affected by recent natural disasters. Mrs Deeb also coordinates and prepares the school's weekly delivery of hot food and water for women and children in homeless shelters. On top of this, she participates in grocery drives, interfaith events, manages the school canteen, and even volunteers at the local Banksia Tigers Football Club. The list of ways Mariam helps and supports our community is endless. As someone who has devoted their entire life to serving others, she is truly the perfect role model for the children at the school. Mariam is truly an inspiration to us all and I want to sincerely thank her for the important work she does across the school and more importantly throughout our local community.

STEVE GAULT

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I commend the exceptional talent and craftsmanship of Steve Gault, a skilled woodcrafter who has been honing his craft for over a decade. For the past 11 years, Steve has dedicated himself to the art of scroll-sawing. Using an electric or pedal-operated saw, he meticulously cuts intricate curves in various materials, including wood and metal. Among his favourite projects are scroll-saw puzzles and personalized name designs. Notably, he has developed a deep appreciation for creating dog breed signs, which showcase his keen eye for detail and love for craftsmanship. In addition to these creations, Steve has also crafted remarkable wooden clocks and wedding anniversary boxes, showcasing his versatility and artistic range. He actively participates in competitions such as the Penrith Show and Blacktown Show, where his work has been admired and recognised by peer. These competitions have provided him with valuable opportunities to showcase his talent and connect with fellow craftsmen, forging new friendships along the way. I extend my sincerest congratulations to Steve Gault for his remarkable achievements as a woodcrafter.

BENJAMIN MALLIN

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I congratulate Benjamin Mallin who graduated from Penrith Anglican College last year with an impressive ATAR of 98.75. Benjamin was named the Dux of the year, reflecting his exceptional dedication and academic prowess. Throughout his educational journey, Benjamin has exemplified the values of resilience, perseverance and a commitment to excellence. His outstanding achievement in the HSC further reinforces Penrith Anglican College's reputation for academic excellence and strong performance. As Benjamin and the Class of 2022 embark on their future endeavours, I encourage them to reflect not only on their career aspirations but also on the kind of individuals they aspire to become. Their diverse plans, whether pursuing higher education, apprenticeships, joining the workforce or travelling, are all opportunities for personal growth and self-discovery. To Benjamin and the entire Class of 2022 at Penrith Anglican College, I extend my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes for their continued success and happiness in all their future endeavours.

JIM AND GLORIA STEVENSON

Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)—I congratulate and celebrate the incredible milestone of Jim and Gloria Stevenson's 60th wedding anniversary. Their enduring love and commitment to one another serve as a shining example for us all. Jim and Gloria's journey began when they first met at a dance in Riverwood as 18-year-olds. Since then, they have built a beautiful life together and residing in Mulgoa for the past 32 years. Their union has been blessed with three children, eight grandchildren and the joy of a great-grandchild, with another on the way. The strength of their family has been the cornerstone of Jim and Gloria's marriage. They firmly believe that the love and support of their loved ones have been the bedrock of their enduring relationship. In their leisure time, Jim and Gloria find joy in playing golf at the Wallacia Golf Club and tending to their property. On their special day, Jim and Gloria were surrounded by the love and warmth of their family and friends, commemorating the remarkable milestone of their 60th anniversary. I extend my heartfelt wishes for Jim and Gloria Stevenson's continued happiness, love, and fulfilment.

HILLS FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION - ALL ABILITIES FOOTBALL

Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Kellyville)—I wish to recognise today the Hills Football Association for their incredible All Abilities program which provides opportunities for individuals with disabilities to participate in the sport of soccer, share social experiences and ultimately build confidence. Currently 5 member clubs in the Hills district are hosting All Abilities programs for Season 2023 which consists of non-competitive weekly sessions held on Saturdays. These clubs include Castle Hill United, Hills Knights, Kellyville Kolts, Rouse Hill Rams, and the Winston Hills Bears. Hills Football is also going to facilitate a modified Referee Program open to all All-Abilities players who want an opportunity to learn how to Referee a game and develop leadership skills whilst being in a supportive, non-threatening and fun environment. Parents of participants are raving about the program, how well it is run, how welcoming the Club has been, and even more important, how the players are treated as equals. The players enjoy wearing their team jerseys and being a part of a real football team. I commend Hills Football and all the Clubs for this incredible initiative which is making a difference to the lives of the players and their families.

AMY CURRAN

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise today to recognise Amy Curran. Amy resides in the Highlands, producing an amazing array of works, utilising her innate and learnt skills as a photographer, author, and artist. Amy has had many pieces of her work used in television commercials, newspapers, and magazines. Amy had her first published children's book in 2016, that went on to win numerous awards both nationally and internationally. Amy has gone on to illustrate and have several books published since this time. Whilst well renowned, Amy has undoubtedly retained her grass root appreciation and acknowledgement of activities in her local area and those who stand proudly to rally, defend, and support the community such as the volunteers of the Taralga Rural Fire Service. In salute of their work, Amy painted a large mural on the Taralga Rural Fire Shed which depicts the iconic photograph in The Age and Sydney Morning Herald during the 2019 / 2020 Black Summer fires, taken by photographer Alex Ellinghausen. I acknowledge the significance behind this piece of work for many within the RFS. Thank you, Amy, for sharing your skills and talent, I recognise your own heartfelt emotion embellished in this work.

WALTER BRECELY

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise today to recognise Walter Brecely. Walter, son of Marcello and Margaret Brecely, was brought up in the small mining town of Goldsworthy in Western Australia. The family moved to the east coast, for Marcello's appointment at Woodlawn mine, near Goulburn. Walter attended Tarago Primary School and finishing Year 12 at St Pat's College in Goulburn, he went on to embark in his studies gaining an arts diploma and degree and a multitude of other qualifications working with different metals. With an inbuilt inquisitiveness and talent, Walter tested many different materials and has gone to hold several solo exhibitions and entering competitions to display his work, also establishing classes to share his knowledge and skills. Walter was nominated for the Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize for his work The Walkers, made from recycled cutlery, stainless steel, and sterling silver. Walter's artistic flair was abruptly and cruelly interrupted by personal tragedy, following his partner's diagnosis with cancer, whom he cared for until her death. It is with sincere and heartfelt recognition that I commend Walter for his artistic talent and the personal circumstances that he has experienced and his ability to regain his composure to commence exhibiting again.

PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields—Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology, Minister for Building, and Minister for Corrections)—The Macquarie Fields electorate is home to many cultural

communities who add to the rich mosaic that is modern Australia. The local Filipino community makes an invaluable contribution to our community. I was pleased to join the Federal member for Macarthur, Dr Mike Freelander, the State members for Campbelltown and Leppington, Greg Warren and Nathan Hagarty, and Councillor Rey Manoto at the Campbelltown and Region Filipino Community Council (CRFCC) celebration of 125 years of Filipino independence. Australia and the Philippines share the values of freedom and democracy, and the CRFCC's annual event is a reminder of the valued and longstanding friendship that exists between our two nations. A flag raising ceremony also commemorated the 162nd birthday of Dr Jose P. Rizal, who inspired the Filipino independence movement and is a national hero of the Philippines. His legacy and martyrdom are an inspiration for everyone who believes in democracy and equality before the law. I commend the efforts of the CRFCC and honour our Filipino community for enriching the local community. To them I say salamat.

EID UL ADHA EXHIBITION

Mr ANOULACK CHANTHIVONG (Macquarie Fields—Minister for Better Regulation and Fair Trading, Minister for Industry and Trade, Minister for Innovation, Science and Technology, Minister for Building, and Minister for Corrections)—Faith and culture are important to many in the Macquarie Fields electorate and enrich the community. Our strong Muslim Bangladeshi community gives so much to the local community and helps make south-west Sydney a special place to live. I was pleased to join Campbelltown Councillor Masood Chowdhury in attending the Eid Ul Adha Exhibition hosted by Sydney Bangalee Community Incorporated (SBC Inc) at the Ingleburn Community Centre in anticipation of the Islamic holiday Eid Al-Adha later this month. SBC Inc plays an important role in promoting the Bangla language, culture, and traditions both within and outside the Bangladeshi community. The Exhibition featured various women-run stalls selling traditional Bengali dresses and clothing, jewellery, and other accessories. I commend SBC Inc as well as Selima Begum, Abu Tariq and all others involved for their efforts in organising the event. It is great to see commerce and culture coming together to make our community stronger and richer.

VALE LES BANTON

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—I was saddened to learn that Les Banton passed away on the 31 May. After struggling with addiction and homelessness, Les used his recovery story to inspire and educate others in communities and prisons with the Bill Crews Foundation. Les is someone who, after losing his livelihood in the early 2000s, was able to turn his life around and deliver for his community. Les encountered great difficulty in his interaction with both Government and private support systems and spoke often about his interactions with both the criminal and homelessness support systems. Les worked with the Bill Crews Foundation to tell his story to others, and provided hope and inspiration for countless people who encountered similar challenges in accessing much needed support. Les was an inspiring image of resilience and perseverance, who will be sorely missed both by the Bill Crews Foundation, and the broader community. Thank you Les, for the inspiring work you did in my community. Your actions have inspired many to follow in your footsteps and work towards a closer, resilient, and safe community in Summer Hill.

TEIGAN BUTCHERS (RAINBOW SMASH) - AMY LARGE VOLUNTEER AWARD 2023

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—Teigan Butchers was recognised this year in the Amy Large Volunteer Awards for their outstanding work in advocating for LGBTQIA+ inclusion in sports. They are the president of the Inner West Roller Derby League, and play for the Bamshees team within the league. Teigan is an inspiring figure to LGBTQIA+ people across the Inner West and has brought the Inner West Roller Derby League into the limelight. During World Pride, the league played for international audiences, and has also been platformed at Luna Park, and in news media spaces. The League hosts regular social events across the Inner West, including at the Robyn Webster Centre in Tempe. The importance of LGBTQIA+ representation in sport at this current moment is hard to overstate and Teigan has used their voice to include LGBTQIA+ people, and make them feel safe playing sports. Congratulations Teigan, it is a joy to know your hard work is being recognised and celebrated.

BEN ROSS - NOMINEE FOR INNER WEST CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)—Ben Ross was nominated for the Inner West Citizen of the Year award this year. Ben is the founder of 'Inner West Ballers', a basketball team based out of Wilkins Public School. Inner West Ballers offers classes at a beginner, intermediate, and advanced level, and also offers a girls only class to create a safe space for young girls looking to get into basketball. Inner West Ballers is a "development" competition, aimed at developing skills and relationships as opposed to a fierce competitive environment. This is to allow children of all skill levels the joy of sports, without the stress of winning. Community Sports groups often are the backbone of long-lasting, and deep rooted community relationships, and bring together friends and family for an enjoyable and relaxing experience. I'd like to congratulate Ben on his hard work and initiative in setting up such a fantastic program for our local community.

81ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEFENCE OF SYDNEY

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—On 2 June 2023, I was honoured to join local, state, and federal representatives and consulate dignitaries at a commemorative service marking the 81st Anniversary of the Defence of Sydney at North Head. On the night of 31 May 1942, three Imperial Japanese midget submarines entered Sydney Harbour with the intention of sinking the USS Chicago, an American heavy cruiser. They missed their target, but sank the HMAS Kuttabul, killing 21 sailors from the Royal Australian Navy. I would like to thank James Griffin MP and his office, in particular Adele Heasman, and members of the Australia Remembers Northern Beaches and North Shore Committee for organising this special event. I was fortunate to share the event with members of the Roseville Memorial Club, led by President Major Michael Askey OAM (retired); as well as Forestville RSL Sub-Branch, led by President Bob Lunnon. Thank you to all those who participated in the service, including members of the Australian Defence Force, RSL representatives, and school students for keeping the Australian spirit alive and well. I look forward to continuing to support this special and solemn event well into the future. Lest we forget.

DAVIDSON RURAL FIRE BRIGADE AGM

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—I was pleased to join the Davidson Rural Fire Brigade for their Annual General Meeting on Sunday 4 June 2023. Davidson RFS is responsible for Davidson, Belrose, Frenches Forest, Forestville and Killarney Heights area. In the past year alone, more than 100 volunteers gave over 9,500 hours. We should be proud of our community. I have always said – and will continue to say – that the heroes who serve in volunteer organisations such as the NSW RFS go above and beyond for their communities in times of uncertainty and crisis. Their service deserves our utmost respect and support. I would like to acknowledge outgoing President Richard Stewart OAM and outgoing Captain Trent Dowling for their service over many years of dedicated service. I give my best wishes to two volunteer fire fighters from Davidson RFS who have been deployed to Canada for 6 weeks to support their firefighting efforts. Our thoughts are with you, and we look forward to welcoming you home safe and sound.

KILLARA RURAL FIRE BRIGADE AGM

Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)—I was honoured to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Killara Rural Fire Brigade on 6 June 2023. I congratulate President Stuart Clark AM and Captain Andrew Wilson who were re-elected to their leadership positions. I have consistently expressed, and will continue to express, my admiration and respect for the exceptional volunteers who serve. These heroes consistently surpass expectations and step up for the communities they serve in times of crisis. It is crucial that we acknowledge and extend our highest regard for their invaluable contributions. I am happy to report that Killara Rural Fire Brigade will soon have new headquarters adjacent to Koola Park in Killara and will begin efforts to fundraise. I thank the Minister for Emergency Services for confirming that the NSW Government will honour its commitment of \$200,000 towards the headquarters. This is welcomed news from the community. I encourage everyone to continue their enthusiasm with the remaining fundraising efforts. I look forward to continuing my strong support and advocacy for Killara Rural Fire Brigade well into the long term future.

GANMAIN RALLIES BEHIND TWINS

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I extend my deepest gratitude to the Ganmain Bakery in their support for a local family. Ganmain Bakery owner, Anna Murphy and manager, Tracey Boyton are commended for the fast action and movement to support local family Brittney and Josh Hey after the unexpected early arrival of their twin babies, Ryan and Noah. Given the babies unexpected arrival on 13 January 2023, 14 weeks early, Brittney and Josh had not been prepared. When Anna and Tracey heard of this, the pair jumped into action rallying the community for donations to support the new family. Anna and Tracey placed baskets in the Ganmain Bakery and asked local community members to make donations. The support from the community and those travelling through town has been overwhelming huge, with people donating gift vouchers and baby items. After spending several months in the neonatal intensive care unit in Sydney, the Hey family has returned home with their beautiful babies. Recently visiting the Bakery, the family is extremely grateful to everyone who has donated. Anna and Tracey are commended for their involvement in this project, and I wish the Hey Family all the best.

WNSWLHD MIDWIFE OF THE YEAR FINALISTS

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I wish to congratulate two midwives, Melissa Ousby and Peta Sharkey, of Cowra Health Service who have both been named as finalists in the Western New South Wales Local Health District Midwife of the Year awards. The Midwife of the Year award is based on three criteria points: 1. The midwife's demonstration and commitment to the Living Well Together Values; 2. Their commitment to the midwifery profession and; 3. Demonstration of leadership on the provision of midwifery quality care. Melissa was named a finalist for her instrumental involvement in building an active maternity service that embraces the

needs of her community and for her well planned and engaging approach to an inclusive and holistic service encouraging her team to strive for excellence in care. Peta was named as a finalist for her enthusiastic approach to her career and her educational role. Peta has been proactive in ensuring all information, training and support is up to date to support new and existing midwives to correctly undertake their work. Congratulations once again to Melissa and Peta, for being recognised in your field of midwifery.

350 GAMES AND LIFE MEMBERSHIP FOR TONI MIMMO

Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)—I wish to extend congratulations to Narrandera's very own Toni Mimmo who ran out for her 350th game with the Narrandera Imperial Football Netball Club over the first weekend in June. Toni joined the Narrandera Imperial Football Netball Club as Junior Netball player but never imagined she would have run out on the field, as a Life Member, to take on Wagga Tigers for her 350th game as a club player. Some of Toni's fondest and proudest memories are being a part of the 2011 and 2012 premiership team and to now play alongside her daughter in the A Grade team. After a difficult few years, the A Grade team only won one game in 2019, however, Toni says "there is more to netball than just winning." Toni enjoys being out on the court and playing the game she loves. Congratulations once again Toni. Other players and community members of the Narrandera Imperial Football Netball Club are lucky to have someone like you to look up to.

DEBBIE HUNT AND KIERON MALONE

Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)—I rise today to recognise Debbie Hunt and Kieron Malone. Moving from the temperate Central Coast twelve years ago to Bungonia, whilst beautiful, presents with its own natural elements of punishing summer heat, freezing winter temperatures, and unfavourable soil conditions, not ideal for the aspirations of cultivation of their property to grow their own food. Together with motivation, schooled in horticulture, research, and equipped with organic resources to prepare their land, Debbie and Kieron planted fruit trees. Today with more than three hundred trees, yielding apples and stone fruits alongside many other vegetable crops. Understanding their environment, the natural habitat, and threats to their crops, they have strategically planted wattles, which attract the native bird life away from the fruit trees. Utilising recycled materials, they have deterred crop damage by wallabies and rabbits. With their success, Debbie and Kieron are keen to share their knowledge and have commenced workshops, which capture their practices to successfully utilise recycled materials to build structures, whilst also placing an emphasis on the importance of land regeneration. I commend Debbie and Kieron on their fortitude and recognise the bountiful rewards that they have achieved and their willingness to impart their knowledge.

GAYLE BOWMAN

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I rise to recognise Gayle Bowman. During National Lifeblood Week, Gayle was celebrated by Taree Lifeblood for her 300th blood donation. Gayle is among Australia's half a million donors being recognised this National Blood Donor Week for their lifesaving efforts. Gayle has given 300 donations of plasma and whole blood which have helped save the lives of up to 900 patients. I congratulate Gayle on her fantastic achievement and thank her for being the Lifeblood of our community.

AVA GILLARD

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I rise to recognise Ava Gillard. Ava was selected in the NSW Primary Schools Sports Association basketball side. A squad of 10 were selected to go to Perth for the Australian championships in August. Ava was a member of the state championship winning Hunter side at the NSW titles at Tamworth. Hunter went through the championship unbeaten, downing the highly rated Sydney North 33-28 to claim the gold medal. This was Hunter's first success in the event and it was also Ava's debut at state championship level. Ava won the coach's award for her efforts. I congratulate Ava on her recent achievement and wish her all the best for the Australian championships.

MANNING RIVER DRAGON BOAT CLUB

Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)—I rise to recognise Manning River Dragon Boat Club. Manning River Dragon Boat Club took part in the annual Flamin' Dragons Regatta at Wauchope and were successful in gaining a trophy and individual medal in every event they competed. The Dragons contested the 2km and finished second to Newcastle City and beat 12 other teams. Manning won the opens 10 team from a field of 11 other highly competitive crews. Manning mixed came third from a field of 13 and the women's 10s boat also came third behind Kempsey and Hunter River. I congratulate the Manning River Dragon Boat Club on their amazing result.

KATRINA WIRTH - LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINEE

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Katrina Wirth was a recent nominee in the Maitland Local Woman of the Year Awards. Katrina has always had a passion to

make a difference through community service. She was a pink lady auxiliary at the old Maitland Hospital and embraced her role providing directions, running the ever-popular lolly trolley, and supporting patients living with dementia. This led to Katrina volunteering with St John Ambulance where she has 6 years of service, including supporting the Maitland community during the July 2022 flood events, this voluntary role inspired her journey into nursing. Katrina also has a passion for education, assisting with the Tournament of the Minds competitions for gifted and talented students, and assisting local schools with their reading programs for struggling students. Katrina is the volunteer Academic Director for her university's nursing and midwifery student society. In addition, Katrina was nominated for the Australia Day volunteer award in Maitland and is most worthy of recognition as a valued and valuable member of the Maitland Community.

LESLEY FLANNERY - LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR AWARD NOMINEE

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Lesley Flannery has recently been recognised in the Maitland Local Woman of the Year Awards for her strong contribution to the Maitland community for more than four decades. Lesley is a committee member and founder of Maitland Cancer Appeal which provides a linen service to people in the Maitland LGA living with a terminal illness. She has served as the secretary since 1987. She was also treasurer for the Maitland branch of Friends of Palliative Care for 16 years. This year alone Maitland Cancer Appeal donated \$400,000 to cancer research in the Hunter. Without Lesley's input and hard work these things may not have been as successful. Despite turning 87 this year, Lesley is still working and on the committee as secretary. Her life has revolved around helping people in her community with her current project, organising World Day of Prayer for the local Anglican Church. Lesley is a truly remarkable woman who has spent a lifetime caring for and supporting those in need. Lesley is a woman worthy of highly commended recognition for her sustained service to the Maitland community.

JANICE KING - NOMINEE FOR MAITLAND LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR

Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)—Congratulations to Janice King who was a recent nominee in the Maitland Local Woman of the Year Awards. Janice has worked as a registered nurse at Maitland Grange Nursing Home since the day it opened, caring for thousands of residents in that time. While Janice has reached retirement age, she still gives her all every single shift. Janice is Maitland born and bred and is now reaching the age where she is nursing some of the people she grew up with. While this would have been a challenge to many people, Janice has continued in her role and serves as a familiar and comforting face to them. Janice is most worthy of recognition as a valued and valuable member of the Maitland Community. Congratulations and thank you Janice.

JANE GRIFFITHS - HAY

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I would like to recognise and congratulate Jane Griffiths of Hay for winning Citizen of the Year at the 2023 Hay Australia Day Awards Ceremony. This was Jane's third Australia Day award after being awarded Young Citizen of the Year and Sportsperson of the Year at previous ceremonies. Jane worked at the Hay Shire Council as secretary of Occupational Health and Safety for twenty years, as well as President of Work Health and Safety. She was a scribe for the Grazier, writing the sports reports. Jane has been a member and umpire of Lions Netball Club, secretary for Hay Swimming Club and has spent decades involved in the Lions Football Club. Jane is President of CanAssist, a position that she holds close to her heart. In 1994, Jane founded the Biggest Morning Tea for Hay, which still runs today in the Riverina. Upon retirement, Jane plays an essential role in Rust and Dust Rally Committee and is Hay Showground's treasurer. Jane is an invaluable member of the Hay community. I thank Jane for her tireless and passionate service.

KEN DACHI - LEETON

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I would like to acknowledge Mr Ken Dachi of Leeton. In 2019, Ken and his wife, Sekai, moved to Leeton from the UK. Ken's work in international aid relief has taken him to many countries around the world. Upon arrival in Leeton, he was approached about a job at the Leeton Shire Council. Ken is now Leeton's multicultural program advisor and dedicates his time helping new migrants find their way in Australia. Ken was invited to speak at the Welcoming Australia symposium in Melbourne, where he was awarded the inaugural Welcoming Cities award in recognition of his incredible efforts. He works hard to ensure that Leeton has business opportunities to attract workers. Ken believes the power of advocacy and the sharing of stories are some of the most important components. I thank Ken for his efforts in making Leeton a safe, welcoming and inclusive multicultural town. Leeton and surrounding rural towns are indebted to your hard work and care for your community members, both present and future.

HOWARD JONES - COOMEALLA

Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)—Today I would like to recognise and congratulate Howard Jones, OAM of Coomealla. Mr Jones was the recipient of the Order of Australia Medal in the King's birthday honours

list for his service to conservation and the environment. As a founding member of the Murray-Darling Wetlands Working Group, he shared a passion for a healthy river and or wetlands, and being heavily involved in the irrigation industry, he was able to add a different slant onto the approach or the perception of a lot of the environmental groups. Mr Jones' conservation efforts date back several decades, and he's been a part of the Lower-Murray Darling River Management Committee, the Murray-Darling Basin Authority's Basin Community Committee and was a founding Director of Western Murray Irrigation. Mr Jones is a member of the Australian Floodplain Association Inc, Landcare NSW Murray-Lower Darling Customer Advisory Group and Southwest Water Users. I thank Mr Jones sincerely for his continued support and sharing his knowledge on the many water issues with endeavours for all to enjoy healthy waterways.

BRANDING BANGLADESH EID

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)—Not long after I was elected, one of the first events I attended was a large Eid gathering organised by Branding Bangladesh with the High Commissioner Mr. M. Allama Siddiki and community leaders. I have a large Bangladeshi and a large Muslim population in my Electorate, many of whom make countless contributions within the community and beyond. Branding Bangladesh is a terrific team of volunteers who also do wonderful humanitarian work - from settlement services and refugee support, to creating awareness of domestic violence and advocating for issues affecting the broader community. I also want to highlight how they helped the most vulnerable and in-need members of society during the pandemic by delivering food packages and essential supplies. In fact, their commitment to caring was recognised when they won the 2022 NSW Volunteer of the Year Award, I congratulate Branding Bangladesh for their extraordinary efforts. Thank you to Abdullah Al Noman Shamim, Shafiqul Alam, Shazzad Siddiqi, Shahrier Pavel Dewan, Lincoln Shafiqullah, Ali Ashraf Himel, and Mohiuddin Mohi – for creating social cohesion and building bridges between diverse communities, through this Eid Event and all the other incredible work you do which enriches us all.

THE PONDS HIGH SCHOOL P&C

Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)—I rise today to extend my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to the members of The Ponds High School Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) for inviting me to their meeting on Monday, the 5th of June. It was a pleasure to be in the presence of such an engaged group of people who are committed to the betterment of our community and the education of our youth. The vibrant and inclusive school community is a testament to the hard work and passion exhibited by the P&C in fostering a strong partnership between parents, teachers, and the school administration. During the meeting, I had the opportunity to listen to the concerns, suggestions, and aspirations of the P&C. Their unwavering commitment to the well-being and success of students left a lasting impression on me. It's clear they are dedicated to helping the school achieve the best possible outcomes for everyone. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to The Ponds High School P&C, for their continued efforts to foster a thriving educational environment. Together, we will work towards the collective goal of ensuring a bright and prosperous future for all students.

ALANNAH DIMMOCK

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism)—I rise to acknowledge Alannah Dimmock for her performance at the 2023 Australian Surf Life Saving Championships at Scarborough and Trig Island Surf Life Saving Clubs. The Aussies is an annual event where members from the country's 314 surf clubs unite to participate in almost 500 beach and ocean events that mimic surf lifesaving activities. Members of Redhead, Swansea-Belmont, Caves Beach and The Lakes Surf Life Saving Clubs made the trek over to Western Australia for this nine-day event, with their competitors taking part in the Juniors, Masters and Opens competitions. Alannah from the Redhead Surf Life Saving Club competed in the Juniors Competition, taking out the gold medal in the Under 13's Female 2km beach run. Congratulations Alannah on a fantastic performance, you are a credit to your club and community.

EVIE WALLER

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism)—I rise to acknowledge Evie Waller for her performance at the 2023 Australian Surf Life Saving Championships at Scarborough and Trig Island Surf Life Saving Clubs. The Aussies is an annual event where members from the country's 314 surf clubs unite to participate in almost 500 beach and ocean events that mimic surf lifesaving activities. Members of Redhead, Swansea-Belmont, Caves Beach and The Lakes Surf Life Saving Clubs made the trek over to Western Australia for this nine-day event, with their competitors taking part in the Juniors, Masters and Opens competitions. Evie from the Redhead Surf Life Saving Club competed in the Juniors Competition, taking out the bronze medal in the under 13's female board race. Congratulations Evie on a fantastic performance, you are a credit to your club and community.

JASON DWYER

Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism)—I rise to acknowledge Jason Dwyer for his performance at the 2023 Australian Surf Life Saving Championships at Scarborough and Trig Island Surf Life Saving Clubs. The Aussies is an annual event where members from the country's 314 surf clubs unite to participate in almost 500 beach and ocean events that mimic surf lifesaving activities. Members of Redhead, Swansea-Belmont, Caves Beach and The Lakes Surf Life Saving Clubs made the trek over to Western Australia for this nine-day event, with their competitors taking part in the Juniors, Masters and Opens competitions. Jason from Redhead Surf Life Saving Club competed in the Master's Competition, taking out a silver medal in board relay and a bronze medal in the board rescue. Congratulations to Jason on a fantastic performance, you are a credit to your club and community.

PENRITH RELAY FOR LIFE

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney)—It was a privilege to join Cancer Council NSW and members of the community in raising funds for the Cancer Council at their annual Penrith Relay For Life. The event saw 36 teams and 350 relayers participate in relays, where over \$57,000 was raised for Cancer Council NSW, who support individuals diagnosed with cancer, their families, and cancer survivors. The organisation provides an abundance of services, programmes and support that guides individuals and their families through their new reality. It was heart-warming to witness the community unite to support an important cause, thank you to Cancer Council NSW and all who donated their time and money. It's because of your efforts we can make strides towards a cancer free future.

ST MARY'S RUGBY LEAGUE CLUB

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney)—The St Mary's Rugby League Club is a recipient of the prestigious "Spirit of the Bash" award, recognising their tremendous efforts in raising funds for disadvantaged children. Club Directors Warren Smith, John Burns and Mick Hilton embarked on a week-long adventure to visit a variety of schools across the state. The event raised over \$1.3 million for disadvantaged children across New South Wales. The club has dedicated itself to supporting children's charities in New South Wales as well as local community projects, over the past 20 years. I congratulate the work of the Club Directors as well as St Mary's Rugby League Club in supporting vulnerable children across New South Wales. Their efforts have enriched the lives of disadvantaged children, the club is an asset to our community, and the state.

ST MARY'S SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS YASMEEN QURBANI AND ZOE EL-CHAMI

Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney)—Two young students from St Mary's Senior High have been recognised for their persistence and commitment to their studies. Secondary students Yasmeen Qurbani and Zoe El-Chami were awarded scholarships at the Public Education Foundation Awards 2023. Yasmeen Qurbani received the Friends of Zainab Senior Secondary Scholarship, which has funded tutoring sessions for Yasmeen, providing her with the skills and resources needed to excel in her HSC studies. Zoe El-Chami was a recipient of the Unions NSW Jeff Shaw Memorial Scholarship, which will support Zoe in funding educational expenses. Both Yasmeen and Zoe are passionate and driven students that are inspiring members of our community. I congratulate both students on their achievements and wish them the best for their HSC studies.

POLICE SERGEANT SCOTT MCWHIRTER

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—It takes a special person to serve his community as a member of the NSW Police Force. Retiring Sergeant Scott McWhirter is one of these people and it gives me great pleasure to acknowledge his 27-year service in the job which ended on June 2. During his career with the NSW Police Force, the Bathurst-based officer has worked across the state, investigating everything from run-of-the-mill cases to murders. While being a criminal investigator was his first passion, Sergeant McWhirter changed roles and took up a position as a general duties supervisor working across the Central West. It was especially pleasing to note that Sergeant McWhirter excelled at mentoring the junior staff where his guidance and advice proved invaluable and that sort of dedication augers well for the future of the NSW Police Force. I wish Sergeant McWhirter the very best as he looks forward to spending more time with his kids, grandchildren, parents and especially being back to kick back and just relax knowing his job as a police officer was well done with the utmost integrity.

CHARLOTTE SHOEMARK AND POPPI STEPHEN

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—Two Bathurst youngsters have proved to be outstanding representatives for their home state of NSW. Charlotte Shoemark and Poppi Stephen were key players in the Blues' recent

successful campaign in winning the School Sports Australia Under 12s Girls Cricket Championships in Darwin. Poppi was awarded player's player of the tournament for NSW following their 52 run victory over South Australia in the final. She was also a standout performer in the one wicket semi-final victory over Queensland, recording the outstanding figures of 5 wickets for just 20 runs. Charlotte was named player of the final after her game-high score of 33 and two catches in the field. Congratulations to Charlotte and Poppi on their outstanding performances and special mention for being two of only three country girls named in the NSW outfit. Their local club City Colts should be very proud to have such talented youngsters in their ranks. I would like to wish them all the best for the future in their sport and who knows, one day they might even be wearing the green and gold of their country and go onto to be Aussie superstars.

JACK MILLER

Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)—Our future is in good hands if young people like Jack Miller is any indication. Jack was a finalist in the recent Trainee of the Year section of the recent Western NSW Training Awards for 2023. The prized NSW Department of Education acknowledgement was just reward for Jack's hard work and commitment as an employee of the Bathurst RSL Club. After four years working in the hospitality industry, Jack took the Certificate IV in Leadership and Management through his training provider Sureway Skills Training. Completing the Certificate helped Jack refine his personal traits which has clearly given him the skills to promote a healthy and efficient team environment at the Bathurst RSL. Along the way it also enabled Jack to encourage others to follow in the footsteps of his VET journey. It's great to see young people like Jack looking to better themselves and I know the team at the Bathurst RSL hold him in high regard noting that he has continuously exhibited incredible commitment when it came to his studies. Indeed, since completing his traineeship Jack has grown immensely in his workplace and continues to be an ambassador for VET studies at his workplace.

STEVEN FORTEY KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOUR LIST, OAM

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—Steven Fortey of Avoca Beach has been honoured for service to the community of Avoca Beach. "I am glad people think of me highly enough to recommend me and feel blessed to be part of such a great community". A teacher for more than 45 years prior to his retirement in 2020, Fortey spent the past 25 years of his career at Kincumber High School. It is a great school with a wonderful staff and of course Avoca Beach is in the draw area for the school. His work in the community is extensive. He was a coach with Avoca Beach Rugby Club for 10 years and is the current president of the Avoca Beach Community. He performed a range of volunteer roles with Avoca Beach Theatre Preservation Group. Steven edits a quarterly magazine, the Avoca Beach News and recently organised, with a team of volunteers, the ANZAC Dawn Ceremony, which our Community Association combines with the Surf Club to put on for the local community. We organise fundraisers for local athletes and with George Brand Real Estate offered respite accommodation for bushfire victims, as well donating to flood victims.

RFS CENTRAL COAST MEMBERS VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION DAY

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—It was an honour to attend the Volunteer Appreciation Day and District Medal Presentation for our NSW Rural Fire Service, Central Coast District at Mingara Recreation Club Sunday 21st May. The Central Coast Volunteer Appreciation Day acknowledged the hard work and dedication of one hundred and eighteen of the district's members, who were presented with medals and awards in honour of more than two thousand, four hundred and fifty years' service between them. The members not only gave their time to protect others during large scale emergencies like the devastating 2019-20 fire season but are also at the ready each day to respond to emergencies here on the Central Coast. The event was an opportunity to award Long Service and National Medals and/or clasps to recognise decades of service. The hard work and professionalism of all Central Coast RFS members does not go unnoticed and whilst they do not ask for praise, this is an opportunity to acknowledge their incredible contribution. It was also a chance to thank their families, employers of all RFS volunteers. I want to express my most heartfelt appreciation and thanks to all the medal recipients.

SURF LIFE SAVING AWARDS

Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)—I would like to recognise Surf Life Saving Central Coast awards night on Saturday 3rd June. It was a fun night full of recognition of the great people who keep our beaches safe, and I was delighted to hear that this year was the first time in ten years that there were no drownings on a patrolled beach. Mister Speaker, I wish to recognise the following people for their great service to our community: Volunteer of the Year, John Avis – North Avoca SLSC. The President's Award – Robbie Wait – Shelly Beach SLSC. Youth Athlete – Natalia Drobot – Avoca SLSC. Masters Athlete – Paul Lemmon – Terrigal SLSC. New Life Member – Phil Lytham – Shelly Beach SLSC. Support Operator of the Year – Steve Lee – Shelly Beach SLSC. Patrol Captain of the year – Rocky Wolters – Avoca SLSC. Coach of the Year – David Smith – Shelly SLSC. Team of the Year U19 Female Taplin Team – Avoca SLSC. Rescue of the Year – Wamberal SLSC. Facilitator of the Year – Paul Dowdell – Shelly Beach SLSC. Comm Ed Program of the Year – Community Defib

Program – MacMasters SLSC. Trainer of the Year – Lyn Drummond – Macmasters SLSC. Administrator of the Year – Fiona Duignan – Copacabana SLSC.

MERCHANT MARINES

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—War is not only fought by personnel in the armed forces. From the conflict in Sudan in 1885, before Australia was federated, to recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, merchant seaman have been vital to Australia's military efforts. During World War II, Newcastle and the Hunter region became the centre of Australia's industrial war effort. Vital cargo and essential minerals, steel, ship building material, coke and coal were all transported by ships from the port of Newcastle by the men of the Australian Merchant Navy. On 3 June, I attended the Newcastle Merchant Navy Memorial service. It was a beautiful and solemn service, remembering those merchant mariners who lost their lives in conflicts from 1885 up to 2008. My thanks to the Newcastle Merchant Navy Memorial, the local RSL sub-branches, the Western Lake Macquarie Concert Band, the Mission to Seafarers Newcastle, the Maritime Union of Australia Newcastle Branch, the cadets of TS Tobruk, and all those who made the service a success. 3,246 names are listed on the Commemorative Roll for the Merchant Navy at the Australian War Memorial, and it is important that we honour their contributions. Lest We Forget.

CHARLESTOWN AZZURRI

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—Charlestown Azzurri continued an absolutely stellar season at the Hunter Sports Centre on Saturday 10 June, where they squared off against Valentine FC. With a goal scored in the thirty-ninth minute of the match, Azzurri's leading scorer Rene Ferguson helped the team secure a 1-0 lead they carried through to full time. This gives Charlestown ten wins out of fourteen games and puts them back on top of the Newcastle Premier League ladder with thirty-one points. My congratulations to coach James Pascoe for leading his side through the season so far, to Rene for his goal, and for the team for playing such a great season. Their hard work and commitment is showing through on the pitch, and they're definitely doing our community proud. There's still a fair bit of the season to go and I'm sure the best is yet to come from Charlestown's boys in blue. Forza Azzurri!

CLEAN UP AUSTRALIA DAY

Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)—We are fortunate in Charlestown to have beautiful public spaces, beaches, parks and reserves. Our community is very invested in keeping them pristine. Part of that effort is the annual commitment of volunteer hours to take part in Clean Up Australia Day. Community groups turned out, donned their gloves and hoisted their plastic bags, in order to take part in the March event. Thank you to all the volunteers who turned out on the day to aide the clean up effort. A contingent turned out Dudley Public School on the first Sunday in March, while groups of volunteers were organised in Adamstown, by Bakers Delight at Warners Bay and Family Chiropractic Centre Charlestown. Thank you to the many schools and groups who participated by holding events in the lead-up, including Warners Bay and Charlestown Public Schools, and Charlestown Childcare and Early Learning Centre. A large haul of coffee cups, plastic bottles, chip packets, cigarette butts, discarded masks and other items were collected, sorted and appropriately disposed of. It is wonderful to see so many young people taking part in these events, which is keeping our public spaces spic and span for generations to come.

SAMUAL TERRY

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)—Samuel Terry from Soldiers Beach Surf Life Saving was acknowledged at the Surf Life Saving Central Coast Awards of Excellence 2023. The young man was awarded Rookie of the Year and Junior Lifesaver of the Year. Around 60 of the state's young lifesavers came together on the Northern Beaches in April for the Ingenia Holiday Parks Junior Lifesaver of the Year Program and the Youth Opportunity Makers Workshop which are two of Surf Life Saving NSW flagship youth development programs. I congratulate Terry for his accomplishments this season in representing his club and Surf Life Saving Central Coast.

PETER HURLEY

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)—Congratulations to Peter Hurley from Lake Haven who received the Volunteer of the Year 2023 at Volunteering Central Coast's. Over the past 15 years Peter has played a major role in the production and presenting of the

Annual Getting Hitched Wedding Expo which raises funds to support Maya Cottage, a refuge for young women on the Central Coast. Peter has been a member of the Relay for Life Committee for many years and active with the Cancer Council Central Coast. Over the past 12 years Peter has served on the Executive of the Elsie's Project to push for a Palliative Care Unit for the Community of the Central Coast. The first unit was opened in Gosford Hospital in 2021 and now Peter continues to assist the Committee towards the opening of a second Palliative Care Unit in Wyong Hospital in 2024. The two units provide treatment, care, and support for those living with a life limiting illness and improves the quality of life of patients and their families. The Central Coast is fortunate to have an incredible volunteer displaying dedication above and beyond in our community, assisting countless families and community members over the years.

BLU J'S

Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyong—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)—Mic and Tracey owners of Blu J's Café local business in Toukley generously donated new blankets to Toukley Neighbourhood Centre to help those in need across the community. The café owners have been offering their support to the community for many years. The popular café opened 7 days a week recently received 5 stars from Score on Doors the NSW hygiene and food safety scoring program which displays the results of regular inspections of food premises. The scoring lets the public know how well local eateries are complying with NSW hygiene and food safety requirements. Owners Mic, Tracey, and staff have worked hard to continuously run their business in the correct manner with a healthy delicious menu and tidy premises year after year receiving wonderful results for the third time in a row. Congratulations on an excellent outcome.

HARMONIOUS FESTIVAL - BUDDHA LIGHT, NAN TIEN TEMPLE

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—It was a joy and privilege to join the local Buddhist community of Willoughby on Saturday 27 May for the Harmonious Festival at the Chatswood concourse. This vibrant and colourful festival featured an official opening ceremony, a lion dance and other multicultural performances, a light offering ceremony, wishing tree and cultural art stalls. It was a beautiful showcasing of the rich culture and spirituality of our Chinese Australian community. With so many of our suburbs like Chatswood home to Australians from every corner of the world, our harmony, diversity and community is our great strength as a people. I would like to thank the Event host, BLIA, for all their time and dedication behind staging this event and the event organiser, the Nan Tien Buddhist Temple of Chatswood. I thank the leaders of the Temple for their warm hospitality.

NORTHBRIDGE PROGRESS ASSOCIATION - AUSTRALIA'S MORNING TEA IN BELLAMBI ST

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—I would like to commend my local Northbridge Progress Association for staging Australia's Biggest Morning Tea for the Cancer Council on 27 May 2023. I was delighted to join the morning tea on a beautiful Saturday morning at Northbridge's Bellambi Square to honour people impacted by cancer, and to raise much needed funds for cancer treatment, screening, early detection and research. I thank all the donors and attendees for their generosity towards a great cause. As the Cancer Council reminds us, every dollar raised makes an incredible difference to those impacted by cancer. The Cancer Council is Australia's leading cancer charity and every day it supports people impacted by cancer when they need it most, speaks out on behalf of the community on cancer issues, empowers people to reduce their cancer risk, and finds new ways to better detect and treat cancer. Having recently lost my dad to cancer, this cause means a lot to my family and so many others. I look forward to supporting Australia's Biggest Morning Tea and the work of the Cancer Council for many years to come.

WILLOUGHBY ROOS 110 YEAR CELEBRATION

Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)—Willoughby has a long and proud sporting history, and I would like to congratulate the Willoughby Roos on their 110th anniversary. The Willoughby District Junior Rugby League Football Club, the Willoughby Roos, are one of the oldest Rugby League Clubs on the North Shore. Open to both boys and girls, the Club fields teams from under 6s to under 14s to compete in the North Sydney Junior Rugby League Competition. On Saturday 27 May 2023, I had the joy to watch the Willoughby Roos play on their home turf of Willoughby oval. I was impressed with both the quality of football and sportsmanship on display. Thank you to Dave and Jodi Zimmer in particular for making me welcome. Priding itself on a high standard, the Club ensures that qualified coaches and referees control all games as the NRL's code of conduct and safe play are strictly enforced to maximise the safety and enjoyment for all players. I again congratulate the Willoughby Roos on reaching this milestone and wish the club a great 2023 season.

GUYRA EVENING CWA GOES GLOBAL

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the achievements of the Guyra Evening Branch of the Country Women's Association, who have made history by attending the 30th tri-annual Associated Country Women of World Conference in Kuala Lumpur recently. The conference was held over a five-day period and included debate, motions, reporting, networking and discussions on key areas of health, education, transport and communication issues facing women in regional areas. I congratulate Mary Hollingworth who represented the Guyra Evening Branch of the CWA, attending with 460 women from throughout the world, including 65 countries in all. Thanks must also go to the other members of the branch for their contribution, preparations and gifts shared with other countries. I commend the members of the Guyra Evening Branch of CWA, on taking this historical opportunity and for the foresight of the value of such an experience. This is a terrific example of the proactive approach women are taking to resolve universal issues in country and regional remote areas.

99TH ANNUAL MOREE PICNIC RACES

Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)—I recognise the achievements of the Moree Picnic Race Club Committee for successfully staging their 99th annual Picnic Race Meeting. I was in attendance and it was a highly successful day, with a crowd of more than 1,000 patrons trackside. I congratulate the President Alex Madden, Vice President Sandy Bailey, Secretary and Treasurer Lucy Cush, Committee Members, Stewards and Judges for pulling together a spectacular event. Thanks also to Trainers, Sponsors, Patrons, Bookmakers and Racegoers for your support throughout the day. I commend the Moree Picnic Race Club Committee on their hardwork and effort in preparation and hosting the first of the Golden Triangle race meetings. Such events are integral to small towns and communities and appreciated by all.

CHRIS FERGUSON

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the life of stalwart Chris Ferguson, not only for his contribution to Rugby League, but also the broader Dubbo community. Ferg was a proud member of the Dubbo CYMS club, who's successes on the field are matched by his outstanding dedication off it. Dubbo born & bred, Ferg loved footy in both primary & high school. From 1970 – 1975, Ferg played Juniors, Reserve and First Grade for CYMS and shared multiple victories and countless memories with his teammates. Following his retirement from the game, Ferg helped many CYMS teams over the years, the culmination of which resulted in the evolution of the CYMS Old Boys in 1998. Ferg has been a committee member ever since and a regular face at Thursday night meat raffles. Remembered as someone people felt 'so comfortable to be around' and 'who loved to have a laugh and enjoy a good time', Chris's presence in Dubbo will be sorely missed. It is my honour to recognise Chris Ferguson for his exceptional contributions to the game he loved and the City of Dubbo he called home.

CHASE FAMILY TRANGIE

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—I would like to recognise the wonderful actions of the from Chase family Trangie who as a family, have collectively shaved their heads to raise funds for the Western Cancer Centre Foundation. Steve, Amity, Harry, Fergus, Toby & Paddy will all be feeling the winter chill with their fresh new do's! The inspiration for the big shave came about in memory of a close family friend of the Chase's, who sadly passed away from bowel cancer before being able to use and benefit from the service. Not only did Steve & Amity want to do something charitable in their community, but they also wanted it to be a positive learning experience for their children rather than just shaving their heads for fun, the same activity could help benefit many members of their community. Mr Chase knows a lot of people will benefit from the centre as he believes you may one day need it yourself or know someone who will. So far, the Chase family have raised almost \$12,000 which is an incredible outcome, so I would like to pass on a huge congratulations for such a wonderful idea and generous spirit.

DUBBO MEN'S SHED

Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)—I would like to recognise the efforts of the members of the Dubbo Men's Shed and their contribution to the Taronga Western Plains Zoo Quoll breeding program. To date, the Dubbo Men's Shed have built close to 90 breeding boxes for endangered quolls at the zoo. The Men's shed and the Western Plains Zoo – both non-profit organisations- have come to a great arrangement that when more boxes are needed, the men's shed are happy to oblige and build them free of charge & if there's a bill for any supplies, the Zoo is happy to pick up the tab! Interestingly, the boxes are now shipped all over. Wherever the quolls are located, the boxes are shipped, with some reaching as far as South Australia and Western Australia for other Quoll breeding programs. It's important to recognise groups like the Dubbo Men's Shed. Great work and initiatives like this are filtered through the community, and members have a space that they can connect and engage with other

likeminded people, building a stronger sense of purpose and belonging. All incredibly vital elements of a thriving community!

ERINEARTH - 2023 ENVIRONMENTAL CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)—I am very pleased to acknowledge that on the 6th of June ErinEarth Wagga won the 2023 NSW Environmental Citizen of the Year. ErinEarth began 25 years ago with Wagga Wagga religious sisters Carmel Wallis and Kaye Bryan making a pitch to the Wagga Wagga Presentation Sisters. The idea was to create a space for the community to learn practical skills for a more sustainable lifestyle by making environmental contributions and to provide a gathering place for personal reflection. Located on Wiradjuri land the project saw two asphalt tennis courts and a dumping ground near a school transformed into a half hectare native garden. In June last year I was fortunate enough to have been invited to plant a tree, a Silver Leaf Mountain Gum, with the ErinEarth Team and I have seen firsthand the inspiring work they do. Some of their practices include workshops in native plant propagation for backyard gardens and education on the value of pollinating insects and the impact they have on food security. The education programs involve not only the local community but also an education network of early childhood primary and secondary schools.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR LYNETTE RILEY, AO

Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport)—I congratulate Associate Professor Lynette Riley of Kogarah, in my electorate, for being made an Officer of the Order of Australia (AO) for distinguished services to education, particularly through the development of Indigenous curriculum and student support, to reconciliation, and to the community. Associate Professor Riley's remarkable career includes more than 30 years of experience as a teacher and an educator in Aboriginal education and administration across primary schools, high schools, and TAFE colleges. Dr Riley was a founding member of the NSW Department of Education's Aboriginal Education unit and she is currently an Associate Professor at the University of Sydney, where she helped create and implement a ground-breaking Kinship module, an online course open to all who wish to learn about Aboriginal kinship and social structures. Associate Professor Riley, also known as Aunty Lyn, is of the Wiradjuri and Gamilaroi peoples from Dubbo and Moree. In addition to her educational work she also has a passion for creating Aboriginal art, and her work has been exhibited a number of times. I wish Associate Professor Riley AO all the best as she continues her distinguished and important work in education and reconciliation.

MISO OISHII RESTAURANT

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—Miso Oishii Restaurant located in Bankstown Sports Club, embodies a phenomenal venture into prime Japanese cuisine. From mouth-watering sushi to scrumptious inari, Miso Oishii provides a variety of small, savoury bites, which are sure to make your day better. And you can wash it all down with a tasty miso soup or one of the many sensuous and unique drinks on offer. As the Member for Bankstown, I am incredibly fortunate to represent an electorate that constitutes a melting pot of different cultures and consequentially provides a vast selection of food experiences from around the world. Small businesses like Miso Oishii are not only the lifeblood of our electorate's cultural identity but a very integral part of our local economy. Chef Jason Chen has done an amazing job in establishing this fine eatery. His passion for Asian cuisine and his incredible food experience are what make Miso Oishii such a remarkable restaurant. Oishii means 'Yummy' in Japanese, but to Chef Chen it is more than that. He is dedicated to making sure everyone in his own words "leaves the restaurant feeling content and fulfilled". I commend him for his admirable passion and amazing work.

THE AUSTRALIAN LEBANESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—The Australian Lebanese Chamber of Commerce (ALCC) was founded in 1985 by a small body of business people to support trade relationships between Australia and Lebanon. The ALCC organised the first-ever Australia Product Exhibition in Beirut during a ministerial visit by the then Premier of NSW Bob Carr in 1996. The ALCC's main goals are to support local businesses to help expand their operations nationally and internationally. The ALCC supports local businesses through networking which helps to expose their services to the wider community. By bringing businesses and communities together, the ALCC has helped local jobs growth, aided and promoted bilateral trade opportunities between Australia, Lebanon, and Middle East, exchanged cultural and business practices, and encourage education and training for its members. The ALCC regularly hosts business seminars and networking events and hosts Business Awards Dinner recognising the achievements of businesses that have excelled in their industry, producing publications that address business issues, and updates on international trade relations. I am proud to support this group and

what it stands for, and happy to acknowledge past guest speakers including Primer Minister Anthony Albanese, former NSW Premiers, and past and present Ministers.

LASALLE CATHOLIC COLLEGE BANKSTOWN - ALL ABILITY TEAM

Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)—Sport is a critical part of development for students across the country and sport in schools is very important. It teaches comradery, leadership, and teamwork all whilst keeping students fit and healthy. I am proud to congratulate LaSalle Catholic College Bankstown's All Ability soccer teams for reaching the grand finals at the Sydney Catholic Schools Autumn Championships at the end of Term 1. Team LaSalle 1 played against Aquinas Menai while team LaSalle 2 played against Marist Catholic College Penshurst. I am glad to say that LaSalle College brought two trophies home. Team LaSalle 2 won the grand final and it was only their second year of competing in the All Ability sports competition. LaSalle Catholic College Bankstown is well-known in our community for producing outstanding students. Alumni of LaSalle College include former ABC weatherman, Mike Bailey, former NRL player Jamal Idris, and former Prime Minister Paul Keating. Our community is very proud of their amazing sportsmanship, and we thank them for representing and showcasing our local talent. I want to extend my congratulations to Principal Michael Egan, the staff, and the community at LaSalle Catholic College for their victory.

BALMAIN PUBLIC SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTAL WARRIORS

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today I bring to the attention of the House the Balmain Public School Environmental Warriors. This wonderful sustainability group from Balmain Public School invited me to visit this week to hear more about their fantastic environmental initiatives. I was really impressed by their beautiful, recently refurbished Ms Pauline's Garden, their new veggie patches and their delicious school-grown tomatoes. The Garden is a beautiful tribute to the legacy of Dr Pauline Jensen, a former teacher at Balmain PS, who for over 10 years led the school recycling and composting programs which the Environmental Warriors continue today. Well done to all the Environmental Warriors and a special thanks to Arwen Jenkins for inviting me to her school. Thank you to Environmental Warriors teacher Felicity Bowman, Principal Maria Lambos, as well as P&C President Lauren LaChapelle and P&C Sustainability lead Trista Rose for making the visit so enjoyable.

BALMAIN INSTITUTE MO AND MARGARET

Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)—Today I bring to the attention of the House Mo McCarthy and Margaret Vickers, who serve respectively as President and Treasurer of the Balmain Institute and will be finishing their terms in July this year. The Balmain Institute is a treasured part of our community, hosting a series of public discussions on significant local and international issues. Over their many years of service as part of the Balmain Institute Executive Committee, Mo and Margaret have helped shape insightful exchanges on everything from the rights of asylum seekers and women to environmental protection and good governance. These talks at the Balmain Town Hall, and, during COVID, over Zoom, have created a valuable space for the exchange of innovative ways to make our world a better place. Thank you, Margaret and Mo, for your contributions to the Institute and best of luck in your future endeavours.

FOODBANK VISIT 2023

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—I recently had the opportunity to visit the Foodbank Facility at Glendenning, where my team and I volunteered for the day to support them in their fight against hunger. This is something my staff and I do every six months, and I always enjoy seeing what it takes to run such a large-scale operation. Established in 1992, Foodbank work hard to combat food inequality throughout Australia. They provide over 86.7 million meals to those who need it each year. We were fortunate enough to be able to visit during Reconciliation Week, where we got to take part in a traditional smoking ceremony. With 30 percent of Indigenous households facing income poverty, organisations like Foodbank are so integral in supporting our First Nations People. I'd like to thank John Robertson, the CEO of Foodbank New South Wales and ACT, for all the hard work he does by providing support to those who need it most. I would also like to thank the fantastic team of volunteers for all the phenomenal work they do at Foodbank. I am very much looking forward to visiting again in six months' time to volunteer again.

GRC PEAKHURST BIG BAND BLAST

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—I rise to congratulate members of the Georges River College Peakhurst Stage Band, who participated in a State tour to 'Big Band Blast', held recently in Bathurst. Big Band Blast is a conference style festival, where bands across Australia are invited to perform a 20-minute set, held over four stages across one weekend. The Georges River College Stage Band also had the opportunity to participate in workshops, receiving feedback from professionals in the industry. There were six exceptionally talented students from GRC Peakhurst who took part in the event. Not only did 'Big Band Blast' give students the opportunity to

receive feedback, but also perform in front of a live audience. Playing musical instruments in a band helps to form lifelong bonds, whilst also developing important skills such as perseverance and discipline. I am so impressed with all that the Georges River College Stage Band has achieved over the last few years. I would like to congratulate Claudia D, Cody J, James B, Jamie W, Sami M and Vinnie W on this fantastic achievement. Keep practising hard and putting your talents to good use!

ITALIAN REPUBLIC DAY

Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)—I recently was given the opportunity to attend the Italian Republic Day event, hosted by Club Marconi. What a wonderful opportunity to celebrate with members of the Italian Community right here in our own backyard. Italian Republic Day, observed annually on June 2nd, honours the significant 1946 Italian referendum that shaped Italy's post-World War II government structure. Italian Republic Day is now celebrated by members of the Italian Community across the globe, including right here in New South Wales. I'd like to thank and acknowledge Morris Licata, as well as the Board of Directors for the work they do for the Italian Community in New South Wales. Your work serves as a reminder of our State's shared values of inclusivity and cultural diversity, which unites us all. As Shadow Minister for Multiculturalism, I am so proud to work alongside organisations like Club Marconi, who preserve the cherished values of the Italian community, ensuring their preservation for future generations in New South Wales. I look forward to working closely with Club Marconi over the next few years, as well as next year's Italian Republic Day celebrations.

FRESHWATER SLSC

Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly)—I rise today to recognise that on Sunday the 25th of June 2023 Freshwater SLSC will host its 114th AGM. Since 1908 Freshwater Surf Club has been an integral part of the community, initially made up of locals who camped along the beach. Now the club is home to more than 1,300 hardworking members who selflessly give up their weekends to keep people safe as well as to run the fantastic nippers program with over 400 nippers. The club has also played a crucial role in the advancement of surfing in Australia. In 1914 Duke Kahanamoku visited the club to give a surfing display, this kicked off surfing in Australia. The "Duke" never forgot his visit to Freshwater and in 1952 he donated one of his famous wooden boards to the club, which is proudly displayed to this day. Mr Speaker, I congratulate and thank Freshwater Surf Club for all they do for our community and wish them the best for Sunday and the year ahead.

PARRAMATTA CRICKETERS TO REPRESENT NSW MEN'S TEAMS

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—I would like to congratulate the players from the Parramatta District Cricket Club on their selection to NSW Men's cricket teams. It is truly wonderful to see the diversity of our community reflected amongst these cricketers from a multitude of cultural backgrounds and ages. Ryan Hackney has been selected to play for NSW in the Sheffield Shield. Metro U17's – Advith Boreddy; Naden Cooray; Nilatha Kulendran; Nitesh Samuel; Blake Noorbergen; and in the NSW Metro U19s - Dhanvi Vemulapalli; Joel Wright; and Ryan Gupta. Congratulations to all who have been selected. We are very proud to have so many talented cricketers representing Parramatta in both men's and women's state teams.

"APPLES" - WESTWORD INITIATIVE 'WRITING YOUR VOICE'

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—'stinging and unhealthy I say/ change is hard. / it is a process. /but it is unavoidable. Those are the words of Mary Joseph, one of 16 poets from Western Sydney featured in 'Apples: an unapologetic anthology from the core'. On the 13th of June, I was invited to launch this anthology – the culmination of the 'writing your voice' program run by WestWords in partnership with Cumberland Women's Health Centre and proudly supported by Parramatta Leagues Club through the Parramatta Club Grants scheme. 'Writing your voice' was a 9-week poetry initiative that provided an opportunity for women from across Western Sydney to learn new ways to express their emotions, reclaim their stories and find their 'voice' through the medium of writing. Hybrid poetry masterclasses and therapeutic writing discussions with Ali Whitelock provided these women with an opportunity they would otherwise never have been given. I urge others to seek out "apples" and support the incredible creative talent that is blossoming across Western Sydney.

ROSENEATH COTTAGE

Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)—Built in 1837, Roseneath Cottage on O'Connell Street, Parramatta has served as a home, and schools including between 1887 -1889 when it housed the first iteration of what was later to become the Tara Anglican School for Girls. In 2017, Our Lady of Mercy College purchased the NSW State Heritage listed property and has undertaken a comprehensive restoration and conservation process of the site. In May I was pleased to attend the official reopening of Roseneath cottage alongside former residents, Allison and Bruce Mear. OLMC now serves as a home to the school's Department of Finance and Marketing. The cottage provides a school and office environment that is tied intrinsically to the unique history of Parramatta. In restoring the cottage, OLMC has made a wonderful contribution to preserving our community's longstanding heritage and

culture. Thanks to OLMC Principal Lucie Farrugia and those who have come together to bring this important piece of Parramatta's story back to life.

LYNDALL MCNALLY, OAM

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—I would like to congratulate Lyndall McNally OAM, a Riverview local, on being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia, for services to the community, in this year's King's Birthday Honours. As a founding member of the Lane Cove Youth Orchestra and President since 1998, Lyndall has dedicated countless hours in service of young musicians for decades. Lyndall has been recognised for her work with a multitude of awards including Lane Cove Citizen of the Year and it is long overdue that an OAM should be included amongst these.

DR KENNETH SINCLAIR, OAM

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—I would like to congratulate Dr Kenneth Sinclair OAM, a Greenwich local, for being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia, for services to Education, in this year's King's Birthday Honours. Dr Sinclair has devoted his career to leading educational institutions and improving access to education. Dr Sinclair is currently the Patron of the New South Wales Institute for Educational Research which funds and promotes the latest research and best practice to equip our educators with the best skills possible. Recognition for his work has been long overdue and I once again congratulate Dr Sinclair.

DR RICHARD JONES, AM

Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)—I would like to congratulate Dr Richard Jones AM, a Hunters Hill local, on becoming a Member of the Order of Australia, for services to medicine, in this year's King's Birthday Honours. As the Clinical Director of the Spinal Injury Unit at Prince of Wales Hospital, Dr Jones has dedicated his professional life to the care of rehabilitation of spinal injury patients, an incredibly noble cause and this recognition is long overdue, I once again congratulate Dr Jones on his recognition.

LALOR PARK HOT BREAD

Mr MARK TAYLOR (Winston Hills)—I use this time to acknowledge and congratulate a local small business located in the heart of Lalor Park for their recent achievement in the Blacktown Local Business Awards. The Blacktown Local Business Awards seek to recognise small and locally owned businesses who contribute significantly to their communities. These businesses go above and beyond to provide excellent services to their community each day. This year the Lalor Park Hot Bread Shop was recognised for their ongoing excellence in providing good such as the classic Australian scones, delicious pies and pastries, freshly baked bread, and specialty crispy pork rolls. Lalor Park Hot Bread has operated in the electorate of Winston Hills for a number of years and is a well-known stop for locals in our community. I extend my congratulations to Lalor Park Hot Bread and their entire team for their award. I look forward to visiting soon.

MISS NELLIE'S CAFE

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I am excited to announce to the House our renowned local business Miss Nellie's Café in Kendall has re-opened after the business was severely impacted by floodwaters in March 2021. A quiet reopening of Kendall's much loved Miss Nellie's Café took place on Monday 29th May with the devastation fresh in our minds following a one-in-one-hundred year flooding event which devastated parts of the Mid North Coast. It took literally 800 days of debris removal, repairs and rebuild to re-open the doors of the iconic 100-year-old, cottage style Café which boasts a delectable selection of homemade cooking and local products. Since the floods, owner Jenelle Nosworthy, wasted no time establishing an onsite food van, thanks to the incredible support provided by the Kendall Tennis Club who made available their kitchen facilities for baking and cooking. A Gofundme campaign also assisted financing the repairs and rebuild, with \$34,444 raised from 318 donations thanks to the generosity and kindness of the community. An amazing accomplishment by owner Jenelle Nosworthy and her team of family and friends rising from adversity and literally bring back to life Miss Nellie's Café to the delight of the Kendall community and beyond. Congratulations Jenelle!

KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS - PROFESSOR GAIL WHITEFORD, AM

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—I rise to recognise Gail Whiteford who has been appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in recognition of her significant service to tertiary education and community health which began with her working as an occupational therapist. Academically, Professor Whiteford swept through the ranks of university commencing as a junior academic to becoming a Professor, Head of School, Head of Campus and finally, Pro Vice Chancellor of Social Inclusion at Macquarie University. An impressive and remarkable journey indeed! Her world renowned research has focused on how to support people living with a disability, or chronic condition, to be as well as possible and be connected in their community with the skills and resources they need. Professor Whiteford has been a member of the Mid North Coast Local Health

District Governing Board, with her last official appointment being as Conjoint Chair Allied Health and Community Wellbeing - a newly established, collaborative role which she enjoyed immensely. Professor Whiteford was also awarded the title of Emeritus Professor with Charles Sturt University in 2022 and is a fitting acknowledgement of an outstanding career in health.

CDT LEADING SEAMAN BAYDEN CONNERTY

Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)—Today I acknowledge Year 11 student Bayden Connerty from Newman Senior Technical College in Port Macquarie for enrolling in the Fleet Engagement 2023 Camp as part of a pathway into the Royal Australian Navy. Fleet Engagement 2023 is coordinated by the Australian Navy Cadets to explore what life is like as a navy officer. Bayden joined other cadets from across Australia staying at Cockatoo Island, a former shipbuilding and repair facility for naval vessels. At Cockatoo Island the Cadets toured the HMAS Waterhen, HMAS Brisbane and Sydney and met navy personnel to learn navy operations and experience training routines for those aboard Australia's Royal Naval fleet. During the camp, Bayden met with former Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove who gave time to personally speak to each cadet. From there, the cadets sailed aboard the HMAS Adelaide from Garden Island to Melbourne and enjoyed an evening with the Defence Force. Fleet Engagement 2023 taught the cadets about the logistical compartments and operations of naval ships including weapon systems, clearance diving and mine warfare. Bayden will join the Young Endeavour on 9th October 2023 and sail alongside the Australian Royal Navy Officers. Congratulations Bayden!

LANDCARE AWARDS

Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains)—Last week I had the pleasure of presenting to many deserving recipients at the 2023 Greater Sydney Regional Landcare Awards. These awards recognise communities and individuals who have shown an outstanding commitment and passion for upholding the natural environment and Landcare movement. I would like to commend those in my electorate of the Blue Mountains who received much-deserved recognition. Galong Creek Bushcare Group, supported by the National Parks and Wildlife Service have, for over 15 years, been actively involved in raising funds and preserving the land around this waterway in the Megalong Valley. Their longstanding advocacy and protection of the Galong Creek is a truly worthy achievement. Farm it Forward is an innovative urban farming social enterprise, concerned with promoting environmental resilience, wellbeing and positive mental health outcomes. Manu Prigioni and the Farm it Forward team continue to make outstanding contributions to our Blue Mountains community. The winner of the Young Landcare Leader Award, Jude Bennett is a Year 10 student at Katoomba High School. His commitment to advocating for sustainable food practices and environmental resilience, has inspired many others to take similar action. Thanks to you all, for your dedication, passion, innovation and care for our environment.

ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE (RFDS)

Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)—On May 17th, 2023, the Royal Flying Doctor Service celebrated its 95th Anniversary and Flying Doctor Day. The first flight took place on May 17th, 1928, with pilot Arthur Affleck, and Doctor Kenyon St Vincent Welch, who took off in a single engine De Havilland 50 biplane named Victory. In its first year of operation, the RFDS, then known as the Aerial Medical Service, completed 50 flights to 26 destinations and treated 225 patients. Today the RFDS provides emergency retrieval and primary health care services to more than 380,000 Australians each year. The team consists of pilots, doctors, flight nurses, engineers, and support crew who provide 24-hour emergency retrieval service and primary health care to remote communities. RFDS continues to be a vital service, providing emergency health care services to remote parts of the country. I congratulate Royal Flying Doctor Service on reaching its 95th anniversary and I thank the pilots, and medical staff for their tireless efforts to provide such an essential service across a vast area. I also would like to thank the Australian community for the continued funds raised to keep Royal Flying Doctor Service flying.

DR IAN CAMERON, OAM

Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter)—Congratulations to Dr Ian Cameron, who received the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to medical administration, and to rural and Indigenous health in the 2023 King's Birthday Honours. Dr Cameron spent his early career as a GP in Bourke, NSW, a rural area where doctors are few and far between. In 1996, he moved to Newcastle to become chief executive for the NSW Rural Doctors Network, a role in which he spent the next 20 years providing healthcare to isolated communities. Dr Cameron has also been an active advocate on various community committees for rural and Indigenous health and was a conjoint lecturer in the College of Health, Medicine and Wellbeing at The University of Newcastle. Dr Cameron's work has improved the lives of many Australians living in Newcastle and beyond. Congratulations on the recognition.

ROSS BINGHAM, OAM

Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter)—Congratulations to Ross Bingham, who was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the community through charitable organisations in the 2023 King's Birthday Honours. Mr Bingham has served the community as the CEO of Ronald McDonald House Charities Northern NSW, providing care and support to families with children diagnosed with serious illness. Mr Bingham is a born and bred Novocastrian who began his Ronald McDonald House career as a teenager working at McDonald's. He now oversees two Ronald McDonald Houses in Newcastle and Tamworth, Family Rooms at John Hunter Hospital and Gosford Hospital, and a Family Retreat in Forster. Congratulations Mr Bingham, this recognition is well-deserved.

SANDY POINT RFS AGM

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—This month I had the privilege to visit the Sandy Point Rural Fire Brigade for their 2023 Annual General Meeting. I had the honour to speak and get to know the members of the Brigade. Today I want to acknowledge the hard work and bravery of the Brigade. The Captain of the Brigade-Philip Ceiley – says it best when he says that they "sacrifice a lot of our spare time in the service of our community for no monetary gain". The efforts that these brave men and women portray in the face of danger saves the lives of those we hold near and dear. I acknowledge the appointment of the new executive team of the Brigade. Congratulations to all those who were elected into their positions – Nigel Maddock as president; William Cadden as vice-president; Jade Vujevic as Treasurer; David Snowsill as assistant treasurer; Robert Rex as Secretary; Robert Lowe as assistant secretary; Philip Ceiley as Captain and Brett Bartholomew as senior deputy captain. I also congratulate those who received awards for their excellency. Congratulations to Robert Lowe with the executive award; Brett Bartholomew with the captain's award; and Davor Tomic with the senior deputy captain's award.

SISTERS OF SAINT JOSEPH RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I recognise the Sisters of Saint Joseph at Mary Mackillop Place in North Sydney who recently launched their Reconciliation Action Plan, that coincided with the Feast of the Sacred Heart. Although the Sisters of Saint Joseph have a long history with Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities, the Congregation is now seeking to formalise its ongoing commitment to reconciliation. The Sisters of Saint Joseph engaged celebrated artist Gumbaynggirr/Dhungatti man Richard Campbell to create a painting in recognition of the Congregation's Reconciliation Action Plan. It is an incredibly detailed piece of artwork, that follows the history of our indigenous people, depicted as part of the rainbow serpent as it makes its way across the land. I would like to recognise Sister Monica Cavanagh, the Congregational Leader, for the warm welcome to Mary Mackillop Place, and the collaboration that the Sisters of Saint Joseph have led with indigenous people to deepen their commitment to walk alongside First Nation people as they seek voice, treaty, and truth-telling. I want to congratulate the Sisters of Saint Joseph for their initiative in seeking further reconciliation with our indigenous peoples.

81ST ANNIVERSARY DEFENCE OF SYDNEY SERVICE

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—The early hours of June 1 1942 are often referred to as 'the night war came to Sydney' when three midjet Japanese submarines entered Sydney Harbour to launch an attack on the US navy cruiser Chicago stationed at Garden Island. Instead one of the Japanese torpedoes exploded against a sea wall next to HMAS Kuttabul, ultimately sinking the ship and claiming twenty-one lives. Each year we gather together at the Defence of Sydney Monument at North Head to pay our respects to the lives lost, and the efforts of the Royal Australian and US Navy's in defending Sydney Harbour from the Japanese submarines. I would like to recognise James Griffin MP and the Australia Remembers Northern Beaches & North Shore Committee for all their efforts in organising this year's 81st anniversary service. I would also like to recognise students from my locals schools who attended, Mosman High and Mosman Preparatory School. In particular Rafferty from Mosman High who delivered the fantastic Paul Fenn Oration which was truly amazing and incredibly performed. Let's not forget.

MARGARET BICKLE, AO

Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)—I would like to acknowledge Margaret Bickle AO who is considered by many to be a role model for women in pharmacy. Margaret first joined the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia more than seventy years ago and now in her early nineties remains a registered, non-practicing pharmacist because she believes women should have the opportunity to fulfil roles in whichever area of pharmacy they choose to pursue. In 1947 there were not a lot of opportunities for women and while Margaret was considering going to university to study teaching, was ultimately convinced by a friend to become a pharmacist. When Margaret graduated in 1950 there was an influx of men returning from the war, with more than three hundred men

in the class and only thirty women. Margaret started her own pharmacy which she ran successfully for a number of years. Margaret has also been recognised with a number of awards from pharmaceutical organisations and societies, as well as being the first woman elected to the Pharmacy Guild Committee of New South Wales, and representing Australia at the Federation Internationale Pharmaceutique. Congratulations Margaret for your outstanding dedication to pharmacy, and for your strong advocacy for women.

CULTURAL BRIDGES CONCERT

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—On the 13th June, I attended the Cultural Bridges Concert hosted by the Ethnic Community Services Co-operative at Randwick Town Hall. This annual event for culturally and linguistically diverse older people welcomed over 200 seniors from diverse multicultural backgrounds, showcasing and sharing their cultural heritage and artistic endeavours, including drawings, paintings, and arts and craft created by participants. This event celebrated aged care program participants and highlight the importance of fun, wellness and self-care. The day included performances and dancing, sharing cultural heritage, a multicultural feast, and information and resources on community supports. It was amazing to see so many people come together, making new friends and meeting old ones, and to see everyone so enthusiastic about sharing their culture. I want to thank the Ethnic Community Services Co-operative for organising a wonderful event. It was a pleasure to attend and I am sincerely thankful for the invitation. I would like to acknowledge Dina Petrakis, Chief Executive Officer of Ethnic Community Services Co-operative, the Board and the many passionate and hardworking staff. I recognise their service and commitment to our community.

DISTRICT GOVERNOR DR JANICE HALL

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I wish to recognise District Governor Dr. Janice Hall and acknowledge her work and service as the leader of the Rotary District which includes my electorate of Drummoyne. Janice has a longstanding membership in her local Rotary club, and extensive experiencing in education, and service. She has spent many of her years working to enact Rotary's vision. I recently met Janice at a celebration to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Rotary Club of Five Dock. She told me that she attends and supports dozens of Rotary events a week. I would like to recognise Janice for her time and thank her for her service to the community and to Rotary. Her service is to be commended.

WOTSO NORTH STRATHFIELD

Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)—I wish to acknowledge an important business on their achievement, winning the Inner West Local Business Awards in the 'Most Inclusive Employer' category. WOTSO North Strathfield is a great coworking space. It is a practical solution for locals, and brings like-minded people together to network and create a modern working environment. Spaces like WOTSO North Strathfield support local start-ups and are a hub for innovation and creativity. It offers flexibility for new and growing businesses and allows them to foster a professional and welcoming workplace close to home. I want to congratulate WOTSO North Strathfield and the staff involved on continued success, and I want to thank them for their support of locals in offering them a great facility to work and grow their businesses. Congratulations on your well deserved Award!

ROTARY CLUB OF HOLROYD - 65TH BIRTHDAY PARTY

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—I wish to recognise the 65th birthday party organised by the Rotary Club of Holroyd. This joyous occasion was held on 26 April at Club Merrylands in my electorate. The anniversary marks a significant milestone for the club in their relentless pursuit of service and community engagement. The Rotary Club of Holroyd has been a beacon of goodwill, making a positive impact on the lives of individuals and communities in our area. Their commitment to service above self is commendable, and their 65th birthday party is a testament to the enduring spirit of fellowship and dedication within the club. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Rotary Club of Holroyd on reaching this remarkable milestone. Their tireless efforts in supporting local causes, initiating community projects, and fostering goodwill exemplify the true essence of Rotary. To all the members, volunteers, and supporters of the Rotary Club of Holroyd, I express my deepest appreciation. I would like to thank the Rotary Club of Holroyd for their outstanding contributions to our community over the past 65 years. Your dedication to service and the ideals of Rotary is truly commendable.

HOUSE OF WELCOME - COMMUNITY LUNCH

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—I acknowledge and appreciate the House of Welcome for hosting their community lunch at their facility in Granville in my electorate. This gathering, held on 26 April, exemplifies the spirit of inclusivity, compassion, and unity that defines our society. The House of Welcome's community lunch is a testament to their commitment to providing a safe and welcoming space for individuals from diverse backgrounds. It serves as a platform for fostering connections, breaking barriers, and promoting understanding among community members. I extend my sincere gratitude to the House of Welcome for their dedication in organising this event, where people from various walks of life can come together, share a meal, and build

meaningful relationships. To all the organisers, volunteers, and participants of the community lunch, I express my heartfelt appreciation. Your presence and contributions create an atmosphere of warmth and inclusivity that strengthens the bonds within our community. In conclusion, I would like to thank the House of Welcome for their unwavering commitment to creating a sense of belonging and promoting social cohesion through initiatives like the community lunch. Your efforts inspire us all.

CONSORTIUM OF TAMIL ASSOCIATIONS NSW - ANZAC DAY

Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)—I commend the Consortium of Tamil Associations NSW for organising their ANZAC Day event at Ringrose Park, Wentworthville. Held on 25 April, they commemorated ANZAC Day and paid tribute to the brave servicemen and women who have made tremendous sacrifices for our nation. The ANZAC Day commemoration was a solemn and respectful occasion where we gathered to honour the memory of our fallen heroes. It was a reminder of the enduring values of courage, sacrifice, and unity that lie at the heart of the ANZAC spirit. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the organisers for their dedication in organising this event, ensuring that the legacy of the ANZACs is remembered and cherished within the Tamil community and beyond. To all the participants, volunteers, and attendees of the ANZAC Day event, I express my deepest appreciation. Your presence and involvement demonstrate our collective commitment to preserving the memory of our ANZACs and upholding the values they fought for. In conclusion, I thank the Consortium of Tamil Associations NSW for their efforts in organising the ANZAC Day event and for their unwavering support in honouring our heroes. Lest we forget.

AUSTRALIAN ARAB CULTURAL FORUM FAMILY DAY

Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy)—Earlier this month I attended the Australian-Arab Cultural Forum Family Day at the Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre. The event was supported by Multicultural NSW, Western Sydney Migrant Resource Centre, Liverpool City Council, and Core Community Services. I would like to congratulate MC May Jouni and Chair of the Australian-Arab Cultural Forum Professor Amira Issa for organising such a wonderful day, which included: A Dabke performance by a Cedar Folkloric Group; Reading of Arabic poetry; A compound by ode instrument performed by musician Raad Altayeb; A cuneiform alphabet clay writing workshop with visual artist Hedar Abadi; An Abaya Show; and, Traditional music performed by Bashaar Hanna and his band. I would like to also acknowledge speeches delivered by Professor Amira Issa, Mayor of Liverpool Ned Mannoun, CEO of Multicultural NSW Joseph La Posta, and Executive Producer of SBS Arabic 24 News Sylvia Mezher. I would like to thank all involved in the proceedings, as it was a pleasure to celebrate, acknowledge and cherish the contributions of the Arabic community in shaping the vibrant mosaic of our multicultural community.
