



**New South Wales**

# **Legislative Assembly**

## **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)**

**Fifty-Eighth Parliament  
First Session**

**Thursday 22 June 2023**

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Thursday 22 June 2023**

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

**The Speaker** read the prayer and acknowledgement of country.

## *Business of the House*

### **SUSPENSION OF STANDING AND SESSIONAL ORDERS: ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended this day to permit the consideration of Government business during the times allocated in the routine of business for general business orders of the day for bills.

**Motion agreed to.**

*[Notices of motions given.]*

## *Bills*

### **MINERALS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (OFFSHORE DRILLING AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE PROHIBITION) BILL 2023**

#### **First Reading**

**Bill introduced on motion by Mr Rory Amon, read a first time and printed.**

#### **Second Reading Speech**

**Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater) (10:19):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

It is my great privilege to introduce the Minerals Legislation Amendment (Offshore Drilling and Associated Infrastructure Prohibition) Bill 2023 on behalf of the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Coalition. This bill fulfils an election commitment the Coalition made to the people of New South Wales to protect our coastline and marine environment. In government, the Liberals and The Nationals opposed drilling for offshore gas due to the grave concerns we held and continue to hold about the possible impact of drilling activities on the environment. The Coalition made a commitment that, if re-elected, it would legislate to ban the drilling for offshore gas in New South Wales waters once and for all. It is evident that this Government has no intention of introducing such legislation and the Opposition is not willing to wait any longer.

We are now acting on that commitment to protect our coastline from harmful mining and exploration activities and to provide certainty to our coastal communities. If enacted, the bill will, firstly, amend the Petroleum (Offshore) Act 1982 to prohibit the granting of permits and licences for the purpose of petroleum exploration or recovery in New South Wales coastal waters—mining, as a layperson would say. Under the Act, "petroleum" refers to naturally occurring hydrocarbons, whether in gaseous, liquid or solid state. Secondly, the bill will amend the Offshore Minerals Act 1999 to prohibit the granting of permits and licences for the purpose of minerals exploration or mining activities in New South Wales coastal waters. That Act defines minerals as "a naturally occurring substance or a naturally occurring mixture of substances", including but not limited to "sand, gravel, clay, limestone, rock, evaporites, shale, oil-shale or coal". Thirdly, the bill will amend the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 to prevent development being approved or authorised in New South Wales or its coastal waters to facilitate the exploration or mining for petroleum or minerals off the coast of New South Wales.

Importantly, the bill ensures that the ability to grant permits and licences for the exploration and mining of sand for beach nourishment will be retained. This will ensure that beaches like Stockton Beach can be nourished and other vulnerable coastal areas can be protected from the challenge of coastal erosion. In practice, the bill will ensure that, firstly, no licences will be granted for petroleum or mineral mining in New South Wales State waters. Secondly, if the Commonwealth approves petroleum or mineral exploration in the offshore area beyond New South Wales State waters—that is, beyond three nautical miles from the New South Wales coast—but within the offshore area of the State, no approval can be granted to development in New South Wales or its coastal waters for the purposes of the maintenance, repair, provision or refuelling of vessel, aircraft or equipment related to the exploration or recovery of petroleum or minerals from the seabed; the handling, refining or processing of

petroleum or minerals from the seabed; or the unloading or transportation, including by pipeline, of that petroleum or minerals.

I turn to the detail of the bill. Schedule 1 to the bill amends the Petroleum (Offshore) Act 1982 to include new section 103A, which would prohibit the Minister from granting permits for exploration for petroleum in New South Wales coastal waters; licences for mining of petroleum in New South Wales coastal waters; and licences for the construction of pipelines within New South Wales coastal waters, where those pipelines are to be used in connection with the mining of petroleum in general. Schedule 2 to the bill amends the Offshore Minerals Act 1999 to include new section 444A, which would prohibit the Minister from granting further mineral licences under that Act, except for licences in relation to the recovery of sand for the purpose of beach nourishment.

Schedule 3 to the bill prohibits relevant development in the coastal waters of New South Wales. "Relevant development" is defined in new section 10.17 (2) as the following, whether occurring in New South Wales coastal waters or the offshore area of the State: any form of "sea bed petroleum exploration or recovery", and any form of "sea bed mineral exploration or recovery, except for the recovery of sand for the purpose of beach nourishment". This definition captures, and accordingly prohibits, any of the above activities occurring in New South Wales coastal waters—that is, up to three nautical miles from the coast. This definition also captures the above activities occurring in the offshore area of the State. The bill defines "offshore area of the State" in accordance with the Commonwealth's Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006. That Act defines the New South Wales offshore area to include:

... so much of the scheduled area for that State as comprises waters of the sea that are:

- (a) beyond the outer limits of the coastal waters of that State; and
- (b) within the outer limits of the continental shelf.

I encourage all members interested in geography to consult schedule 1 to that Act for the specifics of what New South Wales' scheduled area includes—it is quite the page-turner. The operation of this definition is crucial, as new section 10.17 (1) (b) prohibits any development in the State for the purposes of maintenance, repair, provisioning or fuelling of vessels, aircraft or equipment used for the above activities; handling, refining or processing petroleum or minerals obtained from the above activities; or unloading or transportation, including by pipeline, of petroleum or minerals obtained from those activities. This applies whether those activities are in the coastal waters of New South Wales, being within three nautical miles of our coast, or the offshore area of the State, which I have defined.

In other words, while New South Wales' jurisdiction only extends to three nautical miles offshore, this bill would prohibit any development within the State of New South Wales itself, or the waters within its jurisdiction, to support mineral or petroleum exploration or mining off the coast of New South Wales in general. The bill, in effect, would prevent, as far as New South Wales law permits, any petroleum or mineral exploration or recovery off the coast of New South Wales. The implementation of this policy was an election commitment by the Coalition because protecting our coast and marine life is such a significant issue for so many people in New South Wales.

Currently, the most significant threat to our State's coast is posed by exploration and mining activities under Petroleum Exploration Permit 11, or the PEP 11. The area which the PEP 11 covers is 4,574 square kilometres, stretching from Newcastle to Manly. As members will be aware, these are some of the busiest beaches in New South Wales and they have been the centrepiece of our domestic and international image for decades. I remind members of the horrific impact of the 1999 oil spill in Sydney Harbour, in which 300 tonnes of oil covered the city's harbour. International reporting of that incident described it like this:

Sickly fumes penetrated air-conditioning pipes at the Opera House, Sydney's graceful landmark, forcing a performance ... to be halted in the final act ... Foul-looking sludge washed up on the dozens of beaches and small coves that dot the harbour, and residents choked as pungent fumes spread up to 12 miles across the city.

I do not need to warn members of the significant reputational and economic impact another ecological disaster of this scale would pose for our State. Ecologically, the provisions of the bill ensure the safety and protection of the New South Wales marine environment from many threats posed by exploration and mining activities. Firstly, offshore gas exploration of the type PEP 11 threatens often employs what are called seismic blasts as part of ocean bed surveying. These blasts are among the loudest man-made sounds in the ocean, just short of those caused by explosive devices, and have been shown to have a devastating effect on marine life, including killing plankton over one kilometre away; stressing, harming and displacing nearby fish and other sea life; and having links to mass strandings of turtles, dolphins and whales. The current PEP 11 licence is proposing to commence surveying activities, likely including seismic blasting, as close as a few kilometres off the coast of New South Wales. Members will be aware that this stretch of coast is an area of abundant and diverse marine life, including whales, dolphins, seals, penguins, rays and sharks.

Secondly, the type of exploration and mining activities that would be banned by this bill involve the construction of drilling platforms, pipelines and other infrastructure, which physically damage or destroy critical marine habitats such as coral reefs, seagrass beds and benthic ecosystems. Excavation and dredging during the drilling process can also disturb the sea floor and disrupt sensitive habitats. Thirdly, accidental spills of petroleum products and chemicals during gas exploration and drilling pose a significant risk to marine ecosystems, contaminating water and sediments and affecting entire food chains. I do not need to remind members of the images of sea life coated in viscous oil products, choking them, and preventing birds from flying. Collectively, these potential impacts could have a catastrophic impact on the New South Wales coast. Such an eventuality is unthinkable to many, but it is all too possible. That is why I am proud to commend this important bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

## **GOVERNMENT SECTOR FINANCE AMENDMENT (GRANTS) BILL (NO 2) 2023**

### **First Reading**

**Bill introduced on motion by Mr Gareth Ward, read a first time and printed.**

### **Second Reading Speech**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (10:32):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

Members will recall that recently this House debated and passed the Government Sector Finance Amendment (Grants) Bill 2023. When introducing the bill, the Minister said in her second reading speech:

Under the Government Sector Finance Amendment (Grants) Bill 2023, amongst other integrity measures, a Minister must not approve a grant unless satisfied that its expenditure is efficient, effective, economical and ethical and that it would be value for money for the people of New South Wales. The bill will build on the existing framework for regulating government grants to help ensure that we deliver effective, efficient and ethical grants for the people of New South Wales.

To the Government's credit, the words of the Minister are reflected in the bill at new section 10.3A with respect to the administration of government grants. New section 10.3A states:

- (1) The following persons must not knowingly breach a mandatory requirement contained in a Grants Administration Guide—
  - (a) a Minister,
  - (b) a person employed by a Minister under the Members of Parliament Staff Act 2013,
  - (c) an employee of a government sector agency within the meaning of the Government Sector Employment Act 2013, other than a person employed in or by a State owned corporation.
- (2) A Minister must not approve a grant to which the Grants Administration Guide applies unless satisfied that the grant—
  - (a) is an efficient, effective, economical and ethical use of money, and
  - (b) achieves value for money.
- (3) When approving or declining a grant to which the Grants Administration Guide applies, a person must have regard to the key principles of grants administration specified in the Guide.

I need to be clear with the House. I intended to move the provisions in my bill as amendments to the Government's bill. It is usual practice for the Government to advise members involved in moving amendments that a Minister is about to undertake their reply to the bill prior to the amendment stage. This ensures that members moving amendments can be present in the Chamber. That did not occur and I accept the undertaking from the Government that this will not happen again. However, so important do I believe my amendments are that I have taken the step of introducing this private member's bill to enhance the transparency and accountability measures passed by the Government.

My bill proposes two very simple provisions: first, non-compliance with the new provisions with respect to the administration of State Government grants would be an express breach of the ministerial code; and, second, as soon as possible after approving a grant to which the Grants Administration Guide applies, the Minister must give details of the grant to each member of the Legislative Assembly who represents an electorate in which the grant will be administered. I move these amendments for two principal reasons. First, whilst well intentioned, the amendments moved by the Government in its original amending bill appear to have no consequences for Ministers who do not comply other than the obvious and already apparent provisions of the ICAC regulations—that a breach of the law is a breach of the ministerial code. However, without an express penalty for non-compliance it is impossible to characterise the new reforms as nothing other than superficial and ephemeral. This flaw must be addressed. My amendments give teeth to the provisions.

By elevating non-compliance with the grants amendment provisions to a breach of the ministerial code, the Parliament is expressing a statement of seriousness to a Minister about compliance and failure to comply with their obligations with respect to grants. Without a penalty, the most recent amendments appear to be nothing other than a political exercise in giving the impression of action without any real impact. Second, I acknowledge my friend the member for Barwon, as he was the inspiration for the second proposed provision. Whilst I appreciate that decisions are made by governments, this does not mean that governments should ignore a local member of Parliament when providing a grant to the community they represent. By ignoring the local member, the local community about which the decision on government funding is being made also is disrespected. As a Minister, I was always very open with all members of Parliament when awarding funding to the electorates, regardless of which side of the House they were on. Sadly, this is not a practice that is widespread on either side of politics.

Typically, I have seen governments of both colours cut out a local member of Parliament not of their ilk and seek to credit a card-carrying member of their own political team in the relevant local community with the success of the award of those grant funds. This is clearly unprofessional and inappropriate, given that governments do not have money; they have taxpayers' money. It is not government money; it is taxpayers' money. If the Government is serious, as it says, about transparency and accountability with respect to government grants, it will adopt these proposed amendments. If they decide to vote against them, the only transparent thing about the Government's bill and the Government will be the mere fact that we would have been able to see straight through them. I commend the bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

*Addresses*

### **CORONATION OF HIS MAJESTY KING CHARLES III**

**Debate resumed from 11 May 2023.**

**Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (10:39):** The coronation of King Charles III and his wife, Camilla, as King and Queen of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth realms took place on 6 May 2023 at Westminster Abbey. Charles acceded to the throne on 8 September 2022 upon the death of his mother, Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. The ceremony was structured around an Anglican service of Holy Communion. It included Charles taking an oath, being anointed with holy oil and receiving the coronation regalia, emphasising his spiritual role and secular responsibilities as the monarch. Representatives of the Church of England and the British royal family declared their allegiance to him, and people throughout the Commonwealth realms were also invited to do so. I note the attendance of Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, the Governor-General of Australia, the Governor of New South Wales and other representatives. I thought it was a very fitting decision by the Prime Minister to include representatives of the Australian people. Of course, not everyone can attend, but to have people there to represent Australians was a special touch. The wife of the King, Camilla, was crowned in a shorter and simpler ceremony.

After the service, members of the royal family travelled to Buckingham Palace in a state procession and appeared on the palace's rear and front balconies. The service was altered from past British coronations to represent multiple faiths cultures and communities across the United Kingdom. It was shorter than the coronation of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 and had a peak United Kingdom television audience of 20.4 million. The coronation elicited both celebrations and protest in the United Kingdom, with some groups criticising the event's financial aspects. Celebrations included street parties, volunteering, special commemorative church services and a concert at Windsor Castle on 7 May. The events in London and Windsor drew large crowds, but it is worth noting that there were also protests by republican groups and the subsequent movement. A number of people were arrested but, by all indications and media reports, it was mostly peaceful and no-one was hurt. That is a good thing.

Charles' coronation was the first for a British monarch in the twenty-first century and the fortieth to be held at Westminster Abbey since the coronation of William the Conqueror in 1066. Before his coronation, King Charles was Prince Charles and he held some very progressive positions on issues, particularly around the environment and climate change. He moved away from what the monarchy had long done by not involving itself in political-like activities and causes. Prince Charles provided leadership and broke that tradition, which I thought was a healthy thing for the people of the United Kingdom and the broader Commonwealth.

As I mentioned, King Charles III was formerly known as the Prince of Wales. He identified with many local and global causes. His charitable work and philanthropy were things that he was very active in, and he continues to drive charities forward to meet the needs of those causes. Together with the Queen Consort, formerly the Duchess of Cornwall, they are presidents or patrons of more than 500 organisations. Charles is the president of 19 charitable trusts, all of which are gathered together under the umbrella of The Prince's Charities. These

charitable trusts raise over £100 million annually for their chosen causes, all of which were overseen by then Prince Charles himself. The Prince's Charities also has branches in Canada and Australia to help Charles further his charitable endeavours around the globe. The King has frequently toured both of those countries, as well as other Commonwealth countries to attend charitable events in an effort to bring aid to youth, the disabled, the disadvantaged, the arts—which is a personal passion of his—and the environment, climate change and many other causes.

King Charles III is a patron of over 420 charities and started his charity, The Prince's Trust, with his navy severance pay of just over £7,000 in 1976. To date, The Prince's Trust has helped over 875,000 disadvantaged young people into employment or business. As I mentioned, Charles has also founded a number of initiatives to try to help communities locally and globally. Many of them focus on his passion for sustainability. I particularly note his strong support for an organisation close to many of us in this place—Foodbank. We know that Foodbank has been there for disadvantaged and marginalised people. During COVID, fire, flood and other local events, Foodbank has been there. I acknowledge former member of this place and our friend John Robertson for his leadership of Foodbank. He does a great job along with all of his team.

The Accounting for Sustainability Project, the A4S, was founded in 2004 by the then Prince of Wales. It aims to inspire action by financial leaders to drive a fundamental shift toward resilient business models and a sustainable economy so it can deliver for those less fortunate than others. Another cause is the Campaign for Wool, where Charles sought to repopularise wool as a natural fire-retardant and sustainable fabric, expanding the market for both British and Commonwealth wool—including in Australia—and promoting awareness of its environmental benefits.

Whilst I am a very proud republican, I acknowledge how important the coronation was to people of the United Kingdom and, indeed, to many people in Australia who continue to have strong faith in the monarchy. I take nothing away from those people and fully respect their position as I know, and hope, that many of them respect those Australians who believe in a republic. But that does not take away from the respect that we have for the Crown, the British monarchy, and the people of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. I thank the House for listening to my contribution. I commend the motion.

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (10:47):** In reply: I thank the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Lismore, the member for Terrigal, the member for Monaro and the member for Campbelltown for their contributions to this address of congratulation. I again congratulate His Majesty King Charles III and the British people on their new sovereign. I know it was a great occasion for the British people to witness a significant moment of shared history for their nation and our nation. As the Prince of Wales, King Charles III was well known to Australia. He has visited our shores on countless occasions and spent six months of his school life in this country. It is safe to say that the King has entered his new role with an in-depth understanding of Australia and the values that bind us. While many of us may have differing views on the governing of Australia, the coronation provided us all with the opportunity to stop and acknowledge the British monarchy's historical contributions to the Westminster system that operates throughout Australia.

The institution's legacy is of substantial importance to Australia's foundational values. In recognising a legacy that goes back to 1066 and William the Conqueror, we are empowered to better understand our collective heritage and the enduring democratic institutions that define our great State. It has been 10 months since the passing of Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. As is the case for many of us, she had been the only monarch I had witnessed in my lifetime. Her Late Majesty was known for her profound dedication to public service throughout her life. As Princess Elizabeth, she committed her entire life, whether it be long or short, to the service of the British people. It is something we here should all likewise aspire to as we seek to provide that service to our nation. I commend the motion to the House.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell):** The question is that the motion be agreed to.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Governor*

#### **ADDRESS-IN-REPLY**

**Debate resumed from 11 May 2023.**

**Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (10:51):** I make a brief contribution to debate on the address-in-reply to the Lieutenant-Governor's speech at the opening of the Fifty-Eighth Parliament of New South Wales. After 12 years in opposition for the Labor Party, the people of New South Wales have delivered their verdict. It is an absolute honour to be re-elected as the member for Mount Druitt and to have the opportunity to serve as a member of the Minns Labor Government. I start by congratulating all members in this House who have

been elected and re-elected to Australia's oldest Parliament. In particular, I congratulate the new Labor members elected for the first time and wish them every success as they contribute to this parliamentary term.

Our Government's priorities, as noted by the Lieutenant-Governor, are set out in six major categories: reform the New South Wales education system, including preschools and TAFE; repair and rebuild our health system; increase access to affordable and reliable transport, and cap road tolls; ensure good, sustainable housing is attainable for buyers and renters; end the privatisation of State-owned assets and critical infrastructure, while creating a State-owned clean energy corporation; and build an economy that is resilient and that works for people and small businesses. I note that the Minns Labor Government has wasted no time in commencing delivery on its agenda and election promises.

I am pleased to report that already the Minns Government has removed hidden speed cameras, has commenced making 16,000 temporary teaching and support staff positions permanent, has immediately frozen the sale of all public and social housing, and has protected Sydney Water in the Constitution from privatisation. We have also committed to building our ferries here, creating thousands of local jobs. I will make a few remarks in relation to some of these mandates. The Minns Labor Government has made education reform a priority. Education is the foundation of our nation building. A sound education can only be delivered by a stable environment. You cannot achieve a stable environment when educators do not have a stable career. I was astonished, but not surprised, when we learned that thousands of teachers and support staff did not have stable full-time positions.

Education not only impacts our students but also concerns parents, teachers and everyone invested in the future of our State. Thousands of teachers and support staff employed on a casual basis are not able to plan their future—for example, being able to take out a loan to purchase a family home or even to start a family. The Minns Labor Government has spoken and listened to hundreds of teachers and, as a result, begun the process to reduce teacher workloads and make salaries more competitive. The Government has also commenced converting 10,000 temporary teaching roles into permanent positions as well as converting 6,000 temporary teacher support staff roles into permanent positions. This will give teachers the job security they deserve. The casualisation of teaching has forced thousands of talented teachers to leave the profession in New South Wales. Each one of us will recall a teacher who has had a major impact on our life. I, for one, owe my tertiary education to my maths teacher, Mrs Yates, who encouraged me to further my education. On the advice and support of my maths teacher, I went on to study and graduate as a civil engineer from the University of Wollongong.

Another priority is health care. There is no doubt that the former Liberal-Nationals Government neglected Health as it was more focused on its privatisation agenda. I recall that when I was first elected in 2015, the former Government had plans to scale down Mount Druitt Hospital by closing the emergency department and making Mount Druitt Hospital only a rehab and palliative care centre. At one stage, the previous Government stopped ambulances from going to Mount Druitt Hospital and patients were diverted to Blacktown Hospital. The result was chaos to the extent that the Blacktown Hospital emergency department could not cope with the extra demand. A sign went up at the Blacktown emergency department advising patients from Mount Druitt to consider calling an after-hours medical centre, offering some phone numbers. I was able to expose this farce and spoke in Parliament about the former Government's action. The signs were withdrawn very quickly and ambulances were once again reinstated to Mount Druitt Hospital.

Mount Druitt Hospital is very important in the western end of the city, as it serves more than 100,000 constituents who would otherwise crowd Blacktown Hospital and add further pressure to the Health system. I would like to see more services reinstated to Mount Druitt Hospital, particularly, the establishment of a short-term care unit. Mount Druitt Hospital does not have a ward for short-term admissions. Therefore, any patient attending the emergency department who requires admission will need to be transported to Blacktown Hospital for a bed. This not only consumes a lot of resources but also puts more pressure on Blacktown Hospital. A short-term care unit will complement the emergency department and will allow for patient admissions for up to 72 hours. This will reduce emergency department readmissions as well as keep emergency department beds free. I will advocate to the health Minister on behalf of my constituents to consider the short-term care proposal, as it makes a lot of good sense.

Recently I was appointed by the Premier as the Parliamentary Secretary for Police and Counter-terrorism. I am honoured to serve the Minns Government in this role, and I am privileged to work with the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism in serving the people of New South Wales in the field of law enforcement. One area of interest to me in this role is the issue of trail bikes and the laws available to the NSW Police Force to deal with the issues and the concerns raised by the community. It is my intention to have discussions with the Minister as to how we can better improve the laws and find alternative measures to reduce these often-dangerous trail bike activities. As members can see, the Minns agenda is loaded with issues that have been neglected over the past

12 years by the former Government. I am confident that the Minns Government is up to the challenge and it will deliver on its agenda to make New South Wales a better place for all its citizens.

**Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (10:58):** I contribute to debate on the address-in-reply to the Lieutenant-Governor's speech. I thank the Hon. Andrew Bell, the Lieutenant-Governor of New South Wales, for his lovely welcome to the new members in the Chamber. It was lovely to be welcomed in such a warm way and to be recognised for the effort that it has taken to get here. I start my contribution with the importance of education to the people of Camden. There is a problem in Camden with massive numbers of students in each of our schools. There has been a lot of development in Camden, yet we have not been getting the schools that we need and deserve. I ask all members to reflect on what teacher caused them to be here today. We all have a particularly special teacher who was an outlier for us. I had many teachers that contributed to my being here, but I give a shout-out to my maths teacher, Ms Rosemary Hughes.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell):** It being 11.00 a.m., pursuant to standing and sessional orders, debate is interrupted for question time. I set down resumption of the debate as an order of the day for a later hour.

#### *Members*

### **MEMBER FOR THE ENTRANCE**

#### **MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH**

**The SPEAKER:** I wish the member for The Entrance and the member for Tamworth all the best for their upcoming birthdays.

#### *Visitors*

### **VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** I extend a very warm welcome to the guests of the member for Campbelltown. I welcome the Hon. Tony Stewart, former member and Deputy Speaker of this House. I think I can see him there. Welcome back, mate. Mr Tony Callinan is here as well. I welcome the guests of the member for Sydney. They are students and teachers from International House Sydney, an English language school in Sydney. I acknowledge the guest of the member for Blue Mountains, Albie Jones, who is doing work experience with the member. Finally, I welcome to the gallery members of the Australia and New Zealand School of Government, as well as senior public servants from Vietnam who are in New South Wales on a study mission. Welcome to Australia's first and oldest Parliament.

#### *Announcements*

### **LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS**

**The SPEAKER:** I inform the House that two photographers have been approved to photograph question time today.

### **AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA**

**The SPEAKER:** I have the pleasure of announcing the result of the Australia's Biggest Morning Tea event that was held yesterday afternoon in the fountain court.

**Mr Steve Whan:** In the afternoon.

**The SPEAKER:** The paradoxical Australia's Biggest Morning Tea event held yesterday afternoon was a resounding success. I thank everybody who came along and contributed in any way, particularly those who baked or provided cakes and slices. The member for Maitland won on most counts.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** I make a personal explanation. I know I won the baking competition, but I did not actually bake anything. I inform the House that my husband said that is the only way I could possibly win a baking competition. I just want to be clear and transparent.

**The SPEAKER:** I will leave that to the Whip to work on. I thank the member for Maitland. She was the first to enrol, the first to donate and the first to provide something for the event. It was a record event. To this point—and there is still money coming in—we have raised \$2,614 for Cancer Council. I thank everybody. My office will provide a link if anybody wishes to donate further.

### **STATE OF ORIGIN**

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Tamworth offers his commiserations for the result of the State of Origin last night. I hope everybody is okay and has come to terms with it.



*Question Time***POLICE TASER USE**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (11:06):** My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. The initial police statement issued on 17 May about the tragic incident concerning the late Mrs Clare Nowland, which failed to disclose the tasering, concluded with the statement that "no further details are available at this time". Does the Minister agree that statement was false?

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism) (11:07):** The Manager of Opposition Business made an outrageous claim in the Chamber yesterday. He said, "It has come to light that there has been a cover-up." That is a reckless claim that undermines public confidence in the NSW Police Force, and I reject it.

**Mr Matt Kean:** Mr Speaker—

**The SPEAKER:** I assume that the member for Hornsby rises on a point of order.

**Ms Prue Car:** She has said four words.

**The SPEAKER:** That may be the case, but I need to hear the point of order.

**Mr Matt Kean:** Point of order: My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The Minister's answer is not directly relevant to the question asked.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. The Clerk will stop the clock.

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** To the point of order: The member for Wahroonga made an outrageous statement during question time yesterday. The Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism should be given the opportunity to answer the question. She is being directly relevant.

**The SPEAKER:** I concur with the Leader of the House. It is not out of order for the Minister to reflect on something that occurred yesterday. It is too early in the answer for relevance to be tested. The Minister has the call.

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY:** An excellent ruling, Mr Speaker. It was a reckless claim that is undermining the public confidence in the NSW Police Force, and I reject it. In light of that, I will outline some facts. The police launched a critical incident investigation and then upgraded the critical incident from a level 2 to a level 1. That upgrade triggered the involvement of the Homicide Squad from Sydney. The independent Law Enforcement Conduct Commission stood up a parallel investigation from day one. A New South Wales police officer has been charged over his involvement in the incident. A body-worn camera was preserved and used as evidence. The allegation by the Manager of Opposition Business—without a shred of evidence—that the investigation in some way has been covered up is reckless and irresponsible.

**Mr Mark Speakman:** Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129, direct relevance. My question was not about how the police were investigating; it is about what was said. It is a simple question. Was what was said true or false? It is not about the hows or whys in the investigation. Was what was said true or false?

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister is being directly relevant. The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat so the Minister can complete her answer.

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock.

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** Mr Speaker, I ask you to apply Standing Order 74 to stop the Leader of the Opposition from making outrageous imputations while the police Minister is giving a serious answer. It is scandalous conduct. He asked a serious question about an outrageous allegation the Manager of Opposition Business made yesterday. He can at least sit there and listen to the factual reply.

**The SPEAKER:** I have ruled on the point of order. The Leader of the Opposition will come to order and accept the ruling. The Minister will complete her answer and be heard in silence.

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY:** The allegation made by the Manager of Opposition Business—without a shred of evidence—that the investigation in some way has been a cover-up is reckless and irresponsible. I will be clear: The circumstances relating to the media release were already known. I will end with this: If members on that side have evidence, then they should present it. Otherwise, they should stop attacking the NSW Police Force.

**The SPEAKER:** Members will come to order.

## HOUSING SUPPLY

**Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (11:12):** My question is addressed to the Premier. Will the Premier update the House on the steps being taken to address the housing supply crisis in New South Wales?

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:12):** It is a tough question but a necessary one in addressing what is undeniably a critical housing shortage in New South Wales. To put this in perspective, we now have a situation where 30,000 people leave New South Wales and go to other States every single year. It used to be the case, about 10 to 15 years ago, that young people would say, "Will I ever be able to afford to buy a house in New South Wales?" Now the mantra for many young people is, "Will I even be able to rent a house in New South Wales?" That is one of the reasons the Government has decided to have more density closer to where jobs and opportunities are in New South Wales. It is one of the reasons we have commissioned the Greater Cities Commission to rebalance urban growth along public transport corridors, particularly in Parramatta and the CBD.

We have recently announced changes to affordable housing so that, if a private developer with private capital has at least 15 per cent of its housing as affordable housing, we will give the developer a State-significant development pathway as well as a 30 per cent increase in floor space ratio and a 30 per cent increase in the allowed building heights. I am pleased to say to the House that this was met with support from large segments of the housing groups in New South Wales. In fact, Michele Adair, who is the CEO of the Housing Trust, said on ABC Radio, "I think this is actually some of the most positive developments that we've heard in relation to affordable rent, frankly, in a number of years." The Business Council of Australia said:

This is a win-win that enables more affordable housing for those who need it as well as more housing supply overall.

The Property Council of Australia put out a media release that stated:

Prioritising measures which enable industry to deliver more density is exactly the approach we need from this new government.

We are seeing a wellspring of political parties come across to this way of thinking—density done well in Australia's largest city. Even the New South Wales Greens are coming on board. I have noticed even from the Inner West Council there was a wellspring of support for density in New South Wales. The National Party does not particularly care about what happens in Sydney. We have seen the crossbench saying, "We need more density in Sydney." There is one hold-out, and that is the Liberal Party of New South Wales. [*Extension of time*]

**The SPEAKER:** Government members will come to order.

**Mr CHRIS MINNS:** There is a reason for that. Its members are conditioned from an early age to be nimbys. A fantastic article from Alexandra Smith from 2019 is about everybody's favourite former Treasurer of New South Wales, the member for Hornsby. It states:

The Hornsby MP developed a taste for politics as a teenage activist involved in a residents' group fighting overdevelopment in his northern Sydney suburb.

The then 18-year-old and his father Noel were trying to stop units springing up in Wahroonga ...

Some people get involved in politics because of human rights. Some people get involved because of the environment. It might be John Locke. It might be Edmund Burke. The member for Hornsby got involved in politics to stop a unit block in Wahroonga. But it does not stop there. We have been searching and we have found one MP who had the courage to back urban consolidation. That is the self-described champion of multicultural communities, the member for Oatley. He said in 2016 that he supported a new development in Riverwood that would see a new lease of life with a big increase in new social and affordable housing. The problem was, a couple of years later he put out a media release, saying, "The Riverwood housing plan would have seen thousands of residents come into our local community, clogging up local roads. I'm proud to say that I stopped it." What happened? The suburb of Riverwood was redistributed into the electorate of Oatley. It is not nimby, it is "now in my backyard". It is time we backed urban consolidation in New South Wales.

**The SPEAKER:** I take it that the Premier is okay with Government members interjecting during his answers.

**Mr CHRIS MINNS:** Yes.

## POLICE TASER USE

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst) (11:17):** My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. I am sure by now the Minister would have been extensively briefed on the tragic tasering incident. My simple question is: What was the precise day and time that the first next of kin was informed by the New South Wales police about the tragic incident involving Mrs Clare Nowland?

**Mr Chris Minns:** Would you have intervened?

**Mr PAUL TOOLE:** I would have been briefed, and I would have spoken about it.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Bathurst will resume his seat.

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism) (11:18):** The allegations made yesterday by the Manager of Opposition Business—without a shred of evidence—that the investigation in some way was a cover-up are reckless and irresponsible. I want to be clear: The circumstances relating to the media release were already known. The police commissioner has outlined reasons why the details were not included in that initial release. The commissioner said on radio it was important that family members were informed of the details of the situation before the New South Wales police made it public. She said that again yesterday afternoon. It is appropriate that family members hear distressing details like this privately in the first instance. It is the right thing to do. In a situation where a critical incident has been declared—

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Point of order: It is a very simple question. What was the day and time that the first next of kin were informed? That is what the question is about. The Minister has not come remotely close to that.

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** To the point of order: It is a baseless point of order.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Stop the clock.

**The SPEAKER:** As the Manager of Opposition Business asked so politely, the Clerk will stop the clock.

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** The member for Wahroonga made an outrageous allegation yesterday. He should withdraw it now. He made an allegation of a cover-up. He should withdraw it now.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. The Minister will be cognisant of the question.

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY:** It is appropriate that family members hear distressing details like this privately in the first instance.

**Government members:** Hear, hear!

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY:** The House agrees. The public holding statement that was released was consistent with New South Wales police policies. I know that the former police Minister would be outraged if a claim of cover-up about an investigation by the New South Wales police was made under his watch. In addition to that, the former police Minister knows that this is an operational matter and he would agree that that is a matter for the police.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

**Dr MARJORIE O'NEILL (Coogee) (11:21):** I address my question to the Minister for Transport. Will the Minister inform the House of the progress to restore the iconic Freshwater-class ferries back into service, and how that compares with the former Government's delivery of ferry services and other transport infrastructure?

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (11:22):** I thank the member for Coogee for her question and her passion for restoring these iconic ferries back to our harbour. For 40 years the Freshwater ferries have served the route between Manly and Circular Quay. It is probably the most spectacular ferry journey in the world. The Freshwater-class are reliable, Australian-built ferries. They are much loved by Sydneysiders and, indeed, by visitors to our city as well. When the former Government took the Freshwaters out of service, we promised to bring them back. A few weeks ago the Premier and I went to Cockatoo Island to inspect the Queenscliff. I am pleased to report to the House that her restoration is close to complete. This summer she will be back on the harbour with the Collaroy and the Freshwater. That is right. Members on this side of the House keep our promises.

I have been asked how that compares with the former Government's record on transport delivery. We should turn our attention to a very different ferry project: the Kamay ferry wharves. That pet project was the brainchild of the member for Cronulla. Back in 2019 it was costed at \$18 million, two years later the cost jumped to \$34 million, six months later it jumped again to \$56 million and in June last year it jumped to \$65 million. But that is not all. The total cost of the pet project of the member for Cronulla is now a whopping \$78 million. That is a 333 per cent increase on what members opposite said it would cost. But it gets worse. Building nothing at all, to stop it completely, would cost taxpayers \$46 million.

But what does the member for Cronulla have to say about this? "It has nothing to do with me. That was all done at arm's length from government." The truth is that the Leader of the Opposition's fingerprints are all over this project. In fact, they are everywhere. They are all over the transport mess and the total budget mess that we have inherited. Let's go through the modes of transport, shall we? Let's start with trains. The Opposition presided over a 50 per cent increase in the maintenance budget blowout. In 2019-20 it was \$440 million; in 2021-22 it went

to \$670 million. Former Government members abandoned our train manufacturing industry. They said, "We are not good at building them here." [*Extension of time*]

So they bought the trains from overseas, which did not fit the tracks; they are years behind schedule and have not carried a single passenger; and the cost has blown out to \$3.2 billion. How about Sydney Metro? There is a \$9 billion blowout on the City and Southwest. How about the Metro West? There is a \$12 billion blowout. How about light rail—remember the cracked light rail trams? How about the CBD and South East Light Rail? It started at \$1.5 billion and it ended up at \$3.1 billion.

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

**Ms JO HAYLEN:** The fact is, those opposite have absolutely no credibility when it comes to budget management and the Transport budget. One would think they might have a sense of shame about that—perhaps even, dare I say it, a little regret. But let's see what the member for Wahroonga—that prolific podcaster and intellectual powerhouse—has to say about it. He provided some advice:

If I put a renovation on my house, a small domestic construction project, there is likely to be a slight cost overrun, that's just life.

When you're building these multi-billion dollar projects there's likely to be cost overruns.

How about \$20 billion of taxpayer funding wasted? Apparently "that's just life." I have a little more advice from the member for Wahroonga:

They're actually built into the budgeting and we've all had sorts of supply chain and other issues recently, which is really the hangover of the pandemic.

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

**Ms JO HAYLEN:** I must say, if I am ever planning a small domestic construction project or, dare I say it, building a multibillion-dollar transport network, there are two people I will not be asking for advice: One is the member for Wahroonga and the other is the Leader of the Opposition.

#### DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

**Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (11:27):** I direct my question to the Minister for Women, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. When will details of successful projects under tranche 2 of the core and cluster women's refuge program be publicly announced so that people on the northern beaches and across the State can know what services and facilities will exist, and when, to meet the urgent needs of women and their children fleeing domestic and family violence?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (11:27):** I thank the member for Wakehurst for his question, for his interest in issues relating to domestic violence, and for supporting for women and children who are affected by domestic violence in his electorate. I know it is not a new interest. Last year I received correspondence from the member when he was mayor of Northern Beaches Council. He is quite passionate about this. Domestic and family violence is heartbreakingly present in communities across our State. The intersectionality of experiences of domestic and family violence with disability, culture, socio-economic status and a multitude of other factors results in some communities being disproportionately impacted by these crimes. But no community in this State is free from domestic violence, and the beautiful northern beaches of Sydney are no exception. The core and cluster model moves away from the traditional shared-living style of accommodation. It offers more flexible, private and independent living spaces, giving more dignity to women and children and in some cases to their beloved pets.

Funding for the core and cluster program has occurred over three tranches. Each has begun with an expression of interest [EOI] followed by a request for tender process. The tranche 3 EOI process will close on 25 July this year—so very soon. As many members in this place would be aware, the procurement of tranches 51 and 2 has been completed, resulting in 39 approved projects. I spoke to the member for Tamworth about that yesterday. Importantly, the core and cluster model is, by its very nature, a community place based approach to safety for women and children. The Department of Communities and Justice [DCJ] is currently working through the contract negotiations for the successful tranche 2 tenderers. At this stage contract negotiations for those 39 sites are in varying stages of completion. I look forward to sharing more information with local communities as those negotiations progress and are finalised. [*Extension of time*]

Having said that, I am very pleased to be able to share with the member for Wakehurst that one of the projects that was successful in receiving funding through tranche 2 of the core and cluster procurement will serve women and children on the northern beaches. Located in Mona Vale, the core and cluster is led by Women's Community Shelters. It is being done in partnership with Bridge Housing, which is a tier 1 community housing provider, which I am sure the member for Wakehurst is familiar with. I am advised by DCJ that building design

and development application processes are currently underway and that capital works are planned for completion by December this year, with the expectation of service delivery to follow shortly thereafter.

I am pleased also to say that on completion it will offer four self-contained units for women and children escaping domestic and family violence, importantly with services and supports delivered by Women's Community Shelters. Again, I thank the member for Wakehurst for his interest in and commitment to services that quite literally save the lives of women and children in his electorate. I look forward to sharing more information about core and cluster sites as I am able to and as the contracts are finalised, along with the network of local community-based supports and services available to women and children experiencing family and domestic violence across New South Wales communities.

### STATE BUDGET

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (11:32):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces in his capacity representing the Treasurer. Will the Minister please inform the House on the challenges facing the New South Wales economy?

**Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (11:33):** I thank the member for Gosford for her question. She is someone who appreciates what impacts economic headwinds can have on her electorate of Gosford and the Central Coast more generally. On Tuesday the Treasurer delivered an economic statement in the other place. While the Deputy Leader of the Opposition found it a bit boring—as he described it this morning—I know the member for Gosford was listening intently. It is part of the Government's approach to be up-front with people about the challenges we face in New South Wales. It is an approach we adopted early on and one we will continue—an approach the Treasurer has rightly received praise for, with the Financial Review noting:

... Australia now has a treasurer who is taking responsibility to stop debt-fuelled government spending and avoid a wage-price spiral to help the RBA fight inflation.

Members may be wondering why that is important. It is because the pre-eminent economic challenge facing New South Wales is inflation. Inflation is damaging to households and families, and higher prices erode the value of real wages.

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

**Mr PAUL SCULLY:** Just like households and businesses, which are doing their part to fight inflation, the Government is doing its part to get inflation under control as well. In the same way that governments need to act to stimulate economies—

**Mr Matt Kean:** By removing the wage cap and baking in inflation.

**Mr PAUL SCULLY:** The member for Hornsby is chirping away on the other side of the Chamber. This is a good economics lesson for you, because you let this place run out of control on your watch. I will come to that in a minute.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Point of order: The Minister should be directing his comments through you, Mr Speaker, rather than pointing across the Chamber at the member for Hornsby.

**The SPEAKER:** I uphold the point of order.

**Mr PAUL SCULLY:** I thank Mr Denuto for his comments. We are working to get expenditure under control, to battle inflation, and to assist and do our part, unlike the approach to budgetary and economic management that the previous Government took. It went on a debt-driven spending spree the size of which would have embarrassed the Kardashians. Here is just one example. In the three years to June 2022 members opposite added \$70 billion in debt. That was obviously partly COVID and partly bushfire related.

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

**Mr PAUL SCULLY:** They forecast that they would, in the subsequent four years from June 2022 to June 2026, rack up another \$80 billion in debt. That is well after the COVID emergency. [*Extension of time*]

The reason I point that out is an additional \$33 billion in new spending came in the last 14 months of the previous Government alone, when the big emergency was its re-election effort. That was the big emergency. But how did those opposite do it? This is the part I find most fascinating. They wanted to borrow \$25.3 billion over four years to gamble on stocks and other investments. They wanted to have a punt on the markets, forecasting growth to prop up the budget bottom line.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The member for Hornsby will come to order. The member for Wahroonga will come to order. The member for North Shore will come to order.

**Mr PAUL SCULLY:** And what is the net result? A \$7-billion-a-year interest bill in 2026. That is bigger than the total budgets of the police and TAFE combined. It is 16¢ in every dollar the State collects in taxes directly. Is there any wonder we have had to put the brakes on the investment fund? That is the sort of new capitalism that the Treasurer spoke about: \$187 billion recklessly driven up in a spending spree aimed at re-election. But, of course, the new Leader of the Opposition has a view on the budget as well. His new approach to budgetary management is, "Don't believe anything unless it's in the year in which we said it. Budgets aren't worth anything." He told Sarah Macdonald, "If you're going to fund things for four years, you wouldn't be having an annual budget." Basically, he admitted that their budgets are only worth listening to in the year in which they are done. This Government is getting on with the business of budget reform and budget tidy-up.

#### **POLICE TASER USE**

**Ms ROBYN PRESTON (Hawkesbury) (11:38):** My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. When did the Minister or her office first see the initial police statement dated 17 May or a draft of it concerning the tragic incident involving Mrs Clare Nowland?

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Wahroonga will stop repeating what he thinks the question was. I heard the question and the Minister heard it also.

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism) (11:38):** I will say it again. Police chose not to release graphic details about the incident until the family was fully informed and before the investigators confirmed the facts of what happened. There was an independent investigation by Homicide Squad detectives and an immediate announcement of a parallel investigation by the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission and, of course, a proper, comprehensive coronial inquiry into the circumstances.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Point of order: What we now have is a cover-up. The question was quite clear: When did the Minister or her office see the police statement?

**The SPEAKER:** I was anticipating the point of order from the member for Wahroonga and I was inclined to uphold it, but the way in which it was taken is absolutely not in order.

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 74. The member for Wahroonga has again made a baseless and outrageous allegation of a cover-up with no evidence. He is not permitted to conduct himself like that under the standing orders. He should withdraw the remark or be dealt with and called to order.

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. The member for Wahroonga has been asked to withdraw the remark that premised the point of order. Will the member for Wahroonga withdraw the remark regarding a cover-up?

**Mr Alister Henskens:** No, I will not, because this is the third question the Minister has failed to answer.

**The SPEAKER:** Then that is the answer. Apparently, we are giving yes-no answers, and the answer was no. The member for Wahroonga will resume his seat. The Minister has the call.

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY:** Within a week, the officer concerned was charged by New South Wales police with three very serious criminal charges. He will appear in court in coming weeks, where the event will again be thoroughly interrogated. Members opposite are calling all of that a New South Wales police cover-up, which is truly disgraceful.

#### **AMBULANCE SERVICES**

**Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (11:41):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Health, and Minister for Regional Health—a Minister who has the back of our emergency service workers. Will the Minister update the House on the action the Minns Government has taken to assist patients requiring ambulance care in remote and difficult-to-reach places in New South Wales?

**Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (11:41):** I thank the member for Cessnock, and I encourage members who have not listened to his speech earlier this week reflecting on the tragedy at Greta to do so. His leadership—along with that of the member for Upper Hunter, the two mayors and the entire Hunter team—has been nothing short of outstanding. I spoke again recently with Commissioner Morgan, who is in constant contact with those first paramedics and is making sure that support is being provided to the Hunter community. The other day I spoke to Matthew Mullen, the dad of Rebecca, the junior doctor from the Calvary Mater who passed away. Whilst he is going through a very difficult time, he has really felt the support of the community. The leadership of the member for Cessnock has made a big difference to that community, so I thank him.

I am delighted that the Government is rolling out 80 new special-purpose LandCruisers to move away from the Troopcarriers. The best thing about them is they are purpose-built for paramedics. Last week I caught up with Andy, one of the paramedics who designed the new fleet of vehicles. They will be predominantly used in rural, regional and remote New South Wales and will enable paramedics to get into those hard-to-get-to locations where individuals often find themselves. Whether it is the Snowy Mountains, the beaches up and down the coast or the bush in regional and remote New South Wales, people often find themselves forced to access help from very difficult locations. Andy has designed the vehicles with Toyota so that they can get to people, extract them and get them into ambulance care, whether that is through our helicopter network or our on-ground support.

Truly state-of-the-art technology is going into the design of each of those vehicles. It will enable them to set up almost a mini treatment room in some of the most remote and hard-to-get-to locations right across New South Wales. That is absolutely critical. While most members love to get out and about and explore our individual electorates, we all know that within our respective communities—particularly for those members from rural and remote communities—people doing that can often find themselves in trouble. The purpose-built vehicles will enable people to be extracted out and moved into appropriate care so they get the treatment that they need as soon as possible. The Troopcarriers had served their purpose, but we needed to roll out new and better technology to enable us to do that in a way that we had not been able to before. [*Extension of time*]

I commend Andy and the team at NSW Ambulance. In health, Government members are trying to design things with users front and centre—those women and men who will be driving and working in the vehicles. That is the approach that we are taking. Having had an extensive discussion with Andy, I was really pleased with every step of the way he, NSW Ambulance and Toyota worked together to build those purpose-built vehicles. Of course we do not want to use them, but we know we will be using them very regularly. There will be 80 vehicles across rural and regional New South Wales, including four in the Blue Mountains; four in our special ops teams; 14 in the Hunter New England district; 15 in the southern district, home to the member for Monaro and others; 18 in the western district, which is very important to us because of the terrain; 14 up and down the North Coast and mid North Coast; and three specialist vehicles in the Illawarra, the region that I am so proud to represent.

It is about making sure that the brave women and men who attend some of the most horrific scenes, the likes of which many members in this place cannot even imagine, have the tools they need to extract people safely. It is about making sure that we give patients the very best chance of receiving the very best care. I congratulate NSW Ambulance and the frontline paramedics for really investing in the fleet of new state-of-the-art vehicles, which will keep people safe no matter where in New South Wales they find themselves.

### CASHLESS GAMING TRIAL

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (11:46):** My question is directed to the Minister for Gaming and Racing. In his inaugural speech the member for Fairfield said:

I say with confidence that gambling has linkages with drug addiction, depression, domestic violence, physical illnesses, unemployment and crime.

What impact will the Government's delay of the cashless gaming trial have on drug addiction, depression, domestic violence, physical illnesses, unemployment and crime?

**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) (11:47):** I thank the shadow Minister and member for Tamworth for his question. I acknowledge his deep commitment in this area and appreciate the discussions we have had about moving forward with reform. I respect his opinion, which has certainly gone into the melting pot of ideas for how to go forward. I also commend the member for Fairfield for his inaugural speech last night. Everybody in this House understands that we have to get this very important issue right. We have to make sure that the processes are robust and stakeholders are on board so that our trial will be successful. Despite what was in the paper this morning, those discussions with stakeholders have been respectful and constructive. The trial that the Government will conduct will be effective and will interrogate the very important issues.

One of the key issues is that several of the stakeholders, particularly those from the harm minimisation area and the crossbench, have said to me that it is more important to get the trial right than to adhere to deadlines. That was not the Government saying that; it was the people who will actually be affected by the trial. People in the harm minimisation area and the crossbench have said to me that they trust that we will get it right. That we will do what is necessary to make sure that the trial is effective and works.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Members will come to order, particularly Government members. There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** My point of order relates to direct relevance. The question asked what impact the delay will have on drug addiction, depression et cetera—not why it is delayed.

**The SPEAKER:** I draw the Minister's attention to the question and ask him to address the matter directly.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS:** We are in the political game and we like to politicise things. That is really a very low-level response to this issue.

**Ms Jenny Leong:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. The Minister will resume his seat. The member for Newtown rises on a point of order.

**Ms Jenny Leong:** I ask the Minister to withdraw the comments that the crossbench has accepted where it is going. I think he might have been referring to one or potentially two members of the crossbench whereas there are actually 12 or more of us.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister will consider that but, as Chair, I took it to be members of the crossbench. It is a matter of interpretation as to how many that was. I do not think the Minister wanted to imply all, but perhaps the Minister could clarify that to satisfy the point of order. I remind the member for Wahroonga that I am dealing with a point of order taken by the member for Newtown. I do not need the assistance of the member for Wahroonga. The Minister has the call.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS:** I clarify for the member for Newtown that I did not mean every member of the crossbench. I have been talking to a number of members of the crossbench and they indicated that to me. But this is really important issue. We need to get it right because we have to address those two important issues of harm minimisation and money laundering. This Government will act to get it done—unlike the Coalition after 12 years of doing nothing.

#### TEACHER WORKFORCE

**Mr EDMOND ATALLA (Mount Druitt) (11:51):** My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Education and Early Learning. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on how the Government is responding to the teacher shortage crisis and the methods undertaken to date?

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (11:51):** I thank the member for Mount Druitt, one of my electorate neighbours, for that important question. As members know and as the communities of New South Wales know, the teacher shortage crisis that this Government inherited from the Liberals and The Nationals has very real impact. Every day I am hearing from concerned parents, students and teachers. Recently I was forwarded some correspondence from a parent who, in her own words, was "deeply concerned". I thought this is a great example to read out to the House as an example of the sort of feedback that I am getting as Minister, and that I know all local members are getting. This letter really sums up the crisis and the impact that it is having on all of our children. This woman is a mother of four. Her children are all at school. Her daughter's year 7 class is currently short of teachers in maths, woodwork, PDHPE, science and history—so this is not a small problem.

**The SPEAKER:** Opposition members will come to order. There is too much audible conversation in the Chamber.

**Ms PRUE CAR:** This is how much respect they have for teachers, by the way.

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

**Ms PRUE CAR:** Mr Speaker, can you stop the clock, please? This is eating significantly into the time for my answer.

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. Members on both sides of the House will come to order. Government members are being quite noisy, but the situation certainly is not assisted by Opposition members. Members will come to come to order and listen respectfully to the Minister's answer.

**Ms PRUE CAR:** I thank Government members for their inspiration. This woman's husband is a head teacher so she well knows what is happening. He cannot find anyone to cover his vacancies at school. The letter, which came to me in correspondence, ends with:

... I recognise that there is no immediate fix to this problem, it would be nice to see that education, and in particular the teacher shortages, are a priority.

I can tell this mother that of course it is a priority for this Government, addressing this as one of our number one priorities. The Liberals and The Nationals called it a beat-up and tried to cover it up. Every member who is now



in opposition refused to acknowledge there was a crisis—or so I thought. I can inform the House that we now know there is at least one Liberal who is prepared to call this out. The letter I received from this concerned mother was sent to me by none other than the Liberal member for Davidson. Like a newborn entering the world, he has come to his time in Parliament and has just discovered that his own party has left the people of New South Wales with a teacher shortage crisis. The member for Davidson asked me, as Minister, "Could you please consider the concerns ... We look forward to your advice." [*Extension of time*]

I am more than happy to provide the concerned mother with advice that under the Liberals and The Nationals we had record numbers of teacher vacancies—double the number of vacancies as when the Liberals and The Nationals came to government. In Davidson, the member's own electorate, vacancies increased by—wait for it—200 per cent. No wonder the member for Davidson is so concerned about the Liberals mismanagement of the education system. I know the member for Hornsby once referred to the member for Davidson as a former junior staffer who does not represent his community, which I think is incredibly unfair.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Oatley will come to order. The member for Kellyville will cease his conversation. I call the member for Oatley to order for the first time.

**Mr Paul Scully:** He has had the guts to stand up and call it.

**Ms PRUE CAR:** I want to give him some credit for acknowledging and having the guts, as the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces said, to acknowledge what is one of the biggest crises we face as a State. I assure the member for Davidson and his community and the communities of New South Wales that we have already started the hard work to address this crisis. We are ensuring that once again teachers are valued. We have abolished the wages cap. We are ending the obsession with casualisation by making 16,000 teachers and support staff permanent. But I tell the House what we will not be doing. We will not be following the advice of the member for Wahroonga. I think what we all will be doing on the weekend is putting in our AirPods and listening to his podcast.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. The Minister will resume her seat. The member for Wahroonga rises on a point of order. What is the member's point of order?

**Mr Alister Henskens:** There needs to be a new standing order about mentioning my podcast. My point of order relates to relevance. My podcast has nothing to do with the question that was asked of the Minister.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. That was another free plug. The Minister has the call.

**Ms PRUE CAR:** I was going to say that on one of the episodes of his podcast, his idea was to open schools at 7.30 a.m. and end them at eight o'clock at night. I can inform the teachers of New South Wales that we will not be making them work 12 hours a day.

#### MINISTER FOR POLICE AND COUNTER-TERRORISM

**Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (11:58):** My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. Given that the Minister failed to comment on the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission report on police handling of domestic violence; and that, after the Yamba murder-suicide, failed to order a review of the Firearms Registry review dealing with mental health issues until the Opposition suggested it; and failed to hold a media conference until 22 days after the tragic tasering of Mrs Clare Nowland—

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** Point of order: Standing Order 128 requires that:

2. Questions should not contain

- (a) statements of facts or names of persons unless they are strictly necessary to render the question intelligible and can be authenticated

Questions cannot contain inference or imputation. This question directly suggests an imputation against the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. The question is out of order. If the member has a direct question, she should ask a direct question.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** To the point of order: There is no point of order. The Leader of the House did not allow the member for Vaucluse to finish her question. He would be completely unable to determine whether they were necessary facts under the standing order. They are necessary facts—

**The SPEAKER:** I have heard the Manager of Opposition Business. The member for Vaucluse will restate the question in full. I will hear the entire question uninterrupted, and then make a determination.

**Ms KELLIE SLOANE:** My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. Given that the Minister has failed to comment on the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission report on police handling

of domestic violence; failed, after the Yamba murder-suicide, to order a review of how the Firearms Registry review deals with mental health until the Opposition suggested it; and failed to hold a media conference until 22 days after the tragic tasering of Mrs Clare Nowland, has the police commissioner issued a missing persons alert for the Minister?

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Attorney General rises on a point of order. Opposition members will come to order. The member for Wahroonga will come to order.

**Mr Michael Daley:** The problem with the question—and with the whole line of questioning—is that it offends the standing orders in so many ways. In my long association with this House, this is the first time that I have heard an Opposition, for political purposes, seek to impugn the reputation of our police and the police commissioner. We have reached a new low. This is all on Mr Senior Counsel on the Opposition side of the House.

**The SPEAKER:** I thank the Attorney General. I uphold the point of order raised by the Leader of the House and rule the question out of order. I will give the Opposition the opportunity to reword the question. If that can be done immediately, I will hear the question; if it cannot, the question may be deferred to a later time.

**Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (12:02):** My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. Is the Minister the subject of a missing persons alert?

**Mr Michael Daley:** Point of order: Mr Speaker, under the standing orders and several rulings of your predecessors, questions during question time must seek information. That question did not.

**The SPEAKER:** The question does seek information in a satirical sense—but only in a satirical sense. I rule the question out of order.

### BUSHFIRE READINESS

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (12:03):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Emergency Services. Will the Minister update the House on what the Government is doing to prepare us for the upcoming bushfire season?

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (12:04):** I thank the member for Blue Mountains for her question and for highlighting this important issue. This is obviously a great matter for her and for her community. I also put on record our thanks to her son for putting his life at risk during the recent bushfires. I know how much damage the fires did to the community, and the risk that he took. I really appreciate that, as I appreciate anybody who risks their own safety for the protection of the community. I thank the 70,000 members of the RFS, which is mostly made up of volunteers.

As a government, our role is to provide the emergency services with the funding and resources that they need for their vital work to protect the community now and to prepare for the future. As we move from a La Niña to an El Niño climate pattern, the memory of the Black Summer bushfires stills hangs heavy over all of us. We will never forget the 2019-20 fire season for the damage it did and the tragic loss of life, property and livelihoods. We will not forget the way that the State and the entire nation came together to support those communities.

Today the Government will table a progress report on the NSW Bushfire Inquiry. Upon being made Minister, I immediately sought an update on the progress made on the recommendations of the inquiry. It is clear that whilst important headway has been made, a significant body of work still remains outstanding. Of the 148 recommendations and sub-recommendations, only 68 per cent have been completed and the remaining 32 per cent are in progress. Three recommendations are currently overdue by 21 months. That includes, for example, communicating hazard reduction priorities to local communities. The Government commits itself to delivering on the outstanding recommendations. We must make sure we are as well prepared as possible should we face another Black Summer.

The prolonged wet conditions over the past 18 months have caused problems. They have produced ideal growing conditions for pasture and crops, particularly in the west of the State, increasing the risk of significant grassfires over summer. Large areas of bushland adjacent to major urban areas that were not affected in 2019-20 now have even higher fuel loads, which is a significant concern. The RFS is far from complacent, committed to confining 80 per cent of fires to 10 hectares. It has also looked at deploying aerial and remote crews to extinguish small fires before they get a chance to get a strong foothold. [*Extension of time*]

The RFS has also expanded the number of multipurpose firefighting helicopters, with a further three becoming operational before the 2023-24 fire season. We have also increased the support for rapid initial responses by deploying helicopters based in Coffs Harbour, Dubbo and Cooma, as well as pre-positioning aircraft

across the State so that they can quickly respond. Members know that New South Wales is one of the most bushfire-prone places on Earth. Let us be honest: Hazard reduction is not where it needs to be. For 2022-23, local bushfire management committees proposed more than 320,700 hectares of hazard reduction work. But completion of that work has been inhibited significantly by protracted periods of high rainfall and flooding, as we have seen over the past 1½ years.

Between 1 July 2022 and March this year, fire agencies and land managers had been able to treat only 13,575 hectares in terms of hazard reduction. But I am pleased to inform the House that in the past three months, there has been a laser-like concentration on accelerating this work and we have seen a dramatic uplift. I asked for an update on Monday this week. Agencies had managed to treat additional 66,275 hectares—that is a massive increase of 388 per cent over the past three months. While this improvement is a good step in the right direction—I know that my maths is pretty good—there is still a long way to go. We will continue to do everything that we can.

The RFS is looking at a strategic fire trails program, making sure that we can access any fire trails as needed. It is ensuring that firefighters can access fires and contain them safely. More than 300 mitigation crew members are on the ground trying to take advantage of every possible situation to address hazard reduction. There is so much more that I could say. The Government will continue to do everything that it can to keep communities safe. I thank the RFS and the volunteers. *[Time expired.]*

### ROADS FUNDING

**Mrs JUDY HANNAN (Wollondilly) (12:09):** My question is directed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Like many other members in this House, I committed at the last election to fight to make road improvements. My commitment was to reclassify Silverdale Road, Remembrance Driveway and other interconnecting roads in the electorate of Wollondilly as State roads or regional roads, which could be fulfilled with the stroke of a pen. Will the Minister outline why this is not possible under the Labor Government? Will the Minister inform the House why asking for roads to be reclassified actually results in no extra funding? Will the Minister outline what extra funding commitments are due to ensure these roads are funded equally to those in neighbouring council areas? Will the Minister commit today to meet with me and with Wollondilly council representatives to help ensure they are accountable for, as well as informed about, the funding and repair provisions for these interconnecting roads?

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Wollondilly will come and see me to discuss how to prepare a question for question time.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (12:10):** I am so excited by the enthusiasm of the member for Wollondilly. I met with the member earlier this week, and the member will be meeting with John Graham from the other place. The member has a difficult electorate in one sense because it is on the border of a rural and regional area while also having strong metropolitan pressures in terms of road funding. Her questions are the same questions I have fielded from a lot of members in this place. A huge number of members opposite have asked me why reclassification was not done in the past four years while they were in government. It is a question we all have on our lips. The problem is that the school captain in the other place, ex-Minister Faraway, did not quite get to finishing this while he was busy throwing out Fantaes, lollies, doughnuts and ciggies. From 8 November last year he woke up every day knowing that he had the report of the reclassification panel, which was convened by his Government.

There were three Ministers involved. Former Minister Pavey announced in 2019 that up to 15,000 kilometres of roads in New South Wales could be reclassified or transferred back to the State Government. Then we had the member for Bathurst, who is not in the Chamber at the moment, take over the task. He had the interim panel report and he sat on it for about six months. Unfortunately for the school captain, he could not quite get the report out. He woke up every day from 8 November—every single morning for 120 days before the last election—and said, "No, I'm not going to do it. Not today. It's not happening." We begged him. Unlike the former Minister, I have read the terms of reference of the panel, which clearly state:

All work of the Panel, including any reports prepared for government, will be treated as Cabinet-in-Confidence until the Government makes a decision for its public release ... The Panel will make recommendations for consideration by the NSW Government, with the Government response to any recommendations to be determined through the Cabinet process.

As a result, the final report is a Cabinet-in-confidence document. I know that the school captain has been over in the other place and down in the theatre the other day waving a document that he claims to be that report. He said, "Just come and ask me." I think we were all here a couple of weeks ago when members on the other side of the House were getting pretty agitated about Cabinet-in-confidence documents, real or imagined.

The problem I have is that the former chair of that committee has been ringing my office offering to brief me. Honestly, I cannot take that call. I cannot accept that report because it was Cabinet in confidence. In the

Westminster system we have to respect Cabinet processes. What is the approach from this Government? The Minns Government has been very clear about its intended approach to local government and the regions. *[Extension of time]*

Mr Speaker, I thank you for the extension because it gives me time to talk about Labor's approach to regional transport and road funding, which is to work with councils like the member's two councils—Wollondilly and Wingecarribee—and with local members like her. That is why, when I was first appointed to my role by the Premier, I made it a strong priority to write to every member of Parliament and to every local government councillor, mayor and general manager to tell them specifically about Labor's commitment, which is to build on that \$670 million fund. The former Government had no money behind that reclassification report. They belatedly put in \$250 million for the 400 kilometres of roads in the interim, but they had no money for that report. They went to the last election saying it could be another eight years. They were going to hold the member for Wollondilly's council on a promise for another eight years. It is very frustrating for that council, where State roads stop at the border and become local roads. I have heard this from across the State. It is so shameful.

I tell the member today that Wingecarribee council will get extra money. Wollondilly council did get a bit of extra money under the metropolitan funding, but we will look at strategic, regional, integrated transport plans that look after the whole State and do not just cut it up into little squares. If a government is only funding yellow squares—I found out from some of those members on the other side that they did not even fund the blue squares in the regions—councils would have no hope, just as we had no hope for 12 long years. This is a new order. The school captain has gone—he is off with his lollies, Fantaes, doughnuts and smokes—and we are here for the future. We are funding roads. We will work with the member for Wollondilly and I will meet with her and her councils anytime. I thank the member for the question.

#### DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

**Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (12:15):** My question is addressed to the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Will the Minister please update the House on what the Minns Government is doing to support culturally and linguistically diverse women at risk of domestic violence and homelessness?

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (12:16):** I thank the member for East Hills for her commitment to this area. I was pleased to be in Greenacre on 7 June with Muslim Women Australia to announce a project in the local area to deliver 12 units, valued at \$7.2 million. Those 12 units will provide housing for vulnerable culturally and linguistically diverse women so that they can leave violent situations and not be at risk of homelessness. I thank the member for East Hills for her commitment to the ongoing prevention of domestic violence.

#### *Documents*

#### INDEPENDENT PRICING AND REGULATORY TRIBUNAL

##### Reports

**Mr RYAN PARK:** In accordance with section 59 of the Water NSW Act 2014, I table the report of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal entitled *WaterNSW's compliance with its operating licence 2021-2022: Report to the Minister*, dated March 2023.

#### AUDITOR-GENERAL

##### Reports

**The CLERK:** In accordance with section 38EC of the Government Sector Audit Act 1983, I announce receipt of the Performance Audit Report of the Auditor-General entitled *Regulation of public native forestry*, dated 22 June 2023, received this day and authorised to be printed.

#### *Governor*

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

##### Debate resumed from an earlier hour.

**Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (12:19):** I pick up where I left off before question time by asking everyone in this House to reflect on a teacher who was particularly special to them. I take a minute to think about the impact that teachers have on us, our State and our country going forward. The Lieutenant-Governor said in his speech that education is nation-building. It is not just an investment in the future of the people of the State but also an investment in the future of knowledge and the development of new ideas. In our schools, students are

taught how to be critical thinkers, how to question and, like we have seen earlier today, how to debate. Over the past 12 years there has been an unprecedented level of teacher attrition. Last year, for the first time in history, more teachers resigned than retired. Being a former teacher myself, I know that teachers consistently discuss jobs outside of the profession as viable options. There are many complex reasons for that, but one of the main reasons is the complete lack of understanding and respect from those in the former Government.

For example, many classes do not have teachers and students are taken to the library. I have had constituents in Camden tell me that they have classes that are without permanent teachers for months, terms or, in some cases, nearly the entire year. I know of a year 9 maths class that was without a permanent teacher for the entire school year. There just is not a teacher to take on that role. One could imagine having their favourite teacher taken away for the entire year and having casuals day after day after day. Many of our important senior classes are being sent to the library, and the library staff are taking on seven, eight or nine classes at a time. Those students are being given time to do personal study rather than having important one-on-one student-teacher interaction.

People have been telling me, in my capacity as the Independent Education Union delegate, that there were schools that had to close and go to online learning one day a week on a rolling roster. For example, year 7 would be online on Mondays, year 8 would be online on Tuesdays et cetera, because there were not enough teachers within the school to have all of the students on site. One can imagine the impact that has on parents and members of the greater community that need to then stay home and supervise those students. On election day I had a volunteer who was a principal tell me that he had six resignations on his desk with post-it notes on them saying, "In case of a Liberal win." They were sitting on his desk, and he was waiting for the results on election day to see if those teachers would walk away. I am pleased to say, having spoken to all six of those teachers, that they stayed on. I thank them for their service.

This Government is absolutely putting teachers and support staff first. It is saying, "You are enough. You are doing all of the heavy lifting in our schools." It is important that we continue to support our teachers and recognise that there is a crisis. The first step to fixing a crisis is recognising it. I used to sit in staffrooms listening to the former education Minister from the other place continuously saying that there is no teacher shortage, when we had 16 or 17 teachers not in on any given day and classes were being split, merged or sent to the library. There 100 per cent is a crisis in our schools. It is upsetting for our teachers to be told that they are not worth hearing and that they are not being listened to.

The Government has already started to reduce workloads by employing support staff to take on specific roles. The very next day after that program was rolled out by Minister Car, I had a teacher from Mount Annan High School come up to a mobile office I had and tell me about the immediate impact it had on her school. By having an excursion manager and an excursion supervisor in the school, there were able to actually go on excursions. Up until that point, the teachers were too busy teaching day to day and trying to cover and merge lessons to go on excursions, which is a very important part of education. It is important to go out and learn in workplaces away from the classroom.

The Government has also committed to moving 10,000 teachers to permanent positions. It is easy for people who have always had a permanent job to forget what it means to be a temporary teacher. I am friends with teachers in the Camden electorate who have been temporary teachers for over 30 years. That is 30 years of having to find out on the first day of school every year whether they have a job or not—whether they are going to be employed in their school or are going to spend the next week driving around to all of the local schools to find out if they have a new position. That has an ongoing effect on job insecurity, particularly for young staff. I thank the Lieutenant-Governor for pointing out the impact this has on a person being able to lay down roots and start a family within a community. Knowing where you are going to be working is an important part of becoming and staying part of a community. The Government has committed to introducing a ban on mobile phones in all public schools. While I know that the teens in my household are not so thrilled with that—

**Mr Steve Whan:** Their teachers might be.

**Mrs SALLY QUINNELL:** —their teachers are absolutely thrilled. There is nothing more upsetting than standing at the front of class and expounding your incredible knowledge, only to look over and see that everyone is on their phone. It is not dissimilar to question time sometimes. It can be very upsetting. Teachers will know that students are going to speak to each other in the playground. There are ongoing concerns for teachers. For example, students will be able to go to the bathroom knowing that there is not a mobile phone recording device in the bathroom with them. Those are things that teachers are facing. Teachers will know that if they allow a student to go to the bathroom during class, they will not have walked off to film a TikTok, which is a real concern.

The people of Camden have spoken clearly about the need for more schools in the electorate. They were told by the former Government that they were not going to get a new high school but would instead share a high school with the electorate of Leppington. In fact, one person in my electorate told me that they were told by the

former Government that they did not need a new school, because the Government did not realise that the developments of Gregory Hills, Gledswood Hills, Leppington and Willowdale are all next to each other. It would be a shame if someone sat down with a map and realised that 100,000 people would need a high school. So this new Government has committed to two high schools—one in Gregory Hills and Gledswood Hills and one in Leppington, each side of Camden Valley Way. It is important that schools are near communities.

People in the Camden area also found it amazing that Gregory Hills Public School was not slated to be built until 2027—that is, until I was preselected. Then, when I was preselected and started meeting with the community, it was suddenly one of 15 schools that popped up like daisies out of the snow with demountables. Suddenly, a principal was hired for the school and it was set to start—which it has. Gregory Hills Public School started this year, and it is very successful. I am a proud supporter of that school and of the community that it serves. It is important that schools are within the communities that they serve. Schools are incredibly important hubs of learning and knowledge, but they are also important for communities to get together and meet people. That is especially true in new estates, where people are moving in, often from diverse areas, and need to create a sense of community quickly.

Another thing mentioned in this fantastic speech by the Lieutenant-Governor was health care and access to health care. Our Government's priority of having access to health care is nowhere clearer than in Camden. We have had unprecedented development over the past 10 years, but we have not had any movement toward any sort of healthcare access. It seems the people who were formerly in government felt it okay for Camdenites to travel to Campbelltown, Liverpool or Nepean hospitals, which are three of the busiest hospitals in this State. The Minns Government has committed to finding a space and building a new public hospital in the aerotropolis. We know the importance of having an airport and a hospital next to each other. People speak to me continually about their fear of having a brand-new airport for New South Wales and not having a hospital next to it. We need to have those two things next to each other, as we do with the Mascot airport and St George Hospital. It is important that the people of Camden be able to access affordable health care. In what has been called a privatisation by stealth, accessibility to health care is constantly being sent to the private sector. So people in Camden are expected to pay for services that are free everywhere else in Sydney.

More police officers have been committed to us because, once again, the infrastructure has not come with the development of the new housing. I have been told we have fewer police officers now than we did when Camden was a 40,000-person town. That is a major problem. We have two cars that can patrol the area, and they are expected to patrol from the Liverpool area and Oran Park all the way down to Bowral. I do not know whether people in this House know the constraints with that. If two police cars are attending a car accident on the M5, near Bowral, they are a good hour away from anywhere else in the electorate. That is not good enough when we have such a large number of people moving into the area.

The thing people in Camden are talking to me most about and the thing that is hitting the most with the cost-of-living crisis is tolls. The Government's commitment to introduce a two-year cap of \$60 a week on tolls is massive news to the people of Camden. Every single way out of Camden involves a toll road, it being in south-western Sydney. In my time out on the doors, I doorknocked people who are paying \$180 a week in tolls. That includes two people going to work and sporting commitments. In fact, one family told me that the son may not play soccer this year because "We just can't afford to get him there." This is a disgusting representation of how south-western Sydney and Camden in particular have been left short when it comes to infrastructure.

We do not have access to the same things that everyone else in Sydney does, and that is on the former Liberal Government. It left us behind. We were expected to accept the houses, and we are happy to accept everyone coming to Camden. It is a great place. I suggest that everyone wants to live there. But we do not have access to roads, health care and education, and a tenet of our Government is to deliver them. I thank the Lieutenant-Governor for his beautiful welcome to the new people in the House.

**Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro) (12:33):** I am thankful for this opportunity to respond to the Lieutenant-Governor's address. I have seen a few Governors' addresses over the years. I must say it is far more pleasurable to hear one that outlines the Labor program. It is nice to hear the agenda for the next four years of government being outlined and focusing on the things Labor has come in to address. As everyone knows, I was a late starter on the last election campaign. Some of the reasons why I decided to run were outlined in the Lieutenant-Governor's address. It talked about education being a first-order priority. I endorse many of the sentiments outlined by the member for Camden in her speech, except perhaps that everybody should want to live in Camden because, obviously, Queanbeyan and the south-east is the place to be.

The Governor's address outlined the Government's commitments around teachers. I highlight that service provision is about more than buildings. It tends to be forgotten sometimes when we see big cheques being presented and big announcements of capital programs. I outlined some of those capital programs for Monaro, which will come as a result of the agenda outlined in the Lieutenant-Governor's speech. But staffing those facilities

is the absolute key. The attrition and shortage of teachers, which the member for Camden talked about, is one key reason why I decided to run. Virtually every day, I was hearing about children being in playgrounds for hours on end because teacher shortages were affecting classes. To be fair, that is still going on because it takes time to address it. I am getting feedback from some local high schools about multiple classes now in the halls because it is too cold to be in the playgrounds, and from leaders of our schools, who every day are trying to replace teachers who are away and fill in for teachers they cannot recruit.

In Monaro and some of the neighbouring electorates it is particularly difficult because we border the Australian Capital Territory, and the Territory's offering for teachers is attractive to some of them. It is a real challenge for our region. One reason why the Territory's offering for teachers in terms of salaries is more attractive is because of the ridiculous 2.5 per cent wage cap the previous Government insisted on for public sector workers, which saw them fall more and more behind in real terms against inflation in Australia, making many other occupations, particularly in our region, more attractive. We have consistently seen teachers leaving teaching in New South Wales for a number of reasons: firstly, the inability to get permanency; secondly, more attractive working hours and working conditions in, say, the public service in Canberra or in the Australian Capital Territory teaching service; and, thirdly, the massive workloads they were expected to deal with because of the shortage of teachers. It was very much a circular issue where one problem was compounding and causing another.

So I was thrilled to hear the Lieutenant-Governor confirming some of the policies Labor took to the election, particularly around converting temporary teachers into permanent teachers. We have said we will convert 16,000 teachers and school staff members from temporary positions to permanent ones. I have been gratified by the rapid progress made on that. We have heard the education Minister in question time since then, saying that, just three months into this Government's term, 6,000 teachers have taken up those permanent positions. That is phenomenal, and I do not think anybody in their wildest dreams could have expected that our progress on that would be so quick. It reflects a government committed to implementing its policies and fulfilling its promises to the people of New South Wales.

That this was so needed can be seen by the fact that people have taken it up so fast. Even in question time today, the Minister was reading a letter from somebody who was talking about some of these issues. That is very close to home for me. My daughter is a teacher at our local high school. Indeed, she works at the high school where she went to school. She spent three years working as a temporary teacher. She managed to get permanency before the election, which was great. But, as she looked at her life as a newly married person with a mortgage, she certainly wondered whether her temporary job offered the conditions that she and her husband needed to buy a home.

Incidentally, not so long ago my son-in-law embarked on an apprenticeship. Many of the issues that we have heard about, such as access to apprenticeships and assistance for apprentices, have also been very relevant in our lives. But, of course, it is about our whole electorate. When I visit other high schools and primary schools around the Monaro electorate, I hear consistently that the teacher shortage is the number one problem they face. The material that we saw in the Governor's speech and elsewhere projected a shortfall of 4,100 teachers by 2025. None of us who are committed to public education can in any good conscience allow that situation to continue.

We must also see investment in vocational education and training [VET]. I have heard some terrific stories about the work of high schools in our region to link VET courses with employers. In fact, just the other day I toured the Snowy 2.0 project—which is a topic for another day, but it is a very interesting project—and heard about the strong links that have been made between the contractors and proponents of that project and Monaro High School. They are providing VET courses for students who are undertaking training in concrete casting facilities in Cooma. It is great to see that link between industry and education. One thing that has held back our vocational training in Monaro over the past decade has been the winding back of the usage of TAFE facilities. Cooma has fabulous facilities, including a fully commercial kitchen at the Cooma TAFE—which, incidentally, was built during my last term as the local member—and there is another in Jindabyne.

**Mr Stephen Bali:** It's still standing.

**Mr STEVE WHAN:** It is still standing, but it is vastly underutilised because the funding has not been there for TAFE. We must provide those vocational courses. Members would know that the Cooma and Jindabyne economies are driven in large part by hospitality. Those programs must continue to run. I look forward to the Government's commitment to TAFE, which benefits our area. On health, we have talked about the incredible challenge in making wages in health competitive in order to retain those workers in the system. Recently I spoke in this place about the fabulous work of Queanbeyan hospital and its maternity department. I am aware that in that area, in Cooma and in our other hospitals and smaller facilities around Monaro, there are massive problems with engaging the workforce, to the point that our local health district has spent time in England and Ireland. It has directly gone there to recruit people to come to our region to work. I hope that that will help to alleviate some of the issues, but it will not alleviate all of them.

During the election campaign I made a commitment to provide health and aged care in Bombala, which will be delivered by the Government. It is very important. Currawarna in Bombala, which used to be a nursing home, will be reopened as a supported accommodation facility for elderly people and people who cannot live at home. That is a very important community-driven project. The community has raised a couple of hundred thousand dollars or more on its own to open that, and the Labor Government will contribute \$840,000 to help that along the way. That will combine with the expansion to Bombala hospital, which will bring in new aged-care beds.

I acknowledge the previous Government worked on that project as well. Indeed, it completed the scoping and studies for it. However, as we went in to the election campaign the project was held up by the former Government's ridiculous need to challenge Federal Labor. It said, "We will only do this if you cough up money," but it did so by press release rather than by constructive discussion. The people of Monaro can expect that, over the next four years, when I work with our fabulous Federal member Kristy McBain it will be by talking to her and working with her on those issues, rather than by making it a political pointscore exercise, which holds up projects in our communities rather than moves them along.

The other area of health that I highlight briefly is the previous Government's announcement of a large amount of funding for a special activation precinct in Jindabyne. I have some concerns about that because a number of matters on that project take a fairly paternalistic approach. The previous member essentially said, "This is going to happen." The community was told what was going to happen, rather than the member listening to feedback. One of the critical flaws that I found in that project, which I was quite frankly blown away about, was that in planning for a very large increase in population for Jindabyne, no-one had spoken to NSW Health about the need to plan for and expand health services to go along with that. I am seeking to rectify that at the moment, as it is absolutely vital for that region.

The Lieutenant-Governor talked a lot about housing. During my previous time as local member, housing was an issue in Queanbeyan but not so much in other centres. Now it is an issue in every centre in the Monaro electorate. I am working with Karabar Housing, which is a community housing provider. We must do a whole lot in all areas of housing—social housing, key-worker accommodation and affordable housing. I will seek to push along a number of projects. I very much welcome the announcement made this week or last week by the Federal Government to provide \$2 billion for social housing. I will certainly lobby to get our fair share of that in Monaro so that we can work on some of the housing crisis touchpoints around Queanbeyan and Cooma.

At the moment Cooma is particularly overwhelmed by the Snowy 2.0 workforce. While those workers have been difficult to house, it has also made life even more difficult for people who are on the edge of being able to afford housing. During the election campaign I heard stories of women in their 50s who were sleeping in their cars. That is a frightening prospect when it gets down to minus 7 degrees or minus 8 degrees at night. We must address that. [*Extension of time*]

In his address the Lieutenant-Governor spoke about the Government's approach to climate policy. That has been a strong focus for me in the years that I have spent out of politics. In the Monaro electorate, which has alpine areas such as the incredibly valuable Kosciuszko National Park, the environment was formed over millions of years. But even over my lifetime and during my visits to the snow over many years, having grown up in the area—and I hope to visit in the next few weeks—I have seen a reduction in snowfall. The snowline has moved higher. That has serious impacts on much of the alpine flora and fauna. We must take that seriously. That is why, if one visits the snow, they will see that the resorts and many people at the snow play an active part in campaigning for climate action. They see the impact that climate change is having on their doorstep.

Over a number of years I worked in the irrigation sector in rural New South Wales. I saw a lot of the work that is going on to predict the impacts of climate change on the region. In the Murray-Darling Basin, for example, the CSIRO predicts that climate change will result in a 20 per cent reduction in run-off, which is the amount of water that falls on the land and runs into our rivers. That will seriously impact the environment and our productive capacity to grow the food that the people of Australia need and that we export to the world. It needs to be addressed with continuing work on efficiency in production. In implementation planning we need to work out which of those vulnerable areas like wetlands we ensure we save and what methods we use to do that.

We cannot isolate the impacts of climate change to one part of a river system. We cannot say that we will be able to save all the wetlands in the system if our water levels are unlikely to inundate areas because the natural rainfall and run-off has reduced so much. By the same token, we need to make sure we continue to be an efficient State in producing our food and healthy fruit and vegetables. Some 80-odd per cent of the fruit and vegetables that we consume in New South Wales come from irrigated products. It is a difficult balance and one I would like to talk about in more detail during this term.



In his speech the Lieutenant-Governor also talked about the Government's Made in NSW policy. We hear a lot about that with things like trains. When people visit Melbourne, for example, they see "Made in Victoria" proudly displayed on the sides of their trains. In New South Wales, we see "Made in South Korea"—but the trains are sitting idle for four years because of the mess the previous Government made of those purchases. It did not have faith in New South Wales manufacturers to do it. I will talk about some other aspects of Made in NSW because there are huge opportunities for our rural and regional areas. The policy opens opportunities in our farming sector to produce more for export and to do more manufacturing and stage production of our own product.

When looking at how we can work with our primary industry sector to further process its product before it goes to market or is exported, and also looking at the feed-in for those sectors, we see those sectors have a huge demand for machinery and things like fertilisers. Many of those things are produced overseas. Fertilisers, for example, were in short supply over the past few years. It was exacerbated by COVID and by trade disruptions but also by energy costs because many of them use a lot of energy to produce. Those are the sorts of things that a constructive government will look at over time. For example, when we look at a strategy for the energy sector, part of that can talk about how those energy needs and the production of hydrogen, for example, feed into our fertiliser manufacturing. We are extremely dependent on foreign sources for that, so when trade relationships break down with China or any other country we can be seriously negatively affected.

I look forward to giving that input to this Government over the next four years in talks about how we can try to play our part in becoming more self-sufficient, reducing our reliance on imports and making more of our primary products for export in a way that will generate jobs in rural and regional areas. Rural and regional areas should not be afraid of the transition to net zero. There are huge opportunities for our sectors in that. I have spent a bit of time involved in things like renewables in agriculture. There was a conference in Dubbo yesterday but I was not able to attend it, unfortunately. There are great opportunities for farmers in hosting renewables and still being able to conduct farming activities. In making the transition they can also make themselves a more attractive producer for retailers as they can tell consumers about their carbon impact.

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (12:53):** I thank the Temporary Speaker, the member for Sydney, for his indulgence of my love for my community and my joy in representing the electorate of Gosford in the Parliament.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich):** I have been looking forward to it.

**Ms LIESL TESCH:** Fabulous. I start by listing the fantastic suburbs in my community, because it really is a beautiful place on the Central Coast. As you cross the Hawkesbury River in the electorate of Gosford you arrive in Mooney Mooney. It is a gorgeous site on the edge of the Hawkesbury where we have a fantastic oyster farming community that looks after the wellbeing of the beautiful Hawkesbury River. They have been there for multiple generations. They were slightly neglected during the last flooding but still soldiering on as oyster growers. Oyster growers also inhabit the beautiful suburb of Spencer and further around to Gunderman. There is also the mountain district, which is a lovely part of the beautiful electorate of Gosford. There we have Mangrove Mountain, Peats Ridge, Calga, Kulnura and Lower Mangrove. I have a few new people formerly from the electorate of Wyong now in Kulnura. It is a beautiful area.

On the long weekend we had a fantastic harvest festival where thousands of visitors celebrated the farming industry in the electorate of Gosford. Mr Temporary Speaker, next year I advise you to come and pick some pecans during the harvest festival. It is on every year. I thank the Central Coast Council for the work it does promoting, supporting and organising behind the scenes to make that work. There is also a fantastic food and wine festival at Glenworth Valley, and Somersby is a gorgeous spot with an important industrial park. A great little suburb next to the expressway is Kariong. Then North Gosford and West Gosford are important industrial areas surrounding the capital city of the Central Coast, which is the fantastic city of Gosford. From Gosford there is the gorgeous and stylish East Gosford, which is near the Terrigal electorate. Then along the edge of the beautiful Brisbane Water we have West Gosford.

After that we have Point Clare, Tascott and Koolewong—they are fantastic suburbs. On the beautiful peninsula there is Woy Woy, Umina, Blackwall and Ettalong. They are gorgeous places to visit. My electorate extends down to beautiful Pearl Beach—it is well worth a visit for an early morning swim. Then there is fantastic Patonga. The land was originally inhabited by the Darkinjung and Kuringgai people. We have a proud Aboriginal history in our community. It is part of the Darkinjung Local Aboriginal Land Council area, which is doing fantastic work across our community. I am proud to represent Gosford and reply to the Lieutenant-Governor's speech to talk about the good things and the potential for my community over the next four years.

I am proud to be part of the Minns Government. My core Labor values were represented in the Lieutenant-Governor's speech. As a former schoolteacher, it is with absolute pride that I speak about the importance of investing in public education in New South Wales. I came into this place six years ago. I hate to say it but I got out of teaching just in time, before the failure to invest in the integrity of public education started

to hit our education department hard. Over the time I have been here I have seen the gutting of our public education system, and that has hurt our teachers and the outcomes for our kids. To be part of a government that is hitting the ground running with investment in public education makes me super proud. It makes me proud of the Minister for Education and Early Learning that we have 5,500 teachers and support staff who are now permanent. That was done in just three months. That delivery is hugely important and makes a clear statement to teachers and administrative staff in schools that we are there for them and absolutely care.

I have friends who have been temporary teachers for 30 years of their careers, like the member for Camden said. They now have a full-time job and that makes such a difference to their quality of life and their ability to invest in their own and their kids' futures. My partner is a teacher and every night he comes home with a pile of administration work. It is a massive, burgeoning pile of possibly unnecessary bureaucratic administration and accountability that he has to complete over and above his preparation for his classes and marking and reporting on his kids. We commit to removing the administrative burden on teachers so they can focus on what they are really there to do. We have kids in our public education system for 13 years. If we do a great job, we can turn lives around.

Kids from incredible disadvantage and from vulnerable families can come into the education system and get the opportunity to access quality education in their local community. We can take kids out of poverty. If that does not happen, government must look after those kids for another generation. It is important to invest so government does not have to do that. Teachers should have more time to spend on quality teaching. When teachers develop professional relationships with kids, they deliver so much more than the curriculum in their classrooms. They develop a great understanding of kids and the reality of how they live, and can provide support beyond the curriculum.

The previous Government left the State with a massive burden of school maintenance debt. My electorate of Gosford alone has a \$14.4 million school maintenance bill. When I left teaching, the book room roof at our school was leaking—despite pleas by our principal to get it fixed. In fact, the previous head teacher's personal collection of resources was pretty much destroyed. I have not checked in with the school, but hopefully the book room in the Human Society and its Environment department at Brisbane Water Secondary College no longer has water running through it when it rains. It is a tough burden, but I would like to see decent maintenance delivered to our schools with integrity. As far as investment in Central Coast schools, in my 12 years in Parliament all I have seen are upgrades to Wamberal Public School and Terrigal High School—which are, believe it or not, in the Terrigal electorate. So it is pretty exciting that the Government has announced construction of a new school in the Wyong electorate. It is most important that we invest in schools.

My former colleagues will be thrilled to know that mobile phones will not be allowed in the classroom after term 4. The kids might be upset, but it is a great outcome for my former colleagues. I am completely committed to that policy. My principal mates told me about another challenge they face. They asked, "How can we possibly manage when the behaviour policy introduced by the previous Government gives no alternatives for principals and schools to suspending kids who are creating havoc?" I am pleased to note that the education Minister has announced a review of the 2022 student behaviour policy, which will make a difference. Principals will sigh with relief. The previous policy was put in place with nowhere near the negotiation required. Another significant burden on our teachers is the 2 per cent wage cap. Our poor old teachers have lived way below the inflation rate for years. Busting that wage cap is super important and teachers will welcome it with open arms.

I also speak on behalf of TAFE and our vocational education system. The previous Government gutted TAFE. That was so disappointing, especially for vulnerable families and kids who live in disadvantage. TAFE is an important building block for kids who do not come from families with high levels of education and a stepping stone into tertiary education. To see TAFE diminished was most disappointing. I have said before in this place that my partner was a TAFE teacher. He taught a shipwright course. The course had been offered at three great locations in New South Wales but was then squashed into one location. My partner could see the writing on the wall, so he retrained as a high school teacher. That is one example of how our once proud New South Wales vocational education system has diminished. I look forward to seeing investment in TAFE and the restoration of tertiary education.

The Lieutenant-Governor also spoke about health, which is hugely important. My sister is a nurse and my mum worked in aged care. As a wheelchair user in New South Wales, I have been a beneficiary of the fantastic health system. As a 19-year-old, I spent three months in hospital, which was a quite transformative time. So I know the quality of health care that the State should provide. It is fabulous to live in a nation that has Medicare. That fantastic investment was one of the reasons I joined the Labor Party. But under the previous Government we saw the New South Wales health system shredded and our health professionals disrespected. Along with its other budget failures, the former Government committed to funding nurses but did not budget for them. Some 57 nursing

positions in my electorate are unfunded beyond the 2024-25 fiscal year. Finding funding for those 57 nurses is absolutely crucial, but the previous Liberal Government provided no budget space for it.

Almost 39,000 people presented to Central Coast emergency departments [EDs] in the final quarter of 2022. I thank every person who works in the emergency departments of Gosford and Wyong hospitals and in every other part of our health system. Chris Bowen's father lives in my electorate. I met him at the shops the other day. He had a small stint in hospital, and I am sure he will not mind me mentioning it. He said that the care provided despite the stress and understaffing was absolutely incredible. I thank our nursing staff and all our allied health staff for the amazing care they deliver.

The fact that 39,000 people are presenting to Central Coast emergency departments is a reflection on the previous Federal Government's failure to invest in GPs in our community. I am proud to work closely with the new Federal member for Robertson, Dr Gordon Reid, and the Federal member for Dobell, Emma McBride. I thank them for their great work and their push in the lead-up to the last Federal election to address the chronic GP shortage on the Central Coast. They have worked hard to make sure that the Central Coast is recognised as a distribution priority area for GPs. Tripling the bulk-billing incentives for doctors in our community and across New South Wales will hopefully add to the number of GPs in our community and take some stress off our emergency departments.

I commend the member for The Entrance for his work in pushing for the Long Jetty Urgent Care Clinic at the Long Jetty Health Care Facility, which definitely should ease the pressure on the system as people can pop into the urgent care centre rather than present at an ED. I know the member for Dobell and the member for Robertson are also working to develop urgent care centres at Gosford and Wyong to take pressure off EDs. Our health staff will be happy to see that we are removing the terrible 2 per cent wage cap. In time, we will see health wages rise. Our health system is facing a huge challenge. The Labor Government has committed \$97 million in health studies and subsidies to try to attract and retain talent in the health sector. While it is a small step at a time of crisis in health, I support our Minister for Health in his work to bring health workers back to the system and recruit more health workers, starting with our commitment to safe staffing in ED and maternity. I also thank the Minister for Health for visiting the beautiful Central Coast last week. He came straight to our ED and our medical imaging department to thank the staff for their fantastic work.

The Lieutenant-Governor also mentioned the environment. The beautiful Central Coast has a fantastic environment. I am proud to say that we are trying to chip away at the challenges we face. One of the challenges is the entry to the Brisbane Water. The Brisbane Water is part of the beautiful Broken Bay, and the Ettalong Channel opens up to the beautiful Brisbane Water. The previous Government committed \$6 million to dredging a number of sites along the New South Wales coast but, unfortunately, no action was taken on that funding. Less than two months after the election, there was a minute saying that the ferry had ceased operation because of the shallow water. [*Extension of time*]

No systems whatsoever were put in place under the previous supposed investment—not a cent spent putting any preparations in place. Of course, the ferry was cancelled and diverted to Patonga. The member for Terrigal is obviously upset. I am as well. He is crying to me that something must be done. But what work did his Government do? I thank the Minister for Transport, who has done an amazing job. A bus now runs from Ettalong to Patonga to get people onto the ferry that goes across to Palm Beach. In days to come we will also get a small ferry that goes from Wagstaff to Ettalong to get people from the Terrigal electorate to that bus and to bring tourists to Ettalong, because the Ettalong community really relies on those tourists. I will continue to put pressure on Transport for NSW to get that dredging application work done quickly so our communities can continue to operate without disruption to the ferry.

Back to the environment, the Central Coast Council has been left in a dire circumstance by the previous Government. The forced amalgamations of councils across New South Wales have not had a great outcome. The forced amalgamation of Gosford and Wyong councils on the Central Coast, which was not wanted by the community, did not see the savings that the previous Government pretended would be achieved. That council had quite a financial failure and a lot of our community services were removed as a result, much to the upset of our community. I thank the administrator and the CEO of the council for the work they are doing to turn that around, but we still have a lot of work to do. One thing that the council planned to get rid of in our community was Pelican Park in Woy Woy. That fantastic, historic destination has brought loads of joy over many years and is celebrated by lots of people. The Labor Government has committed \$100,000 for the redevelopment of Pelican Park, which is a great outcome for our community.

I could speak about lots of things in the Gosford electorate. The Labor Government is also absolutely committed to cultural development and growth on the Central Coast. The Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy and the 24-hour Economy Commissioner came to the Central Coast two weeks ago to speak to people from across the sector about the opportunities for growth for our night-time economy and live music. There are

lots of opportunities to work beside the Central Coast Council, which is developing its night-time economy strategy for future joy, live music and culture in the evening.

With absolute joy, I complete my reflection on the Lieutenant-Governor's speech by talking about cultural development in our community on the Central Coast. One recipient of an election grant has been the Naughty Noodle Fun Haus. As a result of an investment by the Labor Government, the Naughty Noodle Fun Haus will soon open a facility of its very own in Kibble Park, which is in the beating heart of Gosford. It will invigorate the daytime and night-time economy, celebrating the LGBTIQ+ community and including everybody. Gosford is a mighty fine location, and I am very proud to be the local member. I am proud to be part of the new Labor Government. I thank the Lieutenant-Governor for his commitment to a better New South Wales, and I am on that journey.

**Debate adjourned.**

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

*Motions*

**GAMBLING**

**Debate resumed from 1 June 2023.**

**Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (14:31):** By leave: I move:

That the amendment of Mr Harris be amended by omitting all words after "omitting" and inserting instead: "all words after 'That' and inserting instead 'this House recognises that every member in the Parliament has a responsibility to act to end gambling harm and money laundering.'"

If my amendment is agreed to, for the clarity for everybody watching at home, the amendment of the member for Wyong will read: That the motion moved by the member for North Shore be amended by omitting all words after "That" and inserting instead, "this House recognises that every member in the Parliament has a responsibility to act to end gambling harm and money laundering."

**Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (14:32):** By leave: The basic issue is gambling reform. I thank the member for North Shore for moving the motion for debate and further discussion on this issue. These machines are scientifically proven to manipulate human senses, prey upon the most vulnerable and those who can least afford to gamble. Just 1 per cent of gamblers whom we would classify as problem gamblers contribute vast amounts to the total gambling profits in this State. We have a business model that preys on the vulnerable. Money is hoovered out of the pockets of New South Wales residents by an electronic vacuum. This has significant and terrible impacts on problem addicts right across the State. Since campaigning on this issue, particularly at the last election, I was genuinely amazed at the number of people who sought me out to quietly say how this had affected their lives and how important it is to get this reform happening.

The second reason for reform is that criminal networks are laundering billions of dollars through gambling machines—the multi-agency Project Islington report showed that. The third reason is that a mandatory and identity-linked cashless gaming system with set limits would close the money laundering loophole and significantly limit the impacts of problem gambling. I acknowledge the former Premier, Dominic Perrottet, for his moral courage in this area. I believe his stance dramatically shifted this debate. He understood the importance of this issue and the need to get reforms underway. He worked very effectively with the crossbench. I do believe that the Premier and the Government now understand the importance of this issue. They have read the room on the need for reform. I welcome the constructive way in which they have worked with me, the member for Lake Macquarie, the member for Sydney in particular, and other members of the crossbench. I welcome the commitment of the Minister, the Hon. David Harris, who I genuinely believe wishes to drive poker machine reform.

I support and encourage an expansion of the cashless gaming trial to include more poker machines at more venues. The trial will be overseen by an independent panel, which will advise on technology, infrastructure, cost, impact on industry and employment, and options to reduce gambling harm. There should not be any unnecessary delay to the trial: The community expects progress on this issue and not at a glacial pace. However, I do accept that we need to do this right and, if that does take some extra time, so be it—as long as the commitment and actions remain genuine. I also welcome the other related gambling reforms, both legislative and regulatory, as promised by Labor in opposition. The reforms include bans on donations from clubs with poker machines to political parties, external signage for VIP gaming rooms being phased out, reducing cash limits for new machines from 1 July 2023 to \$500, and reforming older machines and expanding the self-exclusion register statewide.

I have met with representatives of large clubs in Wagga Wagga with poker machines and with representatives of ClubsNSW. I believe they are aware of the issues and understand the need to change. I acknowledge that change must be a fair transition, especially for regional areas. These venues must be supported so that their doors stay open and jobs are not lost. They are often the centre of community life. We need to support them in this transition. At this point it is critical to continue to work with the Government to achieve these important reforms for our communities.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (14:36):** In reply: I thank all members who contributed to debate on my motion. It just shows how many members of this House are concerned about this issue. I thank the members for the electorates of Wyong, Sydney, Manly, Campbelltown, Newtown, Murray, Granville and Wagga Wagga for their contributions to debate. What we have heard in this debate is general agreement across all members of this House that action on poker machine reform is crucial—that is, action to address both the social harms of problem gambling and to address the crime and money laundering implications that have been revealed by the NSW Crime Commission's report. We are yet to see the full extent of the concerning impacts of problem gambling across New South Wales, but we continue to have more and more evidence.

Just last week we had more evidence about the significant profits that are being reaped by poker machines across New South Wales, with Liquor and Gaming showing that there had been an increase in poker machine profits of 40 per cent, or \$1.2 billion, from the start of 2017 to 2022—and that is even while gaming machine numbers had dropped by 6.2 per cent. Although we have had an incredibly comprehensive conversation across our community, as the member for Wagga Wagga acknowledged, and there is strong support for these reforms, we see that the problem persists and it is potentially getting worse. While I agree with all members of this House that there is significant goodwill for an outcome, I remain concerned about the pace of that, and about the detail and focus of that. Today, if we were in a regime of the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government, we would have already had a road map underway to be set by the end of this year. The transition task force was due to commence in April 2023. We would have looked to have the road map for delivery of reforms in place by the end of 2023. I believe that that would have occurred.

We also would have expanded the current technology testing arrangements from 500 machines—which is all that Labor is committing to—to 2,000 machines this year. That work would already have been underway with a transition task force established that would encompass the police, Liquor and Gaming NSW, Treasury, Department of Customer Service and the Privacy Commissioner, and industry and harm minimisation representatives. Troublingly, what we have heard today is that the Labor Government has, once again, delayed action on this. I support the Government's good will and I want to support its endeavours to achieve this outcome, but given we do not have any information about timing and inclusions or exclusions, I remain concerned about when that will occur and what will happen.

The meagre trial set up as a pillar of the gambling platform Labor took to the last election is still not off the ground. I am concerned about the reasons given by Government members compared to what is in the public domain. We know that the people of this State deserve outcomes. Yes, we need to do it right. But we need to do it right and also in a timely manner, because too many people's lives are harmed in the short term. If we had a Liberal-Nationals government in place today, that government would be working towards legislation to end problem gaming by 2028. Government members know that we had incredible sincerity and a great intention to deliver that outcome.

I hope that Labor can work with us and with the crossbench and make use of all the good will across this House and this Parliament to achieve outcomes for New South Wales. We will work to ensure that we hold the Government to account in order that it does so, because New South Wales cannot allow this problem to remain. When it comes to reforming poker machines, eliminating the scourge of money laundering and ending the suffering of problem gambling for families across the State, we all deserve better.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich):** The member for North Shore has moved a motion, to which the member for Wyong has moved an amendment, to which the member for Newtown has moved an amendment. The question is that the amendment of the member for Newtown to the amendment of the member for Wyong be agreed to.

**Amendment of the member for Newtown to the amendment of the member for Wyong agreed to.**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Alex Greenwich):** The question is that the amendment of the member for Wyong as amended be agreed to.

**Amendment as amended agreed to.**

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

**Motion as amended agreed to.****TEACHER WORKFORCE****Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (14:45):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes that since 2017 just 63 per cent of the teaching workforce in New South Wales public schools have had the security of a permanent position, and we are in the midst of a teacher shortage crisis.
- (2) Recognises that the Government will transition 10,000 teachers and 6,000 education support staff in temporary positions onto permanent contracts, reduce the administrative workload and reform the curriculum.
- (3) Commends the work the Minister for Education and the Acting Secretary of the NSW Department of Education, Murat Dizdar, a former HSIE teacher, for their actions to support teachers across New South Wales.
- (4) Thanks teachers and commends the very important work of teachers in public education across New South Wales.

On behalf of the teachers and principals across my electorate and across New South Wales, I thank the Minister for Education and Early Learning and Murat Dizdar, Acting Secretary of the NSW Department of Education and former Human Society and its Environment teacher, for their actions in supporting teachers to restore the public education system. After 12 years of mismanagement of the education system, we are in the midst of a teacher shortage crisis. After 12 years of Liberal governments, the impact on our teaching workforce has been very clear. There are a number of teachers in the Chamber today who are here to support the motion. They know that we need significant reform of the education department in New South Wales.

Staff shortages result in classes being combined and collapsed. Earlier today we heard the member for Camden speak about the diabolical circumstances in her electorate. The member for Monaro spoke about the poor kids in collapsed classes. It is so cold there that they cannot be left outside, so they are all piled up in the hall because there are just not enough teachers. Kids across schools in New South Wales are working in the library. Teachers are afraid to take leave because of the impact on students, knowing that they cannot be replaced. They come back to school unwell. Staff are unable to complete mandatory professional learning because there are no staff members to cover their absence. I know—my partner is in that situation. There is a lot of professional development to be done, but staff cannot take leave to do it.

Another issue that impacts on school communities is that schools can no longer plan for excursions because there is no-one to cover classes. The old practice was to do a favour for a colleague while they were away, but there are just not enough teachers to be able to do it. One teacher I recently spoke with talked about how the teacher crisis disproportionately affects regional students. They explained how classes are merged with minimal supervision. There are no lesson plans, so children miss out on lessons. With minimal substitution staff to cover teacher absences, teachers have even less time to plan effective lessons. It hurts teachers to the core when they do not have time to do the most important work—the reason they actually entered the profession.

The size of classes continues to make teaching so much more difficult, requiring more marking and more administration. Most teachers are considerably burnt out trying to keep up with the workload. It is frightening that teachers are retiring rather than continuing to work beyond retirement age because they no longer have the energy to do the great work that teachers do. It is a tragedy.

Teachers have also talked about the fact that they are expending a lot of energy managing challenging behaviour, which is exemplified in regional areas, where there are fewer services, including mental health support. I am proud to be part of a government that has taken decisive action to change this, immediately getting to work on revising the previous Government's disastrous behaviour management policy. The situation has worsened. Only 63 per cent of the public school teaching workforce had the privilege of a permanent position when Labor arrived in government. The other 37 per cent faces job insecurity and constant uncertainty, impacting the appeal of teaching as a profession and the financial security of the teaching workforce.

Our teachers deserve job security. In my electorate, I have seen the impact of uncertainty and administration overload on teachers. I have spoken before about Sally Oman, a fantastic young teacher whom I previously taught. She has chosen to leave the profession. I want Sally to come back one day. It is heartbreaking. I commend the work of the Minister for Education and Early Learning, Minister Car, who has hit the ground running to lighten the extreme burden on teachers in New South Wales public schools. The Minister recognises the impact of impossible workloads on our teachers and support staff, who are leaving the system due to burnout. The former Government left the State with a crisis of casualisation in the teaching workforce. Teachers need permanent positions. Lacking job security, school leavers are increasingly shying away from the teaching workforce, with a 30 per cent decline in people choosing to study education after leaving school. It is a despicable reflection of the work of the previous Government.

Despite this, our teachers continue to work tirelessly to ensure that no child is left behind in our struggling education system. They are exhausted. The Minns Labor Government has worked alongside teachers to support them. Before the election, the Government committed to transitioning temporary teachers to permanent roles. There are 10,000 temporary teachers and 6,000 support staff heading into permanent positions, with 5,463 teachers having already been made permanent across New South Wales. I commend the education Minister and the Department of Education for that work. Our world-class teachers deserve certainty and job security. This is just the beginning of the turnaround in public education.

The New South Wales Government has moved quickly to reduce the administrative burden on teachers, allowing teachers to focus on what they entered the profession to do, which is teach our students. Recognising the impact of administrative burden, the Government has halved it, with more than 70 mandated changes to policies and processes set to begin in term 2. This is part of delivering the Government's election commitment of a reduction of five hours worth of administrative work per week. For years the education sector has been crying out for help. The Minns Labor Government has put a plan in place to support teachers, schools and children to get the education they deserve.

I send my sincere thanks to teachers across the Gosford electorate and New South Wales for the important work they do educating future generations of students. I know very well that investment in public education is incredibly important. We have 13 years with these kids to turn their lives around and give them opportunities. For some of our most vulnerable kids, who do not have the backing of their family, if we miss out during those 13 years, we miss out for another generation. Cheers to teachers in New South Wales.

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury) (14:52):** I welcome the opportunity to speak to this motion. I echo the comments of the member for Gosford at the end of her speech about thanking our teachers and educators across the State for the work they do. The member for Gosford spoke of the challenges faced by our teachers. I take this opportunity to read a quote from a newspaper article written by Nicole Precel. The headline is "Just up and quitting: Victorian schools short 1,000 teachers". It speaks of forcing some schools to run skeleton programs. The article goes on to say:

Victorian Principals Association president Andrew Dalglish said schools were in a weekly bind trying to plug holes, with principals regularly stepping in to teach ... principal Kate Morphy told the school community that several classes were without a permanent teacher and that they were working to fill those positions.

That article was in *The Age* and is referring to the Victorian school system under the Dan Andrews Labor Government. It is a myth to suggest that teaching challenges are unique to this State or are the fault of the previous Government. It does not reflect the situation across our nation. Government members may want to argue with the Federal education Minister, Jason Clare. Last year he said:

Teacher shortage is a key issue for all States, Territories and sectors. It is a challenge that faces school communities across Australia, and is particularly acute in rural, regional and remote areas, and in particular subject areas (such as science, mathematics, special/inclusive education, languages and technology and applied studies including agriculture, industrial technologies and engineering studies).

I call upon the Labor Government to be truthful and acknowledge that this is a challenge that is faced across the nation. We need to be working together across the nation to respond to it. It is one thing to deal with the issues that we face in our State; it is another thing to pretend that an issue is faced by our State alone and to try to pull the wool over the eyes of the people of New South Wales. We face challenges in education right across the nation.

The second point I make is around the initiatives to respond to these challenges. "Temp to perm" is an initiative that was started by the Liberal-Nationals Government. It was trialled in 2021 during the pandemic and allowed for temporary teachers to be converted to permanent positions. In January this year the former Government did the work to identify more than 11,000 teachers and 4,000 other school-based staff in New South Wales public schools who were eligible to transition from temporary to permanent employees. In the Parliamentary Budget Office costings referred by the Australian Labor Party in October 2022 and published in March 2023, with a proposal title of "Create 10,000 FTE permanent teaching positions", the PBO writes:

The PBO notes that a policy to convert 15,000 temporary teachers to permanent appointments in 2023 was announced by the Government in January.

The policy that Labor came up with was actually announced by the former Government in January this year. It is a good policy, because it was ours. It provides greater employment certainty for individuals, better succession planning, and leadership development opportunities for teachers, support staff and schools. Government members claim that this is their policy and that they are delivering on it; however, they copied our policy to fake the existence of an education policy and are now reaping the rewards of a well-thought-out approach from the former Liberal-Nationals Government.

While the support will keep existing teachers in the system, it will not bring new teachers into our public schools. I will help members oppose by talking through some of the other policy initiatives that they could be thinking of. There is the Grow Your Own program, which supports school learning support officers [SLSOs] to upskill and study teaching degrees while working in local schools. The program initially planned to support up to 100 SLSOs, but its popularity meant that the program doubled to 200 participants this year. The Liberal-Nationals Government had intended for another 300 participants to commence in 2024-25. I have seen firsthand in schools in my electorate, such as at Lavington Public School, that SLSOs are taking up the opportunity to move into the teaching profession.

There is also the Recruitment Beyond NSW program to recruit qualified teachers from interstate and overseas. I know Government members will make comments about that. It is a policy that reflects similar policy in Victoria. There is the Rewarding Excellence in Teaching project, so that excellent teachers can access higher pay, new career pathways and enhanced status. Classroom teachers assessed as expert teachers under the Rewarding Excellence in Teaching project are able to attract salaries of up to \$147,000 a year or beyond, in recognition of their skills and impact.

The former Liberal-Nationals Government also slashed up to 50 hours of administrative burden a year. This is after 12 years during which 10,000 more teachers came into the system. The workforce has grown by 15 per cent, compared with an enrolment increase of 7.6 per cent. I come back to my first point. We are talking about challenges that the teaching profession faces across the nation, which Labor Federal Minister for Education Jason Clare has spoken about. Labor is spruiking its conversion of 10,000 temporary positions to permanent FTE positions, but the PBO report on the Labor policy says it was announced in January 2023 by the previous Government. I thank our teachers for their work. Labor can keep copying the great policies of the Liberals and The Nationals.

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (15:00):** As a casual and temporary teacher for over 25 years who was never offered a permanent position because of my circumstances, I feel proud to stand in this place as part of the Minns Labor Government and talk about its record of achievement and the runs it already has on the board. I am proud to speak to this fantastic motion moved by the member for Gosford, and to be here amongst a number of teachers. For the first time in recent history, teacher resignations are outstripping retirements in New South Wales. That is one of the starkest indications that anyone could find of a system in crisis—and it is on the former Government. Over the past decade more teachers than ever before have thrown in the towel. That is after acquiring their degrees and HECS debts, attaining teacher accreditation and having committed years to the idea that they could improve the lives of young people. Just for the record, under the Liberal-Nationals Government we had a teacher shortage crisis. Everyone spoke about that, but no-one spoke more about it than teachers themselves.

The statistics show clearly that teacher resignations are at record highs; they quadrupled over the term of the previous Government. The resignation rate of early career teachers is at 19 per cent and there are record teacher vacancies of almost 2,000 positions. That is double the rates when the Liberals and The Nationals came to government. I remind the House of a statement I made last year after speaking to a number of my former teaching colleagues. One of them said that under years of a neglectful government, which preferred to over-fund private schools rather than invest in public education that is accessible to all, the trends have magnified exponentially. Teachers have said to me that they are exhausted. They are fed up. They feel devalued and undermined.

Good teachers have been lost and there is a failure to attract new ones to the profession. They go to school each day and it is heart-wrenching. One teacher wrote to me saying, "Public schools are on the verge of genuine crisis. It is not just a headline in *The Sydney Morning Herald*. Morale is the worst I have seen it. There are daily disruptions to teaching. Our schools are falling apart. I am drowning in compliance paperwork." Recently I spoke to that teacher. He is overjoyed and feels a sense of hope for the first time in many years. He feels that hope has been restored with the election of the Minns Labor Government. Teachers will not find the kind of heartless ambivalence or inaction from this Government that the teacher and his colleagues had to experience over the past decade.

We have committed to delivering on a number of initiatives that are designed to address the teacher workforce shortage, including retention and the recruitment of additional teachers. That is what we are talking about. This Government values the work of teachers. We are committed to ensuring that we restore pride in the profession. We will abolish the wages cap. We are converting 16,000 temporary teachers and support staff to permanent positions. We are reducing the excessive workload that broke our teachers under the previous Government. I extend my deep gratitude to all the teachers I have spoken to in the past few years who have told me about their despair. I acknowledge the Independent Education Union, the Teachers Federation and the TAFE Teachers Association. I commend this excellent motion to the House.



**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina) (15:04):** As the education spokesperson for The Greens, I contribute to debate, and I thank the member for Gosford for moving this important motion. I was pleased to meet with the Minister for Education and Early Learning today. It is refreshing that, for the first time in the eight years I have been in this House, we have an education Minister who is not bashing teachers. She is talking about teachers' pay and conditions. I am not trying to be disrespectful to the former education Minister or those who came before her in the Coalition. However, I am a former educator and a member of the Teachers Federation for the past 27 years. My first teaching position was in Broken Hill, west of the line, and I did five years there. I feel like I have listened to teachers a lot. The teachers I met in my previous job and in the past eight years are disheartened by Ministers who have no idea what it is like to teach in the twenty-first century, particularly in public education.

Until this election, the morale of teachers was at rock bottom. Through COVID, teachers risked their lives and their families' lives. They are the ones who get up and prepare lessons for students and who lie awake at night worried about the HSC and practical exams. There are countless ways that teachers help their students, and students and families know the difference they make. Just think of all the practical HSC exams and the time that teachers put in after hours to get the best possible outcome for their students. I was saying today that as parents, we worship teachers. All teachers in our public education system have their credentials and are qualified to be there. When you have a happy teacher who bounces out of bed to go to work because they are supported and valued, it is impossible to measure the difference that makes to a child. It is a tragedy to see the morale of our teachers declining.

What did the former education Minister do, after the selflessness shown by our teachers through COVID? She did absolutely nothing to address the chronic shortage and mass exodus of teachers, and that tipped a lot of teachers over the edge. I welcome this motion. We support the motion, and we welcome the fact that we now have an education Minister who values teachers and understands that their conditions and pay are central to the success of students. We look forward to working closely with the Minister in her role, and also with the Minister who oversees TAFE, which also falls under my purview. We are very excited and we look forward to that close collaboration.

**Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (15:08):** I am very proud to stand in this place as a former teacher to support the motion moved by the member for Gosford. I got up feeling positive this morning, ready to talk about teachers. Unfortunately, the member for Albury took me straight back to what it was like under the former Liberal Government when I had the job mansplained to me. I found it quite negative, and it brought back some trauma that I might need to see someone about. This is a problem in our education system. When I first became a teacher 23 years ago, New South Wales was the place to be a teacher. People travelled from all over the world to be a teacher in this State. I am stunned to hear that the member for Albury would not recognise that people used to travel over the border to Albury to be teachers in New South Wales because this was the place to be. New South Wales used to send its teachers out to the UK and to New Zealand because they were sought after, and now their answer is to call out to those countries and ask for them back. This is a problem we have.

As the member for Gosford mentioned, with our teacher shortage we have problems that go beyond just the classroom. Teachers are coming into school while sick. They are coming back before they should. When I came back from COVID-19, I was testing negative, but I walked back into the classroom possibly a week too early because I knew that, while I was recovering at home, my classes were not being covered, and recurring problems come from that. Teachers do that sort of thing for their schools, their students and the parents every day to make up for the shortfall. Some teachers take on two or three playground duties a day because they know that no-one else will and the damage that happens, especially to young students and special needs students, if they do not have the opportunity to go outside and run around. The damage done when teachers do not have permanent positions and have to reapply and reapply; and the fighting that goes on in term 4 when all the temporary teachers in the region apply for jobs that they are already doing and seek interviews with principals are extremely disheartening and attack the very core of what a school community should be.

The member for Ballina spoke about prac teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a teacher of one of those practical subjects—I was a music teacher during the pandemic—I can tell you it was tough, especially when you add to that that I have three children of my own, one of whom was going through the HSC and doing a practical subject. Teachers were giving up their time in that period. COVID-19 shone a light on those problems. It made us aware, and the former Government chose to ignore it and tell us there was no problem. I commend the motion because I agree that putting Murat Dizdar in charge of the Department of Education has been a godsend for this State's teachers. It has given them hope and positivity. They know that we have a former teacher in charge of the teachers. We need to make sure that our teachers are treated as the absolute professionals they are and that we recognise that they are taking care of where our State goes next. The most precious commodity in our State is our children, and the people looking after them are our teachers. I commend the motion.

**Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (15:12):** Speaking on the excellent motion of the member for Gosford is a great privilege and honour. The member for Gosford has been a great champion of teachers and the teaching profession since she arrived in this place. There is no secret as to why she is the champion of teachers, having been one herself and having a partner who is a teacher. We cannot recognise, congratulate or thank our teachers enough. I sincerely hope that every MP in the Parliament can agree on one underlying truth: We currently have a problem with the number of teachers and the availability of teachers in our schools. That has not come about overnight; it has been a slow burner. We have known for some time that it was coming, and yet we just did not do enough to address the obvious problem.

The teachers I speak to are frustrated about a couple of things. One is that we knew that this problem was coming and we did not do anything else about it. The other thing is that, despite the incredibly obvious truth—that we had a crisis in our schools—the former Government could not simply say we have a problem. Surely it would have taken only a couple of drops of courage and honesty for the Minister of the day to stand up, in this place, in front of a camera, at a principals conference, at a public education conference, at a teachers conference or at an independent schools conference, look people in the eye and say to them, "We have a bit of a problem, and we are here with you to try to fix it." Surely that would have been reasonable because life is not perfect and being in government is not perfect.

Unfortunately, though, we had day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year of the former Government not being able to recognise that truth. I honestly believe that, if the Government had been able to recognise that truth, it would have had the support of the teaching fraternity, who would have said, "The Government hears us, sees us and is connecting with us. And the Government is committed to working on the problem. We can put our shoulder to the wheel and get behind that." But what teachers could not cop was the previous Government refusing to honestly state the obvious: that there was a problem.

The most important message that I have heard from my local teachers since the change of government and a new Minister is that finally the Minister is hearing them and recognising that there is a problem. What an incredible emotional shift for teachers, by simply acknowledging that there is a problem. Nothing stopped the previous Government from doing that, but it did not. We have. There is a problem. It will take a long time to fix it. It is not easy or simple. There are many factors, but there is a problem, and we are committed to fixing it. That is the work we will do. I commend the member for Gosford for bringing the motion to the House.

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (15:16):** By leave: It is not my habit to seek leave, because I am conscious of the efficient use of time in Parliament. However, when we talk about public schools, I want to be involved in the conversation, and I have been for 16 years. First of all I say a heartfelt thank you to every public schoolteacher in New South Wales, every public school cleaner—as the daughter of someone who was a cleaner for 21 years at a public school—and everyone who works in the public school system. I am pleased to see that in the good motion of the member for Gosford, the first sentence talks about public schoolteachers because, as a member of the Labor Party, I chose to teach only in public schools because they have the children who need the opportunity just as much as other children. As a matter of fact, 80 per cent of the poorest students in New South Wales go to public schools, not private schools.

On that note, our emphasis should be on how we better fund our public schools and how we start removing some of the funding we give to our private schools because, frankly, if you can send your child to a private school, you can afford to pay for it. It is a different situation to that of people who send their children to public schools. I can say that with a great deal of evidence because I was a casual teacher when I started at Walgett, in 1984. I started teaching after the bonded system, so there were plenty of teachers around. There were no teaching jobs available in Newcastle. When I was told that there was a casual job 7½ hours away from home, I said, "No way am I going that far." The next town from Walgett is Coonamble, which is 113 kilometres away. But my dad said to me something that I couldn't argue with. As a father of kids who were all expected to leave school at 15 and get a job, he said, "Grub, you went to university, and all you talk about is equality. Don't you think the blackfellas deserve the same education as everyone else?" He was absolutely right. Pardon my language, but that was the language of my father, who was a truck driver.

The Aboriginal kids were the poorest kids I have ever encountered, and I lived in housing commission. I was blindsided by the poverty of that town, the problems of social distancing and how poor the kids were. We kept their books and pens at the high school because if they took them home to Gingie Mission or Namoi Reserve, they would share them. Aboriginal people are very sharing, so those books and pens would not come back to school. We wanted the kids to come to school and have a good experience. In the 1980s they had difficulty getting teachers because people were not prepared to go to the country to teach, and it is worse now. The member for Albury and the member for Gosford talked about the acute problems in the bush, and they really are acute. We must invest in public education in the bush in particular.

**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) (15:20):** By leave: I thank the member for Gosford for moving the motion to acknowledge the huge stress that our public schools are under, although I have met with private schools and they are also experiencing similar workforce shortage issues. From the outset I put on record that I was a former primary school teacher and principal in my career before I came to this place, and my wife is an assistant principal in the public school system. One of the best things that the current education Minister Prue Car has done is to appoint a teacher to run education in New South Wales. Murat Dizdar understands the education system and the stress that teachers are under. That single act will be a defining strategy in turning around the problems that are happening in our public school system, because a teacher understands how the school system works.

The previous Government had difficulty because it appointed a whole lot of people, some of whom had not even worked in the New South Wales or Australian education system—they brought in people from overseas—to work on a system that they simply did not understand. The former Government introduced amazing initiatives, and it spent a lot of money on one in particular to attract teachers from overseas, but that attracted only three teachers. They offered special incentives schemes to teachers, such as by offering a single teacher a higher salary at a school. They did not understand that that disrespects the rest of the teachers in a school. How does a principal, in a well-working, humming teaching workforce, choose one teacher to receive that extra money without causing resentment across the rest of the workforce? The former Government did not understand that. That caused teachers to lose heart, and they voted with their feet and started leaving the system.

The member for Cessnock said that the previous Government never acknowledged that there was an issue. We know that some of it was due to workforce shortages, but a lot of it was because teachers were burnt out and they voted with their feet and left. It was not only experienced teachers who retired early because they just could not cop it anymore, but it was also young, enthusiastic teachers in their first five years of teaching, and they were quitting in droves. We will never take lectures from those opposite about how to run our schools. We know that one must put in place strategies that respect and reward all teachers through pay increases and lower workloads. That is the answer to improving our school system: valuing our teachers and ensuring that our kids get the very best education.

We should highlight that as much as we can. That is the right way to fix our school system, rather than the attempts of the former Government, which provided bribes and headed overseas with fancy programs. They made the headlines, and that is what it was all about—as if to say, "Look, we are doing something." But they did not take aim at the structural problems of attracting and keeping talented teachers in our schools. One can have the best buildings in the world, one can build all of the schools one likes, but without the staff teaching kids, one does not get better learning, and that should always be the focus. I commend the member for Gosford for moving the motion.

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (15:24):** In reply: I thank the members who contributed to debate on the motion. I thank the member for Albury, though I note that very few members from the other side of the House have joined us for debate. The member for Albury highlighted the words of Jason Clare, who spoke of the teacher shortages across all States. Sadly, we are in New South Wales. When the Opposition was in government it did not do anything to address the issue. I am very proud to be part of a Labor Government that is here to make a difference and respect teachers in New South Wales. Teacher shortages exist in science, maths, information technology and special education, but we are taking action.

Members of the Government have spoken of the inaction and disrespect shown to teachers. We must turn that around, and that is what the New South Wales Government and Minister Car are all about. After 12 long years, the former Government put a trial in place in January this year. That was a little bit too late, and we did not see much of a turnaround, although I do know two teachers who got permanent positions out of that trial. But we have had huge success in making temporary teachers permanent. I thank the member for Blue Mountains, who was a casual teacher for 25 years. She has experienced joy in knowing that we have made an extra 5,463 teachers permanent in New South Wales after just three months. She pointed out the tragedy that resignations are outstripping retirements. That is a poor reflection on a very important profession.

During the election campaign many members heard from teachers, more than any other profession, who said to them, "Our profession is in crisis." My beautiful colleague Claire is another example of a teacher in crisis. She left the Department of Education because she was exhausted and could not cop it anymore. We know of many examples like that in the community. The member for Blue Mountains said that teachers in New South Wales are exhausted and undermined, and that schools are in genuine crisis. Another issue is the significant impact of the shortages on the mental health of teachers. A friend of mine is a very experienced teacher. She has gone down to working four days a week, and that was not her intention at all. She has anxiety on her drive to work. That should not be a part of the profession.

I acknowledge the member for Ballina, who taught at Broken Hill High School. She said that the former education Minister did not back teachers, but now we have a Minister who values teachers and acknowledges that teachers' pay and conditions have a positive impact on teacher success. I acknowledge also the fantastic member for Camden, who said she did not enjoy the member for Albury mansplaining to her—none of us do. But it was great to hear from her, fresh from the workforce, although it was not great to hear that she felt disrespected by the former education Minister. Our teachers do incredible work, especially those who teach practical subjects and those who taught at home during COVID. They had a very tough time.

The member for Cessnock talked about the time it took to acknowledge the shortage of teachers across New South Wales. The former Government did not recognise that this problem was occurring, from day to day, month to month and year to year, which was hugely emotional and disrespectful to teachers. There was a huge shift once we finally appointed a Minister who cared. I thank the member for Wallsend for her contribution to the teaching profession. Some 80 per cent of poorer students go to public schools. That reinforces the importance of resourcing public education. I acknowledge also the member for Wyong, a former school principal with great experience in the profession. He knows that teachers, even experienced teachers, have left because of burnout. He mentioned also that there is a drought of young teachers as they are leaving the profession. I am very proud to say that I am part of a Labor Government that, along with the NSW Teachers Federation, is listening to the Independent Education Union and TAFE teachers. We will restore integrity to public education in New South Wales.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Horner):** The question is that the motion be agreed to.

**Motion agreed to.**

### REMOTE, RURAL AND REGIONAL HEALTH

**Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (15:29):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Notes the crisis in remote, rural and regional health and the lower life expectancy of rural people when compared with their urban counterparts.
- (2) Acknowledges this Government's commitment to implementing all recommendations of the recent upper House inquiry into health and hospital services in rural, regional and remote New South Wales.
- (3) Congratulates the Government on the establishment of a Legislative Assembly select committee to monitor the implementation of the upper House inquiry.

I move this motion to once again highlight the issue of remote, rural and regional health. My background in this area is nearly 40 years of practice in regional locations, both as an administrator and a clinician. I currently serve on the Royal Australasian College of Medical Administrators in a volunteer capacity as chair of its rural committee. I am a member of the Australian Medical Association and an honorary member of the Australian Salaried Medical Officers' Federation, all of which I have declared. I bring this concern to the House with some experience. The reality is that remote, rural and regional New South Wales does not enjoy the same level of health care as the cities. In fact, we live in a two-tiered system.

By way of background, in 2021 the Australia Institute published a harrowing report entitled *The Unlucky Country: Life expectancy and health in regional and remote Australia*. The report made key findings about regional New South Wales. It found that the life expectancy of residents in the regions is six years lower than the life expectancy of those in Sydney and it is getting worse. In western New South Wales life expectancy is 79.1 years, compared with 84.5 years in Sydney. It was sort of at parity at the start of the twenty-first century. Those under the age of 75 are twice as likely to die prematurely. Potentially avoidable deaths are more than 2½ times more common. In regional and remote areas suicide rates are double those in the city. In 2022 the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare published *Australia's health 2022: data insights*. Of particular interest to this House should be chapter 9: "Mothers who live in remote areas and their babies". Some of the troubling findings include this statement:

... mothers who lived in remote areas faced considerable issues in accessing health services, as evidenced by lower rates of antenatal care attendance, antenatal care at a later stage of pregnancy, and increased drive time to a public birthing facility. Access to care is particularly important when considering the pivotal role maternity care plays in managing risk factors, encouraging healthy behaviours and improving maternal and perinatal health.

...

This suggests that the patterns seen are indeed a function of geographic location, as well as complex societal and cultural factors.

The standard of maternity care in the regions is a matter I take extremely seriously. It is, after all, what determines the health of generations to come. We now know that the prenatal care of infants is a critical component of their future health and wellbeing. In that context, I note that I was made aware of a number of seriously concerning

complaints made by women who are current or former patients of the Wagga Wagga Base Hospital over the past three to five years. Those complaints came to me in the past two weeks. They were of a distressing nature and indicated a lack of respect for pain, medical consent and human dignity. The complaint was lodged by the Maternity Consumer Network—I thank it for its advocacy—and is now with the Health Care Complaints Commission.

Unfortunately, as I said, I was only made aware of the issue in the past two weeks. However, I have met with the consumer network, the health district and the health Minister to ensure that those matters are being addressed. I am aware that the health district has conducted a comprehensive investigation with the help of the Clinical Excellence Commission and will be making a report to the board in the coming weeks. I will be following up to make sure that those issues are addressed. Those complaints must be investigated and the individuals concerned must be investigated. I make clear that, without question, women and their children must be at the front and centre of maternity care, with respect being a core principle and practice and first-class communication a priority. That is an example of a key issue in rural and remote health.

Our health system must be about putting patients, their carers and our communities at the centre of what we do. That must be our priority. I believe the upper House inquiry has shown that the health system in rural and remote New South Wales has failed to do that. At base, I believe that is the challenge. When a system is driven by money or the providers, the outcomes are not going to make a difference. It has to be driven by carers and communities. The upper House inquiry made 44 recommendations, which, if implemented, will go a long way to tackling rural health issues. The previous Government committed to implementing 41 of them and I acknowledge the leadership of the former rural health Minister, the Hon. Bronnie Taylor, in driving reform in that area.

I also believe the current Minister for Regional Health, Minister Park, is also passionate about fixing rural health. The urge to reform and improve health outcomes in the regions is a personal motivation for him. I note that the Government has committed to implementing all 44 of the recommendations; hence my motion acknowledges that. I am pleased that the Government supported my call to establish a select committee. Originally this motion included a call to establish a select committee, but I have amended it to recognise that the Government has listened and done that. I congratulate the Government on that. The select committee's role is specifically to monitor and help drive the implementation of the recommendations of the upper House inquiry.

I still believe a standalone regional health department will be necessary to deliver the positive long-term health outcomes we need in our regions because it is about giving a voice to the people of our regions. It is about informing the Government what services, processes and facilities are actually needed. It is about throwing off the shackles of a metropolitan-based, big city approach to providing rural health care and making sure that rural patients, their carers and their communities are at the centre of rural health care. For too long the locus of power and the point of control in rural health has been in the city; it needs to be in the bush. It needs to be with the people of the bush, their carers and their communities. That is why I believe in, and continue to advocate for, a department of rural health in a regional location. In the meantime, we have work to do. As chair of the Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health, I intend to do that work.

**Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro) (15:37):** I support the motion and acknowledge the contribution made by the member for Wagga Wagga not only on this motion but also in initiating the formation of the committee following the recommendations of the upper House inquiry, which he referred to in his speech. I am pleased to be a member of that committee and look forward to its work. I certainly appreciate the expertise that the chair will provide. Dr McGirr and I came across each other many years ago, when he was an administrator in the health system. I suspect he might find life as an MP a bit easier than administering a regional health area at times because there is no doubt that many of the challenges that he has just outlined are very difficult to overcome, particularly challenges around workforce shortages and the many health issues that seem to affect regional New South Wales more than city areas.

We heard from his contribution about the two-tiered health system in New South Wales. There is absolutely no doubt about that. In terms of suicide rates in country areas, a lot of people have already started contacting me again about the issues around youth mental health in many country communities, which are very serious. Often there are incredible problems getting the people we need into communities to help address those issues. I spent a fair bit of time over the past few years working in agriculture. As things have become more mechanised in agriculture over the past decades, you can see the serious problems with obesity and the health problems associated with that. On top of that are the mental health problems that come from periods of prolonged drought, natural disasters and the many other challenges faced by rural and regional workforces.

The Government certainly acknowledges the challenges faced by people living in rural and regional New South Wales and is looking forward to addressing them. The Minister is very serious about that, and I have really welcomed the fact that he has spent quite a bit of time visiting health workers in regional communities in his first few months as Minister. It is extremely worthwhile to hear firsthand what people are feeling and

I encourage Ministers, particularly the Minister for Health, to talk to people on the ground. That is one of the steps towards ensuring that when the Government talks about what is needed to address some of the problems—and there are no quick fixes—someone has been out and about enough to understand the significant differences in the delivery of health care between city and regional communities.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery):** The time for general business notices of motion has expired. Pursuant to the earlier resolution, debate is interrupted for the consideration of Government business. I set down the resumption of the interrupted debate as an order of the day for a future day.

### PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I seek leave to move motions for the establishment of parliamentary committees and the appointment of members.

**Leave granted.**

#### *Committees*

### PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

#### Membership

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That:

- (1) In accordance with section 54 of the Government Sector Audit Act 1983, the following members be appointed to serve on the Public Accounts Committee: Mr Clayton Barr, Ms Jenny Leong, Mr Jason Yat-Sen Li, Mr Michael Regan, Dr David Saliba and Mr Anthony Roberts.
- (2) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.

**Motion agreed to.**

### COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

#### Membership

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That:

- (1) In accordance with section 38 of the Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014, the following members of the Legislative Assembly be appointed to serve on the Committee on Children and Young People: Mrs Helen Dalton, Ms Donna Davis, Ms Karen McKeown and Ms Kylie Wilkinson.
- (2) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.
- (3) A message be sent acquainting the Legislative Council with the resolution and requesting the Legislative Council appoint three of its members to serve on the committee.

**Motion agreed to.**

### COMMITTEE ON THE HEALTH CARE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION

#### Membership

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That:

- (1) In accordance with section 67 of the Health Care Complaints Act 1993, the following members of the Legislative Assembly be appointed to serve on the Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission: Ms Charishma Kaliyanda, Dr Joe McGirr, Dr David Saliba and Mr Michael Kemp.
- (2) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.
- (3) A message be sent acquainting the Legislative Council with the resolution and requesting the Legislative Council appoint three of its members to serve on the committee.

**Motion agreed to.**

**COMMITTEE ON THE INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION****Membership**

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That:

- (1) In accordance with section 65 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, the following members of the Legislative Assembly be appointed to serve on the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption: Mrs Sally Quinnell, Mr Michael Regan, Dr David Saliba, Ms Kobi Shetty, Mr Tri Vo, Mr Jason Yat-Sen Li, Mrs Wendy Tuckerman and Mr Mark Hodges.
- (2) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.
- (3) A message be sent acquainting the Legislative Council with the resolution and requesting the Legislative Council appoint three of its members to serve on the committee.

**Motion agreed to.**

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

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That:

- (1) In accordance with section 31C of the Ombudsman Act 1974, the following members of the Legislative Assembly be appointed to serve on the Committee on the Ombudsman, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission and the Crime Commission: Mr Phil Donato, Ms Karen McKeown, Mr Tri Vo and Mr Mark Taylor.
- (2) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.
- (3) A message be sent acquainting the Legislative Council with the resolution and requesting the Legislative Council appoint three of its members to serve on the committee.

**Motion agreed to.**

**LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE****Membership**

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That:

- (1) In accordance with section 5 of the Legislation Review Act 1987, the following members of the Legislative Assembly be appointed to serve on the Legislation Review Committee: Ms Donna Davis, Mr Nathan Hagarty, Ms Maryanne Stuart, Ms Lynda Voltz and Mr Dave Layzell.
- (2) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.
- (3) A message be sent acquainting the Legislative Council with the resolution and requesting the Legislative Council appoint three of its members to serve on the committee.

**Motion agreed to.**

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS****Establishment and Membership**

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That:

- (1) A joint standing committee to be known as the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters be appointed.
- (2) The committee inquire into and report upon such matters as may be referred to it by either House of the Parliament or a Minister that relate to:
  - (a) the following electoral laws:
    - (i) Electoral Act 2017 (other than part 3);
    - (ii) Electoral Funding Act 2018; and
    - (iii) those provisions of the Constitution Act 1902 that relate to the procedures for, and conduct of, elections for members of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council (other than sections 27, 28 and 28A).

- (b) the administration of and practices associated with the electoral laws described at (a).
- (3) All matters that relate to (2) (a) and (b) above in respect of the 25 March 2023 State election, shall stand referred to the committee for any inquiry the committee may wish to make. The committee shall report on the outcome of any such inquiry within 18 months of the date of this resolution being agreed to by both Houses.
- (4) The committee consist of 10 members, as follows:
  - (a) five members of the Legislative Assembly; and
  - (b) five members of the Legislative Council.
- (5) Mr Stephen Bali, Mr Nathan Hagarty, Mrs Sally Quinnell, Ms Janelle Saffin and Mr Tim James be appointed to serve on such committee as the members of the Legislative Assembly.
- (6) Notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders of either House, at any meeting of the committee, any four members of the committee shall constitute a quorum, provided that the committee meets as a joint committee at all times.
- (7) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.
- (8) A message be sent acquainting the Legislative Council with the resolution and requesting the Legislative Council appoint five of its members to serve with the members of the Legislative Assembly upon the committee, and to fix a time and place for the first meeting.

**Motion agreed to.**

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ROAD SAFETY**

**Establishment and Membership**

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That:

- (1) A joint standing committee (to be known as the Staysafe Committee) be appointed to inquire into and report on road safety in New South Wales, with the following terms of reference:
  - (a) As an ongoing task, the committee is to—
    - (i) monitor, investigate and report on the road safety situation in New South Wales; and
    - (ii) review and report on countermeasures aimed at reducing deaths, injuries, and the social and economic costs to the community arising from road accidents.
- (2) The committee consist of six members of the Legislative Assembly and three members of the Legislative Council and that, notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders of either House, at any meeting of the committee any four members shall constitute a quorum provided that the committee shall meet as a joint committee at all times.
- (3) Mr Edmond Atalla, Mr Roy Butler, Mr Warren Kirby, Mr Greg Warren, Ms Kylie Wilkinson and Mr Matt Cross be appointed to serve on such committee as the members of the Legislative Assembly.
- (4) Mr Greg Warren shall be the chair of the committee.
- (5) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.
- (6) A message be sent acquainting the Legislative Council with the resolution and requesting the Legislative Council appoint three of its members to serve with the members of the Legislative Assembly upon the committee, and to fix a time and place for the first meeting.

**Motion agreed to.**

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE OFFICE OF THE VALUER GENERAL**

**Establishment and Membership**

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That:

- (1) A joint standing committee to be known as the Joint Standing Committee on the Office of the Valuer General be appointed.
- (2) The committee's functions be:
  - (a) to monitor and review the exercise of the Valuer General's functions with respect to land valuations under the Valuation of Land Act 1916 and the Land Tax Management Act 1956, and in particular:
    - (i) to monitor the methodologies employed for the purpose of conducting such valuations;
    - (ii) to monitor the arrangements under which valuation service contracts are negotiated and entered into; and
    - (iii) to monitor the standard of valuation services provided under such contracts.



- (b) to report to both Houses of Parliament, with such comments as it thinks fit, on any matter connected with the exercise of the Valuer General's functions referred to in paragraph (a) to which, in the opinion of the committee, the attention of Parliament should be directed;
  - (c) to report to both Houses of Parliament any change that the committee considers desirable to the Valuer General's functions referred to in paragraph (a); and
  - (d) to inquire into any question in connection with the committee's functions which is referred to it by both Houses of Parliament, and to report to both Houses on that question.
- (3) The functions of the committee not extend to the investigation of any matter relating to or arising from a particular valuation of a specific parcel of land.
  - (4) The committee consist of five members as follows:
    - (a) three members of the Legislative Assembly of whom two must be Government members and one must be a non-Government member; and
    - (b) two members of the Legislative Council of whom one must be a Government member and one must be a non-Government member.
  - (5) Dr Hugh McDermott, Mr David Mehan, and Ms Tamara Smith be appointed to serve on the committee as the members of the Legislative Assembly.
  - (6) Ms Tamara Smith shall be the chair of the committee.
  - (7) Notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders of either House, at any meeting of the committee any three members of the committee shall constitute a quorum, provided that the committee meets as a joint committee at all times.
  - (8) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.
  - (9) A message be sent acquainting the Legislative Council with the resolution and requesting the Legislative Council appoint two of its members to serve with the members of the Legislative Assembly on the committee, and to fix a time and place for the first meeting.

**Motion agreed to.**

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**Establishment and Membership**

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the standing orders:

- (1) A portfolio standing committee to be known as the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services be appointed. The following portfolio responsibilities stand referred to the committee—Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty; Seniors; Education and Early Learning; Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education; Families and Communities; Disability Inclusion; Health; Medical Research; Mental Health; Multiculturalism; Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault; Housing; Youth; Customer Services and Digital Government; and Women.
- (2) The name and portfolio groupings of the committee may change to correspond with any changes made by the Government to the relevant portfolios.

*Terms of reference*

- (3) The committee may examine, inquire into and report on the following matters concerning its portfolio areas:
  - (a) any matter referred to it by the House;
  - (b) any relevant policy, bill or subordinate legislation;
  - (c) any relevant financial matter; and
  - (d) any relevant portfolio issue.
- (4) Legislative scrutiny—The committee, in this context, have a legislative scrutiny function that shall include evaluating the policy impact and consequences for each portfolio of any relevant bill introduced in Parliament, any existing legislation and any item of subordinate legislation.
- (5) Financial matters—The examination of financial matters by the committee include the review of government financial management, by considering the financial documents, expenditure, performance and effectiveness of any relevant government department, agency, statutory body or State-owned corporation.
- (6) Examination of annual and other reports—The committee may examine any matter in the annual report or other reports of any public body, including:
  - (a) the adequacy and accuracy of all financial and operational information; and
  - (b) any matter arising from the annual report or other report concerning the efficient and effective achievement of the agency's objectives.
- (7) Public works—The committee may consider any matter concerning public works relating to the portfolio area.

*Initiation of inquiries*

- (8) The committee may be referred an inquiry by resolution of the House or in writing from a Minister.
- (9) Except in the case of bills, the committee also may initiate an inquiry on its own motion and report on any proposal, matter or thing relevant to its functions, including an annual report, other report or petition. The committee can only consider a bill on referral from the House, in accordance with standing order 323 (Legislation Committees).
- (10) The committee take care not to duplicate an inquiry into any matters under examination by another portfolio or standing committee of the House, and any question arising in this connection may be referred to the House for determination.

*Membership*

- (11) The committee consist of seven members, comprising:
  - (a) four Government members (one of whom shall be the chair);
  - (b) two Opposition members; and
  - (c) one crossbench member.
- (12) The following members of the Legislative Assembly be appointed to serve on the committee: Mr Clayton Barr, Ms Liza Butler, Ms Donna Davis, Ms Trish Doyle, Mrs Helen Dalton, Ms Felicity Wilson and Mrs Tanya Thompson.
- (13) Mr Clayton Barr shall be the chair of the committee.

*Subcommittees*

- (14) The committee have the power to appoint subcommittees, consisting of three members, and to refer to a subcommittee any of the matters that the committee is empowered to consider. In this regard, the subcommittee may be responsible for conducting hearings, briefings, visits of inspections and other activities but cannot make decisions concerning the conduct of an inquiry, such as the selection of witnesses, and the committee's reports.
- (15) A subcommittee have at least one member supporting the Government and one member not supporting the Government, and a quorum for a subcommittee shall be at least two members.

*Visits of inspection*

- (16) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.

**Motion agreed to.**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery):** It being 4.00 p.m., business is interrupted for the petition take-note debate. I set down resumption of the item of business as an order of the day for a later hour.

*Petitions***DRINK SPIKING AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION**

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Sonia Hornery):** The House will now consider an ePetition signed by 20,000 or more persons regarding mandatory training for the prevention of drink spiking and sexual violence, lodged by the member for Newcastle. Before I call the member for Newcastle, I welcome the visitors to the gallery. I know that many of them are local and have long had an interest in this very important matter. They are welcome in the New South Wales Parliament.

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

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter) (16:00):** In this place we often talk about reforms and debate legislation that is designed to keep people safe, including measures targeted at sexual violence and domestic and family violence. Such debates have been about consent, coercive control and court processes, just to name a few. But an issue that has not received much airtime in this place is the very serious issue of drink spiking. It absolutely needs to be spoken about. I know it is an issue of concern to many people, because that is why we are here today. More than 20,000 people signed a petition coordinated by Newcastle-based advocacy organisation What Were You Wearing? calling for measures to raise awareness, increased prevention measures and better support for people who may have had their drinks spiked.

What Were You Wearing? has done an exceptional amount of work to bring the petition to this place. I acknowledge all the volunteers in the gallery who have travelled to Parliament today to watch the debate. They have given so much of their time and energy to supporting people who have experienced sexual violence or domestic or family violence, and have campaigned so strongly to see it completely end. They have achieved an extraordinary amount in just a couple of years—well done. This may be the first time many members in this place have come across the group, but I am sure it will not be the last. The founder and Newcastle Local Woman of the Year, Sarah Williams, is with us in the public gallery. It would not surprise me at all if one day she is standing exactly where I am today.

Drink spiking is when a person deliberately adds another substance to a drink without the knowledge of the person who will be drinking it. It is a pretty scary thought. It often makes the person whose drink has been spiked extremely unwell. There could be vomiting, loss of consciousness and loss of memory. Terrifyingly, it can also be a method employed by perpetrators of sexual violence to impair their victims to a point at which they cannot resist or remember an assault. This loss of memory can result in fewer reports and therefore fewer investigations and fewer convictions.

We know that drink spiking and sexual assault is under-reported. That makes it even more concerning that, according to crime data, drink spiking is growing in prevalence across all corners of this State. It is at more than double the pre-COVID numbers. In fact, in 2022 there were 24 reports of drink spiking in the Newcastle local government area alone, which was 10 more than the previous year and gave Newcastle the second-highest number in the State. This is unacceptable. How do we call our State a safe place when these reports are growing in frequency? When people go out to a bar, a club or a nightclub, they are expecting to have a good time. They might be celebrating a birthday or enjoying some live music, or maybe they just have the night off and want to have a bit of fun. What they do not expect is to have their drink spiked, their night ruined and their body compromised.

Keeping people safe is not a job for one individual, which is acknowledged in the petition. We need to make sure that the venue and security staff know what to do when spiking is reported and are actually trained to respond. That includes taking every report seriously, seeking any required medical assistance and ensuring the ongoing comfort and safety of anyone who has been affected by a spiking incident. We also need to have the education on spiking for people who are going out so that they know what they can do to reduce the risk of drink spiking and how to look out for their mates. This is the exact thing that What Were You Wearing? is doing. It is looking out for every person who wants to go to a venue, have a good night and get home safe and sound.

I am very proud to be supporting the organisation, and I look forward to soon being able to provide it with more assistance with this and with another fantastic initiative to provide safe spaces and trauma-informed staff for patrons at music festivals. I expect every member of the House will get behind this petition and What Were You Wearing? as all stakeholders work together to prevent drink spiking and sexual assault.

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (16:05):** I thank the member for Newcastle for bringing this petition to the attention of the House. It is a subject that we should all take an interest in, and it is important that we have the opportunity to discuss it in this place today. I acknowledge the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, who is present in the Chamber. All members in the House want to support the work that she is doing across the Parliament and across the State. I commend the more than 20,000 petitioners who have signed the petition. It clearly indicates that there is significant concern about this issue across the community, particularly in Newcastle.

As iterated in the petition, the increased incidence of drink spiking, which often, sadly, leads to sexual assault, is reflected in the 2022 Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research data showing that drink spiking in New South Wales was at its highest level in five years, with reported cases growing steadily each year despite the disruptions of COVID-19 lockdowns. I particularly acknowledge the Australian founder of What Were You Wearing?, Sarah Williams, who is with us in the public gallery, for her strong and tireless advocacy on this issue. I commend her for the work she has done and continues to do to shine a light on drink spiking.

It is incredibly difficult to speak out about issues relating to sexual abuse—about your own experiences and the impact they have had on you—but, despite those challenges, Sarah has spoken out. She continues to speak out, as she has said in the past, to see justice, not only for herself, but for everyone else. Sarah said, "I wanted to speak out about and show people that even if you don't speak yourself, if you want to anonymously report to our website, you can still have your voice." I thank Sarah for what she has done. I thank her for taking a stand against sexual assault and domestic violence and for being such a champion in supporting others across Newcastle, across the State and across Australia.

I note that the member for Port Macquarie, who wanted to participate in the petition take-note debate, instead asked me if I could speak. She has met with Sarah in the past. Unfortunately, the member could not speak today because she has lost her voice. I am not speaking for the member for Port Macquarie, but I know that I am speaking with her will and her sentiments and her support. I know that if she could utter the words, she would be saying wonderful things in recognition of Sarah and the things that Sarah has achieved and will continue to achieve.

The member told me that she had spoken with Sarah during the week, and that Sarah shared her insights on how we can tackle this issue, particularly by including the topics of drink spiking and sexual violence prevention in the responsible service of alcohol [RSA] training. It is our understanding that in New South Wales the RSA course handbook does include a section on drink spiking, but the petitioners are of the view that it fails to adequately cover the signs and symptoms of spiking or the steps to address a suspected case. I have friends,

colleagues, and young women I know and care about who have found themselves experiencing drink spiking. Sometimes it is not discovered until a day later or many hours after it has occurred. Sometimes it is only discovered because they have vigilant friends with them at a licensed premises, who have found them in a bathroom or found them at the bar, disoriented, and have stepped in to protect them.

No-one, particularly women, should ever find themselves in the position where they have to ensure that somebody is vigilant enough to look out for them. It is an incredible abuse of their liberty, bodily autonomy and safety, and we want to make sure that we prevent it. We also note that petitioners also propose spiking prevention kits, educational resources and posters in venues that will assist with patron safety awareness. I believe these are all worthy strategies and the member for Port Macquarie is in support of as well. They should be considered in tackling drink spiking. We have previously seen similar campaigns, such as Ask for Angela, having a positive impact.

The member for Port Macquarie wanted me to reflect on the rollout of the Ask for Angela campaign in dozens of licensed venues in her electorate in 2018, which came about from a collaboration between the Hastings Liquor Accord, the Australian Hotels Association and the Mid North Coast Police District. It is an internationally recognised initiative that encouraged patrons to ask for help if they were getting unwanted attention or felt their safety was at risk. It was a really modern approach to a modern issue, and by asking for Angela people had the safety of subtly alerting staff, who could be a part of the support, to intervene. Staff could call police, organise safe transport or refer the patron to a support service. Having those posters at venues makes a real difference. I know that this petition in and of itself is helping us continue the conversation about how to ensure we have safe venues, safe nights out and safe environments for everybody, particularly women, who are considerably vulnerable to drink spiking across our community. I thank Sarah very much.

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault) (16:10):** I thank the member for Newcastle for bringing this petition to the House and for his support and advocacy to ensure people, particularly women and young women, remain safe. I also acknowledge the strong advocacy of the What Were You Wearing? campaign, and particularly Sarah Williams, in raising the awareness of drink spiking by providing educational resources and, importantly, giving victims of sexual assault a voice.

I note the petition from What Were You Wearing? that was tabled has reached 20,000 signatures, and that is no mean feat. Sarah and her team have put in many long hours, including attending festivals, getting signatures on nights out and running a social media campaign. Today, What Were You Wearing? also held a powerful art exhibition at the front of Parliament House, showcasing outfits worn by sexual assault survivors at the time of their attacks. I have attended that exhibition on a couple of occasions in the past, once with the police Minister. It is an incredibly impactful and disturbing exhibition.

There has been a shocking increase in reported incidents of drink spiking. Indeed, we have seen a rise of almost 50 per cent compared with pre-pandemic levels. In the year to June 2022 the NSW Police Force received 186 reports of drink or food spiking compared with 115 in 2015 and 119 in 2018. That is 71 more people who have gone for a night out, only to have their drink or food spiked. The most concerning thing, though, is that we know that less than one-sixth of suspected drink spiking sexual assaults are believed to be reported to police. We know that while drink spiking does happen to men as well, 87 per cent of drink spiking victims are women. As the Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, and the Minister for Women, this topic is close to my heart. No woman should have to fear their drink or food being spiked when they go out just to have a good time. No woman should have to fear assault or sexual assault just because they have said no, only to then have their drink spiked and be assaulted.

This is what happened to Demi, who was at a nightclub in Newcastle when she was approached by a group of five men who surrounded her and pressured her into consuming drinks. When the venue closed, they tried to get Demi to leave with them, including by using force. By then she was beginning to experience sedative symptoms. Luckily for Demi, her friends intervened, causing the men to leave. But Demi continued to feel unwell, and she faded in and out of consciousness. Hospital staff later confirmed that her drink had indeed been spiked. The disturbing thing is that it was reported that the venue and security staff were not able to help Demi and did not take a report of the incident. This was the second time that Demi's drink was spiked at that venue. That incident was the genesis for the current petition before the House seeking mandatory training for the prevention drink spiking and sexual violence for all security for bar staff at nightclubs, including drink spiking prevention kits, educational resources and posters in venues to promote patron safety and awareness.

The Government takes the issue of drink spiking seriously, and I am sure that everybody in this place does. We condemn violence against women. Drink spiking is a criminal offence under the Crimes Act and penalties include fines and up to two years imprisonment. I commend the Minister for Gaming and Racing, who is taking swift action to tackle this issue. I know that he will speak later. His actions include updating the drink spiking

content in responsible service of alcohol training handbooks, exploring options to further promote the Think Safe to Drink Safe campaign, adding drink spiking guidance to the liquor guidelines documents and reviewing the possibility of reinvigorating the Ask for Angela campaign that the member for North Shore spoke about. I finish by thanking Sarah and all those who share their stories with What Were You Wearing? Drink spiking needs more awareness and attention, and this is exactly what they have done. I commend the motion.

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (16:16):** I support the member for Newcastle in his efforts to keep people safe. I thank him for bringing this petition to the attention of the Parliament. Also, I thank those who signed the petition and the movement What Were You Wearing?, which is very important. It is about education, and it is about awareness. As the former Minister for Hospitality and Racing, I took a serious view in relation to this issue and initiated the Think Safe to Drink Safe campaign. I know that the current Minister for Gaming and Racing takes it very seriously as well. Part of the campaign was about education and awareness. The most effective way to reduce the chances of your drink being spiked is to keep an eye on what you drink and never accept drinks from people whom you do not know well or trust.

This is also about the responsible service of alcohol awareness and education campaign by Liquor and Gaming in terms of how those in the hospitality industry look at keeping their patrons safe. Part of that is around awareness, like being aware of unusual requests such as odd combinations of alcohol or drinks that are not on the menu. Other points include always measuring alcohol rather than free pouring to ensure alcohol is accurately measured, not serving patrons showing signs of intoxication, monitoring people who are consistently ordering big rounds of drinks, monitoring the environment, reporting suspicious behaviour to managers, removing unattended glasses and checking areas like bathrooms regularly. If a person feels unsafe, they may seek out staff assistance by asking for Angela. If staff are able, then they can discreetly take that person to a secure part of the venue and let their manager know. They can assess the situation and work out the best course of action. Also, staff should trust their instincts. If something feels wrong, then it most likely is.

Drink spiking is a criminal offence. Section 38A of the Crimes Act contains an offence against drink spiking. It is against the law to give another person food or drink that contains an intoxicating substance that the other person is unaware of with the intention of causing harm. It carries a penalty of two years' imprisonment and/or a fine of \$1,100. That is the reason why we say report it. Call the police on 000. The NSW Police Force has the Drink Safe campaign, with drink coasters and single-use, self-adhesive drink covers that support and promote safe drinking being used in licensed venues across the State. Licensed venues in and around Sydney are being prioritised, but I encourage the police to expand the trial across New South Wales. The covers and coasters depict an anti-drink spiking message. It is about education and awareness for hospitality workers. Some of the warning signs include a person feeling dizzy, faint, ill or sleepy or being incoherent and confused. If a person feels drunk, even if they have only consumed a small amount of alcohol, they need to let someone in the venue know that something is not right.

This is about education and awareness. It is about keeping people safe. We all want to go out and have a great time at our pubs, clubs, restaurants and hospitality venues, and we want to do it in a safe way. I commend Liquor and Gaming NSW for the Think Safe to Drink Safe campaign. We must look out for our mates and look out for each other. People should not accept drinks and should always buy their own. They should not leave their drink unattended. There are a lot of areas where people can be diligent and look after each other when they go out and enjoy the night-life and the night-time economy in whatever town they are in—whether it be Newcastle, Sydney or Tamworth. Let us think safe. Let us make sure that we look after each other when we go out for a night on the town.

**Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (16:20):** On behalf of The Greens, I contribute to debate on the petition to make training for the prevention of drink spiking and sexual violence mandatory for security and bar staff in New South Wales. I acknowledge the work of What Were You Wearing? Australia, a Newcastle-grown community organisation that is dedicated to the eradication of sexual violence. In response to a growing number of drink-spiking incidences in their local community, members of the organisation took the initiative to stand up and demand change. I acknowledge the member for Newcastle for sponsoring the petition. It is wonderful. It is no easy feat to have a debate on a 20,000-strong petition and I thank the 20,181 people who signed the petition in support of these significant changes and reforms.

I also acknowledge the 14,000 people who shared their stories of when they experienced drink spiking. It is a massive achievement to have this debate, but it is more important to hear the cross-party support across this Chamber in recognising that we need to act together to do more. Everyone deserves to be able to go out and have a drink while feeling safe, but we know that drink spiking happens and happens on a huge scale. There are clear links between people having their drink spiked and going on to experience sexual assault and violence.

This is also a gendered problem. Women are particularly at risk of this behaviour. While it is important to deliver on all of the suggested reforms in the petition, at the end of the day we must step up and stop the

perpetrators—the people who believe that they can spike a person's drink and then have some kind of claim of ownership over that person to do what they wish with them. The patriarchy and the arrogance and dominance of sexual behaviour in our society fuels a system and culture in our communities where people think it is acceptable to spike a person's drink and then do whatever they wish with them. The sexism and inequality that exists in our society enables that to fester, and we need to address it.

Shamefully, all too often, victim-survivors are not believed. Their experience is routinely dismissed. The scrutiny and vitriol that is levelled against them is shameful, toxic and relentless. It is critical to acknowledge that when people have their drinks spiked, too often they are not believed. They are instead routinely dismissed as having had too much to drink and being a bit too loose or too messy. They are kicked out of venues when they are in a vulnerable state and put in dangerous and extreme situations. That can then be further weaponised against them if they experience sexual violence, and it has a lasting impact on their trauma and causes harm to them, their communities, their friends and their families.

To anyone who has had their drink spiked, and to all survivors of sexual violence and assault, I say that we see you, we hear you and, most importantly, we believe you. Our night-life and venues must be safer, and staff need the training and resources to make that happen so that they can recognise when drink spiking has happened and how to respond in a way that supports victims in those situations. Even better, we ideally prevent it from happening in the first place and take the appropriate steps in our community and society to stamp out sexual violence and assault in general.

It is also important to recognise that the responsibility should not sit with individuals and victim-survivors, which is why the incredibly named What Were You Wearing? Australia demonstrates the complete hypocrisy and irony of asking a woman, "Did you cover up the drink? Were you watching it? Did you leave it on the bar when you went to the bathroom? Didn't you ask someone to hold it or look at it for you?" Maybe we should ask the guy who just put something in that person's drink and was going to take them outside and assault them why they did that, rather than asking a person why they did not keep holding their drink close to them all night with a coaster rested on it in case they go to the toilet. That is the question that needs to be asked.

Too often, it is young women who are asked to answer questions, instead of the male being asked why on earth he thinks he is entitled to walk into a pub, drug a woman and then sexually assault them. That is the question we should be asking. We must continue to remind people that, at the end of the day, we should be focused on the perpetrators of that kind of aggression and violence. Rather than looking at how we can protect young women, we need to look at how we stop people from being such arrogant, patriarchal men. I was proud to be a part of the reform that delivered the absolute affirmative consent law reforms in New South Wales. I offer The Greens' support for the ongoing campaigning that What Were You Wearing? Australia is doing to end drink spiking and make sure that women, girls and everyone in our communities and bars are safe.

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (16:26):** By leave: It is important to note on record and through our conversations in our communities, whether it is out at night or having a barbecue at home and chatting with friends, that drink spiking is a dangerous and increasingly common phenomenon in New South Wales, and that we are seeking to change that. Since the end of the COVID lockdown, as has been stated already in this place, reports of drink spiking and associated assaults have been on the rise. It is difficult to say whether those reports are due to an increase in reporting or an increase in incidents, but something has to be done.

The New South Wales-based organisation Full Stop Australia highlights that it is estimated that there are 3,000 to 4,000 occurrences of drink spiking per year in Australia; however, it is grossly under-reported. Data highlights that less than one-sixth of cases are reported to the police. I acknowledge the fantastic people from What Were You Wearing? Australia and all of the petitioners who have introduced this fantastic initiative of awareness-raising. They have aimed to collaborate with communities and with local nightclubs and venues to prevent drink spiking. They are calling for the implementation of mandatory training to prevent drink spiking and sexual violence for security and bar staff at nightclubs and that, within that comprehensive training, we look at identification, prevention and response to drink-spiking incidents. I thank them for bringing this petition to this place. I encourage them to keep having those conversations in the community with everyone they know.

It has already been noted that the dangers of spiking are extensive. It is important for members to continue to speak about this not just in this place but when they return to their electorates and talk to their friends, colleagues and families. People must look for the warning signs, which include feeling dizzy, faint, ill or sleepy, even if a person has only consumed a small amount of alcohol. I remember a young woman telling me that it is not just drugs in the alcohol but a whole range of additives that have caused alarm. I will share a personal story because the petitioners have encouraged people to share personal stories because they are powerful. A young woman stopped me on the street not long after I was elected and told me that she and a group of her friends had moved from a nightclub to someone's home to continue partying. She had consumed something that made her feel unwell. She came out of a room and wobbled her way down the stairs and was stopped in utter terror as she looked down

the bottom of the stairs at a friend of hers, who was catatonic and surrounded by a group of young men. She said through her tears that to this day she still feels the guilt of not being able to move or scream or shout out on behalf of her friend, but she watched a situation unfold.

It is an important message for young people that when you see something, when you hear something, when you suspect something, speak out. It is on not the victims to do that but on those who are around them and care about change in legislation. A young man came out of the kitchen and saw this young woman there and said to the men, who were discussing who was going to "go her first", "I don't think you are welcome here, and I don't think she can say yes, so get out." They said, "You're going to fight all of us, are you?" This young man said, "Yeah, I will". They said, "Is this your girlfriend?" He said, "I don't know who it is, but she can't say yes. You've done something to her drinks. I know it, and you can get out". That young woman thanked me and said, "You have raised good men. He was your son."

**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) (16:31):** I thank the member for Newcastle for bringing this important petition to the Parliament, on behalf of Sarah Williams, head of What Were You Wearing? I acknowledge the exceptional work she has done in this particular area. I met briefly with her group earlier today, and I am personally grateful for its advocacy on this important issue of drink spiking. As I explained to the group, I have two daughters in their 20s. One will turn 21 this year; the other, 23. They go out to venues in Newcastle. I must admit that, as a parent, I feel worried every time they go out and relieved when they come home safely. I think that is something all parents experience.

As Minister for Gaming and Racing, I am providing a response with regard to the actions underway to prevent and protect against drink spiking in licensed venues across New South Wales. The Government is committed to delivering a better night out for all and to boosting the State's reputation as a global night-life destination, creating a thriving 24-hour economy across the State. This means ensuring that people, especially women and members of the LGBTIQ+ community, feel confident and safe in and around licensed venues. Spiking drinks, as the former Minister outlined, is a criminal offence, and enforcement of the law is the responsibility of the NSW Police Force. Liquor and Gaming NSW provides a supporting role through education and training for venues' staff members and licensees, and awareness campaigns for venue operators and patrons. Liquor and Gaming NSW is currently refreshing its responsible service of alcohol training content in relation to drink spiking and refreshing the information in the training handbook for licensees.

The Government is engaging with the United Workers Union, which represents bar and security staff members at licensed venues. The Government acknowledges its concerns—namely, that workers who raise incidents relating to drink spiking with their employers should be supported and protected by someone at their workplaces. In addition to the training of workers, Liquor and Gaming NSW is exploring options to further promote awareness campaigns, such as the NSW Police Force Think Safe to Drink Safe campaign, which was launched over the 2022-23 summer period, in time for WorldPride. Liquor and Gaming NSW will also review the Ask for Angela campaign that commenced in New South Wales in 2017, which aims to prevent sexual violence and improve safety for patrons. Liquor and Gaming NSW and the Independent Liquor and Gaming Authority will work with venues to create specific plans to address patrons' security and safety. I commend the petitioners again for the work they are doing. We need to continue the conversation and talk about the further suggestions they have. The Government is more than happy to look at those and to make sure our venues are safe places to be.

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter) (16:34):** In reply: I thank all the speakers who contributed to debate. I thank the member for North Shore for being a proxy and doing her own job as well. I take my hat off to the member for Port Macquarie for meeting with this wonderful organisation, What Were You Wearing? I thank the Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault for sharing Demi's incident. As the Minister said, everyone in the House takes drink spiking seriously. I thank the member for Tamworth for his contribution and suggestions on drink covers and coasters and the worthy Think Safe to Drink Safe campaign. The member for Newtown highlighted that 14,000 people contributed their stories, which is shocking and compelling. She is right: There is cross-party support for the petition. The member for Blue Mountains told a compelling story about those young women and the bravery of her son. We know how brave her sons were in the bushfire and the rescue there, and also standing up against horrible perpetrators of sexual violence is quite incredible.

Other members came and met with this great organisation. The member for Granville came out the front. Our wonderful police Minister has been vocal on this issue in the media and supports the initiatives we have. Everyone on this side is supportive. I thank the Minister for Gaming and Racing. He is always happy to talk about the issue. When I asked him whether he would meet this wonderful organisation, he said that of course he would.

Is there more to be done to prevent drink spiking and eliminate sexual violence? Definitely. We will continue working until we get there, and this is an important part of that journey.

**Petition noted.**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I congratulate the petitioners on raising this important issue. I hope they sense that there is broad support in this place for action. We will get it done.

### *Motions*

## **PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES**

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I seek leave to move motions for the establishment of parliamentary committees and the appointment of members.

**Leave granted.**

### *Committees*

## **LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING**

### **Establishment and Membership**

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the standing orders:

- (1) A portfolio standing committee to be known as the Legislative Assembly Committee on Environment and Planning be appointed. The following portfolio responsibilities stand referred to the committee—Environment; Energy; Local Government; Planning and Public Spaces.
- (2) The name and portfolio groupings of the committee may change to correspond with any changes made by the Government to the relevant portfolios.

### *Terms of reference*

- (3) The committee may examine, inquire into and report on the following matters concerning its portfolio areas:
  - (a) any matter referred to it by the House;
  - (b) any relevant policy, bill or subordinate legislation;
  - (c) any relevant financial matter; and
  - (d) any relevant portfolio issue.
- (4) Legislative scrutiny—The committee, in this context, have a legislative scrutiny function that shall include evaluating the policy impact and consequences for each portfolio of any relevant bill introduced in Parliament, any existing legislation and any item of subordinate legislation.
- (5) Financial matters—The examination of financial matters by the committee include the review of government financial management, by considering the financial documents, expenditure, performance and effectiveness of any relevant government department, agency, statutory body or State-owned corporation.
- (6) Examination of annual and other reports—The committee may examine any matter in the annual report or other reports of any public body, including:
  - (a) the adequacy and accuracy of all financial and operational information; and
  - (b) any matter arising from the annual report or other report concerning the efficient and effective achievement of the agency's objectives.
- (7) Public works—The committee may consider any matter concerning public works relating to the portfolio area.

### *Initiation of inquiries*

- (8) The committee may be referred an inquiry by resolution of the House or in writing from a Minister.
- (9) Except in the case of bills, the committee also may initiate an inquiry on its own motion and report on any proposal, matter or thing relevant to its functions, including an annual report, other report or petition. The committee can only consider a bill on referral from the House, in accordance with Standing Order 323 (Legislation Committees).
- (10) The committee take care not to duplicate an inquiry into any matters under examination by another portfolio or standing committee of the House, and any question arising in this connection may be referred to the House for determination.

### *Membership*

- (11) The committee consist of five members, comprising:
  - (a) three Government members (one of whom shall be the chair);
  - (b) one Opposition member; and
  - (c) one crossbench member.



- (12) The following members of the Legislative Assembly be appointed to serve on the committee: Mr Clayton Barr, Mrs Judy Hannan, Mrs Sally Quinnell, Ms Maryanne Stuart and Ms Kellie Sloane.
- (13) Mr Clayton Barr shall be the chair of the committee.

*Subcommittees*

- (14) The committee have the power to appoint subcommittees, consisting of three members, and to refer to a subcommittee any of the matters which the committee is empowered to consider. In this regard, the subcommittee may be responsible for conducting hearings, briefings, visits of inspections and other activities but cannot make decisions concerning the conduct of an inquiry, such as the selection of witnesses, and the committee's reports.
- (15) A subcommittee have at least one member supporting the Government and one member not supporting the Government, and a quorum for a subcommittee shall be at least two members.

*Visits of inspection*

- (16) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.

**Motion agreed to.**

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON INVESTMENT, INDUSTRY AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**Establishment and Membership**

**Mr RON HOENIG: I move:**

That, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the standing orders:

- (1) A portfolio standing committee to be known as the Legislative Assembly Committee on Investment, Industry and Regional Development be appointed. The following portfolio responsibilities stand referred to the committee—Premier; Treasury; Finance; Small Business; Jobs and Tourism; Western Sydney; Sport; Innovation, Science and Technology; Better Regulation and Fair Trading; Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade; Water; Lands and Property; Small Business; Agriculture; Western New South Wales; the Arts.
- (2) The name and portfolio groupings of the committee may change to correspond with any changes made by the Government to the relevant portfolios.

*Terms of reference*

- (3) The committee may examine, inquire into and report on the following matters concerning its portfolio areas:
- any matter referred to it by the House;
  - any relevant policy, bill or subordinate legislation;
  - any relevant financial matter; and
  - any relevant portfolio issue.
- (4) Legislative scrutiny—The committee, in this context, have a legislative scrutiny function that shall include evaluating the policy impact and consequences for each portfolio of any relevant bill introduced in Parliament, any existing legislation and any item of subordinate legislation.
- (5) Financial matters—The examination of financial matters by the committee include the review of government financial management, by considering the financial documents, expenditure, performance and effectiveness of any relevant Government department, agency, statutory body or State-owned corporation.
- (6) Examination of annual and other reports—The committee may examine any matter in the annual report or other reports of any public body, including:
- the adequacy and accuracy of all financial and operational information; and
  - any matter arising from the annual report or other report concerning the efficient and effective achievement of the agency's objectives.
- (7) Public works—The committee may consider any matter concerning public works relating to the portfolio area.

*Initiation of inquiries*

- (8) The committee may be referred an inquiry by resolution of the House or in writing from a Minister.
- (9) Except in the case of bills, the committee also may initiate an inquiry on its own motion and report on any proposal, matter or thing relevant to its functions, including an annual report, other report or petition. The committee can only consider a bill on referral from the House, in accordance with Standing Order 323 (Legislation Committees).
- (10) The committee take care not to duplicate an inquiry into any matters under examination by another portfolio or standing committee of the House, and any question arising in this connection may be referred to the House for determination.

*Membership*

- (11) The committee consist of seven members, comprising:

- (a) four Government members;
  - (b) two Opposition members; and
  - (c) one crossbench member (who shall be the chair).
- (12) The following members of the Legislative Assembly be appointed to serve on the committee: Mr Stephen Bali, Mr Roy Butler, Ms Charishma Kaliyanda, Ms Maryanne Stuart, Mr Steve Whan, Mr Richie Williamson and Mr Justin Clancy.
- (13) Mr Roy Butler shall be the chair of the committee.

#### *Subcommittees*

- (14) The committee have the power to appoint subcommittees, consisting of three members, and to refer to a subcommittee any of the matters which the committee is empowered to consider. In this regard, the subcommittee may be responsible for conducting hearings, briefings, visits of inspections and other activities, but cannot make decisions concerning the conduct of an inquiry, such as the selection of witnesses and the committee's reports.
- (15) A subcommittee have at least one member supporting the Government and one member not supporting the Government, and a quorum for a subcommittee shall be at least two members.

#### *Visits of inspection*

- (16) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.

### **Motion agreed to.**

## **LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON LAW AND SAFETY**

### **Establishment and Membership**

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the standing orders:

- (1) A portfolio standing committee to be known as the Legislative Assembly Committee on Law and Safety be appointed. The following portfolio responsibilities stand referred to the committee—Attorney General, Corrections, Police and Counter-terrorism, Emergency Services, and Veterans.
- (2) The name and portfolio groupings of the committee may change to correspond with any changes made by the Government to the relevant portfolios.

#### *Terms of reference*

- (3) The committee may examine, inquire into and report on the following matters concerning its portfolio areas:
  - (a) any matter referred to it by the House;
  - (b) any relevant policy, bill or subordinate legislation;
  - (c) any relevant financial matter; and
  - (d) any relevant portfolio issue.
- (4) Legislative scrutiny—The committee, in this context, have a legislative scrutiny function that shall include evaluating the policy impact and consequences for each portfolio of any relevant bill introduced in Parliament, any existing legislation and any item of subordinate legislation.
- (5) Financial matters—The examination of financial matters by the committee include the review of government financial management, by considering the financial documents, expenditure, performance and effectiveness of any relevant Government department, agency, statutory body or State-owned corporation.
- (6) Examination of annual and other reports—The committee may examine any matter in the annual report or other reports of any public body, including:
  - (a) the adequacy and accuracy of all financial and operational information; and
  - (b) any matter arising from the annual report or other report concerning the efficient and effective achievement of the agency's objectives.
- (7) Public works—The committee may consider any matter concerning public works relating to the portfolio area.

#### *Initiation of inquiries*

- (8) The committee may be referred an inquiry by resolution of the House or in writing from a Minister.
- (9) Except in the case of bills, the committee also may initiate an inquiry on its own motion and report on any proposal, matter or thing relevant to its functions, including an annual report, other report or petition. The committee can only consider a bill on referral from the House, in accordance with Standing Order 323 (Legislation Committees).
- (10) The committee take care not to duplicate an inquiry into any matters under examination by another portfolio or standing committee of the House, and any question arising in this connection may be referred to the House for determination.

#### *Membership*

- (11) The committee consist of five members, comprising:
  - (a) three Government members (one of whom shall be the chair);
  - (b) one Opposition member; and
  - (c) one crossbench member.
- (12) That the following members of the Legislative Assembly be appointed to serve on the committee: Mr Edmond Atalla, Mr Phil Donato, Dr Hugh McDermott, Mr Tri Vo and Mr Paul Toole.
- (13) Mr Edmond Atalla shall be the chair of the committee.

#### *Subcommittees*

- (14) The committee have the power to appoint subcommittees, consisting of three members, and to refer to a subcommittee any of the matters which the committee is empowered to consider. In this regard, the subcommittee may be responsible for conducting hearings, briefings, visits of inspections and other activities, but cannot make decisions concerning the conduct of an inquiry, such as the selection of witnesses and the committee's reports.
- (15) A subcommittee have at least one member supporting the Government and one member not supporting the Government, and a quorum for a subcommittee shall be at least two members.

#### *Visits of inspection*

- (16) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.

### **Motion agreed to.**

## **LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Establishment and Membership**

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in the standing orders:

- (1) A portfolio standing committee to be known as the Legislative Assembly Committee on Transport and Infrastructure be appointed. The following portfolio responsibilities stand referred to the committee—Transport, Roads, and Regional Transport and Roads.
- (2) The name and portfolio groupings of the committee may change to correspond with any changes made by the Government to the relevant portfolios.

#### *Terms of reference*

- (3) The committee may examine, inquire into and report on the following matters concerning its portfolio areas:
  - (a) any matter referred to it by the House;
  - (b) any relevant policy, bill or subordinate legislation;
  - (c) any relevant financial matter; and
  - (d) any relevant portfolio issue.
- (4) Legislative scrutiny—The committee, in this context, have a legislative scrutiny function that shall include evaluating the policy impact and consequences for each portfolio of any relevant bill introduced in Parliament, any existing legislation and any item of subordinate legislation.
- (5) Financial matters—The examination of financial matters by the committee include the review of government financial management, by considering the financial documents, expenditure, performance and effectiveness of any relevant government department, agency, statutory body or State-owned corporation.
- (6) Examination of annual and other reports—The committee may examine any matter in the annual report or other reports of any public body, including:
  - (a) the adequacy and accuracy of all financial and operational information; and
  - (b) any matter arising from the annual report or other report concerning the efficient and effective achievement of the agency's objectives.
- (7) Public works—The committee may consider any matter concerning public works relating to the portfolio area.

#### *Initiation of inquiries*

- (8) The committee may be referred an inquiry by resolution of the House or in writing from a Minister.
- (9) Except in the case of bills, the committee also may initiate an inquiry on its own motion and report on any proposal, matter or thing relevant to its functions, including an annual report, other report or petition. The committee can only consider a bill on referral from the House, in accordance with Standing Order 323 (Legislation Committees).
- (10) The committee take care not to duplicate an inquiry into any matters under examination by another portfolio or standing committee of the House, and any question arising in this connection may be referred to the House for determination.

*Membership*

- (11) The committee consist of five members, comprising:
- (a) three Government members (one of whom shall be the chair);
  - (b) one Opposition member; and
  - (c) one crossbench member.
- (12) The following members of the Legislative Assembly be appointed to serve on the committee: Mrs Judy Hannan, Mr Nathan Hagarty; Mr Warren Kirby, Ms Lynda Voltz and Mr Ray Williams.
- (13) Ms Lynda Voltz shall be the chair of the committee.

*Subcommittees*

- (14) The committee have the power to appoint subcommittees, consisting of three members, and to refer to a subcommittee any of the matters which the committee is empowered to consider. In this regard, the subcommittee may be responsible for conducting hearings, briefings, visits of inspections and other activities but cannot make decisions concerning the conduct of an inquiry, such as the selection of witnesses and the committee's reports.
- (15) A subcommittee have at least one member supporting the Government and one member not supporting the Government, and a quorum for a subcommittee shall be at least two members.

*Visits of inspection*

- (16) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.

**Motion agreed to.****MODERN SLAVERY COMMITTEE****Membership**

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That:

- (1) This House notes the Legislative Council's message of Wednesday 10 May 2022 relating to the appointment of a joint committee known as the Modern Slavery Committee.
- (2) Pursuant to the requirement under Division 4 of the Modern Slavery Act 2018 for the Modern Slavery Committee to be a joint committee, the following members be appointed to serve on the committee as the members of the Legislative Assembly: Ms Jenny Leong, Dr Joe McGirr, Ms Kylie Wilkinson and Ms Tina Ayyad.
- (3) A message be sent informing the Legislative Council of this resolution.

**Motion agreed to.****STANDING ORDERS AND PROCEDURE COMMITTEE****Establishment and Membership**

**Mr RON HOENIG:** I move:

That:

- (1) A Standing Orders and Procedure Committee be appointed to inquire into and report on any matter relating to the standing orders or the procedures of the House and its committees.
- (2) Notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders, such committee consist of: the Speaker (as Chair), Mr Ron Hoenig (Leader of the House), Mr Alister Henskens (Manager of Opposition Business), Mr Steve Whan (Government Whip), Mr Adam Crouch (Opposition Whip), Mr Gurmeh Singh (Nationals Whip), Ms Sonia Hornery (Deputy Speaker), and Ms Janelle Saffin (Deputy Government Whip).
- (3) The committee have leave to make visits of inspection within the State of New South Wales and other States and Territories of Australia.

**Motion agreed to.***Judiciary***CONDUCT DIVISION OF JUDICIAL COMMISSION OF NEW SOUTH WALES****Nomination**

**Mr MICHAEL DALEY:** By leave: I move:

That pursuant to clause 4 of schedule 2A to the Judicial Officers Act 1986:

- (1) This House nominates Professor Nalini Joshi, AO, and Professor Emeritus Margot Kearns as community representatives for appointment to a panel of the Conduct Division of the Judicial Commission of New South Wales.

- (2) A message be sent requesting the Legislative Council's concurrence in the nominations.

**Motion agreed to.**

*Community Recognition Statements*

**TRIBUTE TO TOM COUCHMAN**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:55):** I send my heartfelt condolences to the family of the late Tom Couchman, who recently passed away. I pass on my thoughts and love to Tom's husband, Tony, and his siblings, Vicki, Carole, Stewart and Phil. Tom was an incredible and invaluable leader for the Central Coast community. During the pandemic, he was responsible for the Central Coast Coronavirus Info group on Facebook, amassing over 19,000 followers. Tom put his tremendous investigative talents and attention to detail to work researching the numerous regulation and policy changes occurring around the country. He kept the Central Coast community updated and informed, assisting people navigating the minefield of conflicting and often confusing information. I have said before that it is possible that, through his work, Tom saved lives. He undoubtedly made us more knowledgeable and better equipped to manage the pandemic. My sincerest thanks and gratitude go to Tom. Vale, Tom Couchman.

**MICHELLE LEE**

**Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (16:56):** I inform the House of the inspirational journey of Michelle Lee, who is a resident of the Hills shire. In 2019 Michelle completed the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge, one of the world's toughest challenges. Michelle completed an ocean row of 3,000 miles, which is 4,700 kilometres, starting in the Canary Islands. It took her 68 days to reach English Harbour, Antigua, in the Caribbean. More recently, this year Michelle became the first woman to row solo across the Pacific Ocean unassisted without stopping. Michelle set off in Mexico in her eight-metre carbon fibre boat named *Australian Maid* on 8 August 2022. The journey took Michelle across the equator and into the path of five hurricanes and four cyclones. Michelle arrived in Port Douglas on 5 April 2023. I spoke to Michelle this morning and expressed my personal gratitude and congratulations to her. Michelle's story is one of pure courage, dedication, determination, endurance and willpower. I recognise the extraordinary achievements of a truly amazing member of our community, and I congratulate Michelle on her achievements.

**ITALIAN REPUBLIC DAY**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I call the member for Cabramatta, who last night gave one of the best inaugural speeches that this House has ever heard. I congratulate him.

**Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (16:57):** I thank you for those nice words, Mr Temporary Speaker. On Sunday 28 May over 15,000 people gathered at Club Marconi in Bossley Park to celebrate Italian Republic Day. Club Marconi was host to a great day for my community, which was filled with festivities, including market stalls and food vendors that showcased the flavours of Italian cuisine. Attendees were also treated to a display of classic Italian cars, adding to the celebration of Italian history and culture. Club Marconi is a hub for the Italian community in my electorate and it was my pleasure to participate in this celebration of culture. I extend my thanks to Mr Morris Licata, President of Club Marconi; the board of directors of Club Marconi; and all those involved in the organisation of the event. Their efforts and dedication resulted in an outstanding celebration of Italian culture and history.

**THE SHEPHERD CENTRE**

**Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy) (16:58):** Today I recognise The Shepherd Centre and the work it does in our great community. Recently I had the privilege of visiting The Shepherd Centre at Casula and was shown around by David Brady and Stephanie Ingram, the Western Sydney Community Woman of the Year 2022. The Shepherd Centre is a not-for-profit early intervention centre providing programs and support for children with hearing loss and their families. It runs programs and services to meet the needs of infants, toddlers, school-aged students and teenagers. With nine locations Australia wide, the Casula centre is only one of two locations that also has a preschool. Hearing health is vitally important for babies, infants and children, where early intervention is critical. The Shepherd Centre's preschool program focuses on offering small, language-rich environments to support children reach their full potential. Its success can be attributed to the fact that those with hearing issues complete high school at the same rate as the general population. I thank The Shepherd Centre for its continued contribution to our community.

**PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE**

**Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (16:59):** Last Saturday 17 June I attended a local Filipino celebration to commemorate the milestone 125th anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence, which was on 12 June. A flag-raising ceremony was organised by the Philippine Language and Cultural Association of Australia

[PLCAA] in partnership with Penrith City Council. The event occurs every year. It was attended by dignitaries, and we were treated to several cultural performances. It is important that we honour our communities' traditions. I congratulate all the PLCAA members on the work they have done to keep their culture alive and introduce it to those in our local community. I have attended the event many times over the years. Members of PLCAA always share a meal with us at the end, and it is a spectacular spread. I again congratulate them on the momentous 125th anniversary celebration.

#### **COMMUNITY REFUGEE WELCOME CENTRE**

**Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (17:00):** I bring to the attention of the House the Community Refugee Welcome Centre, a safe and inclusive space where refugees and people seeking asylum are supported to rebuild their lives in their new country while forming meaningful connections with inner west locals. The centre provides a seedbed for newcomers to flourish based on their strengths, interests and skills, and facilitates their professional development. It is the only centre of its kind in Sydney, where refugees design and lead projects with a special focus on community art projects and the wellbeing of newcomers. The centre opened in 2017 as a partnership between Inner West Council, the justice and peace office of the Archdiocese of Sydney and Settlement Services International. Last Sunday I had the pleasure of attending the Spirit of Welcome festival that was organised by the centre to mark Refugee Week, showcasing the cultural and artistic contributions of refugees. I thank everyone involved in the festival—Damon Amb, Sophie Bejok, Adam Bujairami, Donna Kelly, Julia Siedova, Jawad Mahbobi and Moones Mansoubi—for their work bringing communities together.

#### **BANKSTOWN STROKE SUPPORT GROUP**

**Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (17:01):** It brings me great pleasure to recognise the work and advocacy of the Bankstown Stroke Support Group. The group's primary focus is on supporting stroke patients throughout their recovery journey. The collaborative efforts of Bankstown hospital, Revesby Workers' Club and Canterbury-Bankstown council have been pivotal in ensuring the success of the support group. I also acknowledge East Hills locals Tony Finneran and Paul Hollis, who are the driving force behind the support group. They dedicate their time and expertise to creating a nurturing environment where individuals can share their experiences, receive emotional support and gain valuable insights from others who have gone through similar challenges. By fostering a sense of community, the support group has become a beacon of hope for stroke survivors. I thank Tony and Paul for their tireless efforts and congratulate them on the success of the Bankstown Stroke Support Group.

#### **CASINO UNITED HOSPITAL AUXILIARY**

**Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence) (17:02):** I acknowledge the wonderful fundraising efforts of the Casino United Hospital Auxiliary volunteers. For over a century they have raised much-needed funds to purchase hospital items and medical equipment for the Casino and District Memorial Hospital, which has benefited their local community greatly. Unfortunately, the members of the auxiliary have hung up their aprons, with their last meeting held this week. Nobody knows the exact number of cups of tea or coffee, biscuits, cakes and slices they have made and sold over the years. But I do know the commitment and dedication of auxiliary members, both past and present, are very much appreciated in my local community. I particularly thank Robyn Spruce, who has served on the executive for the past two decades both as secretary and president; Deborah Jaynes, who has served as treasurer; and Barbara Thorley, who has done a wonderful job as secretary. I wish them all the very best and thank them for their long service.

#### **LIVERPOOL INNOVATION PRECINCT**

**Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (17:03):** On 8 June I attended the launch of the Liverpool Innovation Precinct's investment prospectus, along with leaders in health, education, business and government. It was a pleasure to join Treasurer Daniel Mookhey, the member for Leppington and the member for Holsworthy to acknowledge the valuable work of the Liverpool Innovation Precinct Committee in advocating for and recognising the potential of the Liverpool area as a hub of health, education, research and innovation. The launch was an opportunity to outline my vision for Liverpool and acknowledge the once-in-a-century economic development opportunity provided by the Western Sydney Aerotropolis, including the creation of new, well-paying jobs for residents and greater connectivity for businesses in south-west Sydney. I acknowledge the contributions of those who have worked on it over previous years, with special thanks to David Borger and Business Western Sydney for their longstanding commitment to making our region an innovation superpower.

#### **INTERNATIONAL YOUTH SCIENCE FORUM**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (17:04):** This evening the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges Sophie Yates and Hallie Richmond of Kiama High School, who have been selected to attend the International Youth Science Forum in London this coming July. Our community is incredibly proud of those extraordinary young women. Both Sophie and Hallie are extremely passionate science students who have been provided with a

once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to connect with global innovators throughout the scientific community. The International Youth Science Forum is a 14-day program held at various prestigious establishments. They include the Royal Geographic Society, Imperial College London, Oxford and Cambridge universities, as well as a multitude of other recognised institutions.

Sophie and Hallie have advised me that they will have access to a range of specialist lectures, demonstrations and keynote addresses from Nobel Prize winners and other scientific trailblazers, as well as scientific visits to world-class laboratories. Sophie and Hallie will be connecting with around 500 young people from across 70 countries, allowing for the global expansion of scientific outreach and the inspiration of the next generation. I was delighted to make a small contribution to their fundraising efforts and I congratulate both of them on their success.

#### **MATT DELL**

**Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (17:05):** I recognise an amazing constituent in my electorate, Matt Dell of Ulladulla. Matt contributes far and wide to the local community. He is a local business owner and also finds time to hold numerous community-based positions. He is president of the Milton Ulladulla Business Chamber; treasurer of the Lions Ulladulla District Community Foundation, which built the Jindelara respite cottage for people with a disability; and an active member of the Apex Club. Matt is also founder and chair of Community Connect Southern Shoalhaven, which supports volunteer and community groups. It recently held an expo to help link the community with local services and to link new volunteers with groups. To top it off, Matt is a committee member and performer with the Milton Ulladulla Entertainers, and has been for over 30 years. This year's performance saw over 1,600 tickets sold for performances over four days and evenings, and they donated over \$45,000 to local charities and groups—an outstanding effort.

#### **DAVIDSON ELECTORATE KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS**

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (17:06):** I acknowledge and congratulate constituents from the Davidson electorate who received honours as part of the King's Birthday Honours on Monday 12 June. David Anthony, Fiona Balfour, Dr Julia Vonwiller and Christopher Vonwiller became Members of the Order of Australia. Dr Michael Chow, Lesley Gild, Susanne Hamilton, Jeffrey Newman, Dr Irene O'Connell, Simon Pennington and Dr Dennis Sundin received a Medal of the Order of Australia. Their contributions are in the fields of technology, health, science, business, sport, law, philately and community. Their service helps foster a sense of unity, empowering our community to make a positive difference to the lives of others. Their tireless efforts and commitments serve as an example to us all. I am proud that the Davidson electorate has the second highest rate of volunteering in New South Wales—a community of which we should all be very proud.

#### **GILBERT AND JULIANNE FRANCE**

**Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (17:07):** I express my deepest gratitude to Gilbert and Julianne France, an extraordinary husband-and-wife duo who have made remarkable contributions to the Riverstone electorate through their unwavering dedication as volunteers in policing at the Riverstone Police Area Command [PAC] and their JP services. They have had a positive and profound impact on our community. Gil and Julianne selflessly volunteer at the Riverstone PAC, providing invaluable support with administrative tasks. Their presence at school functions, fetes, fairs and pop-up stalls allows police to focus on urgent matters, and their assistance is deeply appreciated. Their provision of justice of the peace services is invaluable to the community. They offer that vital service at multiple locations, ensuring accessibility and convenience for those in need. Gil's role as the Hawkesbury Men's Shed secretary showcases his dedication to promoting social cohesion and raising awareness about men's health issues. Gil and Julianne's willingness to go above and beyond is truly inspiring. On behalf of the entire community, I extend my heartfelt thanks for being outstanding citizens. Their exceptional service is deeply appreciated, and they serve as an inspiration to us all.

#### **TEYS TAMWORTH**

**Mr KEVIN ANDERSON (Tamworth) (17:09):** I thank Mr Michael Wells of Teys Australia Tamworth for his contributions to the meat processing industry in Tamworth. Over an 11-year career in charge of the Teys Tamworth facility, Michael has been a leader for hundreds of local staff. His leadership has seen the business grow as an integral part of the Tamworth community, offering sponsorships for local sporting teams and raising funds for community organisations in Tamworth. Sadly, Michael has now moved on to head up operations north of the border in Biloela, handing the reins over to Richard Ingram, who is a proud local and has 25 years' service to Teys Tamworth. Recently I had an opportunity to catch up with Richard and tour the facility where hundreds of local employees work. Teys Tamworth is family and Richard now takes on the role of running the plant. We wish him well as he continues the strong legacy of leadership at one of Tamworth's biggest employers.

### TERRIGAL TROTTERS

**Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (17:10):** I acknowledge the Terrigal Trotters and congratulate them on another successful Bay to Bay Running Festival held on Sunday 18 June 2023. The sold-out festival attracted over 3,000 competitors this year and included participation from far and wide—children, elite athletes and those who just enjoy a weekend jog. A big congratulations to the organisers and all the volunteers who come together to make this event bigger and better every year. I note that in 2023 the Bay to Bay raised \$70,000 for local charities, which is a fabulous result. I am sure the House will join me in congratulating the Terrigal Trotters on their efforts in raising funds for charities and their contribution to running on the Central Coast and Australia-wide.

### TRIBUTE TO TONY MUSTACA, OAM

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (17:11):** I express my profound appreciation and respect for the life of Anthony "Tony" Mustaca, OAM, a former councillor of Willoughby City Council, who passed away on 11 June 2023. Born in Italy on 1 September 1944, Tony migrated to Australia in 1956 where, I am proud to say, he chose to settle in Chatswood. Tony went on to make a distinguished contribution as a dedicated educator, a long-serving councillor and Deputy Mayor of Willoughby, as well as a highly respected community leader. In recognition of his many and extensive achievements, he was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in 2013 and an Italian knighthood in 2017. Councillor Mustaca served four terms on Willoughby City Council and served twice as deputy mayor. He lived in Chatswood most of his life and dedicated himself to the service of the Willoughby community. As an Italian immigrant, Tony typified so much of Australia's immigrant success story, with his rich contribution to our community and nation. A devoted family man, he is survived by his wonderful wife, Heather, six daughters and sons-in-law and many grandchildren—a magnificent legacy. Tony will be very much missed.

### PAM BURGESS

**Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (17:12):** When Pam Burgess from the Bega Valley Indoor Market Place began witnessing what was happening in Ukraine and heard firsthand accounts from her best friend, Tabitha Bilaniwskyj-Zarns, whose family and friends live there, she wanted to help in whatever way she could. Partnering with GoCamp Ukraine, which is a volunteer program that organises free language camps throughout Ukraine, Pam started the "Make, Create and Donate" initiative. The community opened their hearts and craft supplies to help spread some much-needed cheer. Items are donated to Pam, who then boxes them and sends them to the displaced children in the Ukraine, hoping to put a smile on their faces. She is hoping that the Bega Valley can collaborate to create items like beanies, socks and teddy bears to send in a bulk care package to Ukraine in time for Christmas. I recognise Pam's hard work and dedication and provide my sincere thanks to everyone who has contributed and donated to the initiative.

### TRIBUTE TO MARGARET FOWLER

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (17:13):** I pay tribute to the late Margaret Fowler, a remarkable woman whose contributions and dedication to my community and beyond will always be remembered. Margaret Fowler, wife of the former emeritus mayor and current councillor Ross Fowler, OAM, sadly passed away on 22 March this year, leaving behind a legacy of service and compassion. Margaret was best known for her decades-long tenure as the friendly face behind the counter of the Wallacia Post Office. Her commitment and warm demeanour endeared her to the community, making the post office an essential part of the social fabric of Wallacia. Margaret was also a passionate historian and member of the Penrith Historical Society. She served as a member of the St Paul's Grammar School board for 23 years, where her visionary mindset and passion for progress played a pivotal role in the school's adoption of the International Baccalaureate Middle Years and Primary School programs. I know that Margaret will be deeply missed by the community but her family will feel her absence most deeply. I hope that the knowledge that Margaret is now in eternal peace with her Saviour, Jesus Christ, will be of comfort and hope. Vale, Margaret Fowler.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** Members will appreciate that I sometimes comment on the length of community recognition statements, but that was an important one. I thank the member for Badgerys Creek.

### PARRAMATTA PURPLE FLAG ACCREDITATION

**Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (17:14):** Purple Flag accreditations are set to enhance our night-time destinations across the State and it is quite right that the first step outside the CBD for this scheme is in Parramatta. This accreditation is the perfect punctuation point to a significant amount of planning and posturing over many years to make those beyond Western Sydney realise that Parramatta is where it's at—not just as a place to live and to work, but for entertainment, great food and a great vibe synonymous with the cultural diversity of our community. Parramatta's Purple Flag accreditation is due to the joint efforts of State and local governments.



A team of dedicated City of Parramatta staff have been instrumental in facilitating and advocating for investment in Parramatta's small businesses, infrastructure and communal spaces. This type of success takes vision and a commitment to realise the potential of Parramatta's night-time economy. This accreditation is an important part of the overall pitch for Parramatta to be a destination.

#### **CENTRAL COAST MARINERS**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:15):** I commend the great Central Coast Mariners for their A-League Men's Championship win. The Mariners are the embodiment of the Central Coast spirit, and their win against Melbourne City was celebrated right across the coast. This is the second time the Mariners have won the A-League Championship and it was a long time coming—10 years in the making. While I was unable to attend the grand final game in Sydney as I was at the Central Coast Surf Life Saving Awards night, it was obvious that everybody in the room was keeping note of the score with the occasional cheers and "They're winning" echoing throughout Mingara. Even my parents in South Australia—especially dad—were keeping track of the game, sending me text updates of the score during the match. Mariners supporters literally come from far and wide. The entire Central Coast and I congratulate the Mariners on their fantastic win as A-League Champions. Of course, we look forward to seeing many more wins in the A-League—especially a nice back-to-back premiership—for the Central Coast Mariners. I again congratulate the team on doing an outstanding job.

#### **SIKH MISSION CENTRE**

**Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (17:16):** Our nation has been shaken by the tragic events earlier this month at Greta in the Hunter Valley. But, once again, in dark times we have seen the best of our community—people and organisations from across the country coming together to support those most impacted by these tragic events. On Sunday 18 June members of the Sikh community came together at the Sikh Mission Centre at Austral in my electorate to hold a prayer congregation for those who lost their lives in this horrific incident. The event was held on behalf of the National Sikh Council of Australia and follows a long tradition of Australian Sikhs' selfless contribution to the Australian community when it is most in need. Indeed, Seva—or service and dedication to others—is a core tenet of the faith. I commend the National Sikh Council of Australia and all those involved in this important commemoration, in particular Bawa Singh Jagdev, who is the secretary of the Austral Mission Centre.

#### **MARY-LOUISE MCLAWS, AO**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (17:17):** I pay tribute to one of Australia's outstanding epidemiologists who was instrumental in the fight against COVID-19, Mosman local Mary-Louise McLaws. The University of New South Wales epidemiologist and World Health Organization adviser was a calm, wise and informed voice at a time when there were many unknowns about the COVID-19 pandemic. Mary-Louise has long been admired by her colleagues nationally and globally for her influential work on infection control with the World Health Organization. In recognition of her work during the pandemic, she was also appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday Honours in 2022 for her distinguished service to medical research, particularly to epidemiology and infection prevention, to tertiary education and to health administration. Tragically, early last year Mary-Louise was diagnosed with a brain tumour. She has been bravely fighting this insidious disease and has undertaken significant treatments. I pass my thoughts and the thoughts of members of this place to her family and friends who are standing by Mary-Louise as she continues her brave fight. I thank Mary-Louise for all her work in keeping our community safe during a time of great uncertainty.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** We join in thanking Professor McLaws. I thank the member for North Shore.

#### **CAMDEN ELECTORATE MOTHER'S DAY FUN RUN**

**Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (17:18):** Mother's Day is often an emotional and memorable day for many, but it is especially so for those whose lives have been touched by grief. On Sunday 14 May the Camden Bike Track was a sea of pink. For the past two Mother's Days Camden has hosted a Mother's Day Classic fun run—or walk, in many cases—event. Thousands of locals walked the four kilometres out-and-back route to be met with music and local business stalls. There was a sausage sizzle cooked by Gregory Hills Rotary and enjoyed by many. The Camden electorate office staff were among many teams who proudly wore the names of family members and friends as they followed the pink Holden Valiant ute. Local musicians provided excellent accompaniment and we had the opportunity to purchase cupcakes, artwork and local handicrafts—as long as they were pink. I congratulate Jess, Sara and Kelly, who organised a wonderful and powerful community event that raises awareness and allows locals to gather in solidarity and remembrance.

### 2ND/3RD PENNANT HILLS SCOUT GROUP

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (17:19):** I am happy to inform the House that the 2nd/3rd Pennant Hills Scout Group recently turned 100. With many people seeking a greater sense of community, Scouts provides that for parents and children alike and helps to develop many soft skills in our youth, including leadership and a passion for the outdoors. We saw these qualities on Anzac Day, with Scouts taking a strong leadership position through organising and running services, as they have in past years. With the electoral redistribution, I am grateful to now represent more Scout groups, including 2nd/3rd Pennant Hills, who generously invited me to their centenary celebration on 13 May. Alongside former members and leaders, we enjoyed a dinner, cake, trivia and speeches. I had the pleasure to meet group leader, Ted Smithson, for the first time. I also thank my new constituent and committee member Michael Rosettenstein. Voluntary organisations only reach 100-year anniversaries because of generations of volunteers who have passed on valuable life skills, as this group has.

### POLICE AND COMMUNITY EXPO

**Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (17:20):** On Saturday 20 May I had the pleasure of attending the Police and Community Expo organised by the Fairfield City Police Area Command. Every year, this event gives the command the opportunity to strengthen its connection with the community. Officers from various units of the NSW Police Force were present and actively engaged with attendees to foster closer ties. Local emergency service providers, educators and career organisations were also present at the event and did a great job in raising awareness of the support services available in our area. I extend my congratulations to all the individuals involved in organising this fantastic community event. I thank Superintendent Michael McLean, APM, for extending the invitation to me. I look forward to working with him and the Fairfield City Police Area Command to keep our community safe.

### KNIT2GETHER GROUP

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (17:21):** Today I acknowledge the Knit2gether group, a wonderful community group within my electorate that has supported those in need for over 15 years. I recently had the opportunity to pay them a visit and try my hand at knitting! Started by founder Linda Pritchard over 15 years ago, Knit2gether came from humble beginnings, comprising six ladies who would meet to support each other over a cup of tea or coffee and, of course, to knit. It has now grown into a group of up to 40 people, who meet monthly to knit items for those in need. Knit2gether supports those in need by knitting beanies, blankets, scarves and gloves for the disadvantaged, homeless and lonely. I was pleased to be able to donate \$500 to the group, which will assist them in buying more wool and sewing equipment. I thank Linda for the wonderful work she does, as well as each and every volunteer for donating their time to help those in need. I am so proud to have a community group of such high calibre within my electorate.

### TILBA

**Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (17:22):** I congratulate the beautiful town of Tilba in the Bega electorate, which has just won the silver medal in the NSW Tourism Awards Tiny Top Tourism Town category for 2023. This beautiful and historic town, which is always green, sits at the foot of mother Gulaga mountain, the spiritual centre for the Indigenous people of the Bega electorate. Combined with this strong cultural connection, there is rich and diverse non-Indigenous history and beautiful natural landscapes. The historic streetscape invites a gentle stroll along Bate Street where people can experience the Saturday morning markets and shop for local dairy products and baked goods. After taking the Bellbrook loop track around the foothills of Gulaga, they can stop for good food and libations at the Dromedary Hotel, which serves locally produced beers and wines. Having satisfied their appetites, Tilba is within easy reach of the coastal villages of Narooma and Bermagui, and the historic village of Cobargo to the south. I again congratulate Tilba. I cannot wait to visit again.

### 3 VILLAGES COMMUNITY GROUP

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:23):** I acknowledge the outstanding work done by the 3 Villages Community Group in my electorate of Terrigal. Most recently the organisation held a fantastic brick fair at the Saratoga community hall. A brick fair, for those who do not know, involves the wonderful toy Lego. Lego is a fantastic toy that I think every single person in this Chamber has played with at some point. For me, the brick fair last Saturday was a walk down memory lane. There was wall-to-wall Lego and so many enthusiastic kids of all ages and sizes participating in the brick fair. I was delighted to be able to contribute two Lego kits as prizes to the young people taking part in the fair. I congratulate Taia Sansom, the incoming president of the 3 Villages Community Group, and all of her volunteers who put this fantastic festival on. It was great to see so many people attend, and to see so many young people get to experience the joy of Lego. There was not a sad face in the house. There were a lot of very excited kids. I wish them all the best of luck with next year's brick fair for the 3 Villages Community Group.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I thank the member for Terrigal, but shame on him. Lego should never be a trip down memory lane. It is a trip on which we continue.

**Ms Felicity Wilson:** Can you maybe commentate less next time so we have more time for CRSs?

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I thank the member for North Shore for her advice on how to do my job.

#### JASON WILLIAMS

**Mr DAVID MEHAN (The Entrance) (17:25):** I congratulate Jason Williams and the Central Coast Wargames Club on the occasion of the inaugural Armageddon Wargames Competition held on the weekend of 10 to 11 June 2023. The competition saw a large crowd of wargamers, some from interstate, gather at the Ourimbah RSL Club to battle with their toy armies using the well-known Art de la Guerre rule set. My constituent Gerry Fallon and his ancient Scottish army was the overall winner. Well done, Gerry. I thank Jason and the Central Coast Wargames Club for their contribution to the hobby of wargaming on the Central Coast.

#### *Private Members' Statements*

#### WAHROONGA ELECTORATE KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

**Mr ALISTER HENSKENS (Wahroonga) (17:26):** I have the pleasure to represent an absolutely incredible community, and this year seven residents of the Wahroonga electorate received King's Birthday Honours for their service and dedication to the community. Mr David Anthony, AM, of Turramurra is a prominent figure in the Australian cotton industry and well known for his service throughout cotton communities. His long and successful career has left a significant impact on the agricultural sector, having held positions in corporations, in agricultural science research and biosecurity and on government advisory bodies. His leadership was instrumental in the successful navigation of significant growth, change and challenges within the cotton industry. Additionally, his service had a significant impact on the community in Narrabri. A former Narrabri resident himself, he and his wife now live in Turramurra and have brought their community-mindedness there.

Miss Rose-Marie Radley, AM, of Wahroonga was the longest serving director of nursing at the Sydney Adventist Hospital, known as The San, in Wahroonga. She has a close association with the hospital, with her grandparents being foundational to the establishment of The San and her mother having trained in nursing there. Miss Radley's professional life took her across the globe, working in hospitals in Canada, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Coupled with her kindness, insight and understanding, her experience enabled her to be a transformational leader at The San, modernising multiple areas of the hospital, including the redevelopment of facilities, hospital administration and clinical services. Her contribution to nursing education has improved the quality of nursing for us all, taking training from an in-hospital to a tertiary program. Her impact will endure for generations to come.

For over four decades, Professor Simon Willcock, AM, of Westleigh has made significant contributions within the medical profession. Currently he is Clinical Program Head of Primary and Generalist Care, Wellbeing and Diagnostics at Macquarie Health. He has held numerous leadership roles in clinical and educational settings, including as a member of the board of the Sydney North Health Network and Estia Health. Within his educational and research roles, his areas of interest include the health of doctors, generational change in the medical workforce, men's health, and musculoskeletal medicine. Our community benefits from his remarkable contributions in individual patient care, medical education and research, organisational governance and medical workforce development.

Mrs Diana Moehead, OAM, of Normanhurst has served our community through Girl Guides and Scouts for over four decades. She is a member of the Pennant Hills Trefoil Guild, supporting and connecting others within the Girl Guide network, serving as both the president and vice-president. She volunteered with Normanhurst Girl Guides and Scouts, supporting the parent community and Guides unit for many years. She participated in the Hornsby Gang Show for over 20 years and worked at the Australian Scout Jamboree. Mrs Moehead's inspiring and valued contributions to the community extend to all areas of her life, including service to Normanhurst Uniting Church and her local community.

Mr Simon Pennington, OAM, of Pymble is dedicated to the sport of rowing and the development of athletes. Alongside his own achievements as an athlete, he has coached at numerous high schools in New South Wales and been involved in the leadership of teams competing in the New South Wales Youth Olympics and on the international stage. Mr Pennington was recently appointed head of co-curricular at St Joseph's College and has headed up programs at Pymble Ladies' College and Newington College. Young men and women in our community and across New South Wales have benefited greatly from his experience and coaching.

Mrs Jeannette Tsoulos, OAM, of West Pymble has been a dedicated volunteer in Jewish organisations for decades. From the National Council of Jewish Women to the Australian Jewish Historical Society and Australian

Jewish Genealogical Society, Jeannette's volunteer work has stood out. She has been a member of the National Council of Jewish Women and Australian Jewish Historical Society since 1988, and a member of the Australian Jewish Genealogical Society since 1994, as well as its past president. Volunteers are the backbone of our communities, and we are fortunate that Jeannette calls our area home.

Mr Alan Cole, OAM, of Wahroonga has been a voluntary coordinator and administrator of the Turrumurra Trotters since 1974. The Trotters are a group of fitness enthusiasts who have gathered regularly since 1974 to run around Turrumurra and surrounding suburbs. Alan is the legendary timekeeper who has kept the Trotters running for almost 40 years. He has also kept the group together, organising events for them and donating to charitable causes, including homelessness. I thank all recipients in this year's honours list and congratulate them on their service to improve the lives of many in my electorate as well as across New South Wales and internationally.

#### **DR ABDUL HAQ**

**Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (17:30):** I share the remarkable story of Dr Abdul Haq and his legacy of community engagement through the Bangladeshi community of Sydney. I acknowledge and welcome members of the Bangladeshi community, particularly his wife Laila, daughter Ruby, son Ash and brother Khurshid Alam, who are in the Chamber today. On 28 May I was invited to attend the Good Morning Bangladesh Biggest Morning Tea event for the Cancer Council. Hundreds of people flocked to Village Green in Blacktown to attend this morning tea. From an elderly grandmother making traditional Bengali breakfast to young Bengali Australians selling candles, the atmosphere was one of inclusivity. It was a community eager to share what it had to offer and raise as much money as possible for a great cause. Impressively, since the inception of the program in 2001, Good Morning Bangladesh has raised over \$350,000 for the Australian Cancer Council, making it the Cancer Council's second highest morning tea contributor and its highest cultural contributor. I was astonished to learn that this year's event raised a whopping \$24,000 in a matter of hours.

Alongside me at the event was the Hon. Ed Husic, the Federal Minister for Industry and Science, Blacktown City councillors Moninder Singh and Susai Benjamin, and Cumberland councillor Sabrin Farooqui, who is of Bengali heritage. Each of these people has had a longstanding connection with the Bangladeshi community during their time in office. When I was speaking with them and others in attendance, they all mentioned one name—Dr Abdul Haq. Dr Haq sadly passed away in 2016, but even several years on, it is clear that he continues to be held in high regard. Through my conversations with his daughter Ruby, who now runs this event, and his nephew Rakin Alam, a staffer in my office, I learnt about his immense contribution to Australian society, the Blacktown community and my electorate, which has created his timeless legacy as a community builder. He was dedicated to fighting cancer. Not only was he one of the founders of Good Morning Bangladesh alongside Mr Qayum Parvez, but Dr Haq also raised \$150,000 for the construction of a cancer hospital in Bangladesh.

Dr Haq was highly educated. He held a PhD in industrial engineering and was an academic at the University of Technology Sydney. He ran an educational coaching company that helped high school and HSC students. Dr Haq's interest in fostering knowledge in the next generation led to the creation of Talent Day, an initiative that recognises the achievements of Bengali students in the HSC each year. Dr Haq's contribution also holds special value for me personally as the member for Riverstone. His dedication to improving the lives of people who follow the Muslim faith in my electorate cannot be overstated. Dr Haq was instrumental in the foundation of Quakers Hill mosque, one of the main mosques for the Muslim community in my electorate. alongside Mr Kazi Ali, OAM, Dr Haq was also integral in establishing the Muslim burial section at the Riverstone cemetery. His work in securing the burial section helped put Muslim families at ease when they lost a loved one, as it allowed them to secure a resting place for their loved one close to home.

Dr Haq was a selfless individual dedicated to helping others. People like Dr Haq are some of the most valuable members of our society. He was a shining example of a leader who worked tirelessly for his community. Individually, Dr Haq's contributions to education, philanthropy and community engagement are significant; collectively, they are immense. It is through community leaders like him that our society thrives and is strengthened. Whilst Dr Haq is no longer with us today, and I am genuinely saddened that I did not get the opportunity to meet him, his legacy is being carried on by his family through his wife Laila, daughter Ruby and son Ash. Dr Haq's initiative, the Bangladesh Forum for Community Engagement, continues to engage with philanthropic programs like Good Morning Bangladesh, and is now led by president Dr Ayaz Chowdry and secretary Tanveer Shaheed. Dr Haq's legacy was so immense and well respected that Blacktown City Council recently named a park after him near his home in Hassall Grove, ensuring his name will live on long after those whose lives he touched have gone. He is the first Bengali Australian to have a public space named in their honour. I thank Dr Haq for his contribution and may he rest in peace.

**The SPEAKER:** I welcome the family of Dr Haq to the gallery and I congratulate the member for Riverstone on a fitting tribute.

### KYEEMAGH PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport) (17:35):** I inform the House of the final completion of Kyeemagh Public School in my electorate, which has been expanded from the existing kindergarten to year 2 infants school to a full kindergarten to year 6 primary school in an effort spanning many years. Seven years ago, in mid-2016, I was visited by a fantastic group of parents from the then Kyeemagh Infants School P&C. Led by their outstanding president, Gina Moeke, they had launched a community campaign to get the wonderful little 60-student school expanded. Their proposal made sense. Kyeemagh Infants was located on a very large block of land and the nearest primary school at Brighton-Le-Sands was struggling with record enrolments. The Bayside population was, and still is, growing. The little school also had a special ethos. It was a happy and inclusive place and its young students desperately wanted to be able to stay there for all of their primary years.

So determined were those P&C members to get the expansion approved that they gained the support of over 1,000 locals on a petition, and offered to fundraise the costs of installing demountable classrooms for the extra grades. After seeing how committed they were to getting this major improvement for our local community, I immediately asked to meet with officials from the Department of Education and staff from then education Minister Adrian Piccoli's office. To their great credit, both those groups of people saw the wisdom of the community's request. They worked to put together a formal proposal and get it over the line. In June 2017, just nine months later, it was announced that the change had been agreed to and the school would be reclassified as a kindergarten to year 6 primary school. The parents, staff and local community all celebrated this fantastic outcome. Exactly how the school would be physically expanded had not yet been determined, so the P&C doubled down and kept working hard.

One year later, in June 2018, came the announcement that everyone was waiting for: The old infants school would be completely rebuilt into a brand new school for 500 students. Construction started in July 2020 and continued throughout the pandemic. The final stages of the build were completed last year, shortly after the school welcomed its first year 6 cohort, completing the transition to a full primary school. The new school is a wonderful facility, with beautiful origami-inspired architecture, 17 flexible learning spaces, a new library, hall, canteen, admin block, covered outdoor learning area, and a wonderfully designed playground. All that is missing is a little shade while the trees are still growing, but we are working on that right now. The school has already grown to just over 200 students and is on track to hit 400 in the next few years, showing how much foresight those parents and P&C members had back in 2016.

I take a moment to put on record some of their names: Luisa Trieu, Louise Sheehy, Nadene Faure, James Kyriakou, Caroline Foley and Gina Moeke, as well as many others. They deserve recognition for their outstanding efforts. Kids grow up so quickly—it was only seven short years ago that I first met those wonderful people, yet their little children are now all in high school! I am happy to report to the House that the current generation of parents and P&C members are just as committed to the school's future as those of 2016. They have been working on making the new school even better, bringing ideas to me in 2023 just like the P&C of 2016. It is a delight to try to help them where I can. The new Kyeemagh Public School is an asset to our community, a place full of happy, smiling children who are well adjusted and energetic, and are now able to stay at the school for all of their primary school years. That is the legacy of many people's hard work. I congratulate and thank every single person involved in this fantastic project. They have created something to be proud of and the electorate of Rockdale is better for their efforts.

### NORTHERN RIVERS FLOOD RECOVERY

**Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence) (17:39):** I have spoken about flood recovery a number of times during my short time in this place, and I speak about it again because it is of major concern to residents in my electorate. Flood recovery is a long and emotional journey for us all—a journey that takes many twists and turns over a long period of time. The Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation [NRRC] has been chipping away, but progress is slow. The people affected have been patient. They have registered and are waiting for their turn. Three streams are available to flood-affected residents under the Resilient Homes Program: buybacks, house raising and retrofits. It is fair to say that the three streams were over-subscribed, with some 6,000 residents registered across the Northern Rivers.

Last week the Northern Rivers Reconstruction Corporation released maps of the local government areas that are included in the scheme, which includes Richmond Valley Council and Clarence City Council in my electorate, along with Tweed Heads, Ballina, Lismore, Kyogle and Byron. As the House would know, those areas were the hardest hit in the 2022 floods. Following the release of the maps, the NRRC confirmed that the first tranche of funds that were made available falls well short. While in Lismore on 4 April, Premier Minns said:

It's really important that the new government sends a message to the businesses and to the community that lives in this part of NSW that we are there with them for the long haul.

Last week the member for Lismore, the member for Ballina, the member for Tweed and I joined with mayors from seven local government areas, seeking an urgent meeting with Premier Minns to ask the Government to honour the second tranche of funding that was promised by the former Government—which was supported by Labor while it was in opposition. The letter said:

We the elected representatives of the Northern Rivers are writing to you to ask you to deliver on tranche two of the Resilient Homes program (RHP) as soon as possible.

Our communities know that the funding will help them recover quickly. The first tranche was \$750 million. It is a staggering amount of money and was co-funded by the Federal Government. However, in the official drawn-up Cabinet notes, it is understood that \$1.5 billion was required and that there would be a second tranche. It is now some 16 months since the humanitarian disaster that engulfed our communities up north, and it seems that some of the vital funding from the second tranche is not available. This is very important for the people of my electorate. They have been waiting for so long to get an answer so that they can recover. They have been patiently living in caravans and pod villages, couch surfing or living in a home that would be described by most members of this place as simply uninhabitable.

I fear that the maps have been drawn up to suit a number, not a need. As I have said before in this place, the service station and supermarket in Woodburn have still not reopened. In Broadwater, schools are still not open and, in Coraki, people are still living in a pod village. In fact, some 750 residents in my electorate are still without a home. In Casino, some roads remain closed and there are people still not back in their homes. About 330 homes across my electorate were destroyed or severely damaged. I again call on the Government to do what it said it would do on 4 April and support the people of the Northern Rivers. We are all in this for the long haul. The recovery is not finished. I urge the Government to come good on the second tranche of funding.

### **BUILDING INDUSTRY STANDARDS**

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (17:44):** I speak again about the enduring and shameful legacy of the former Government on housing stock and the regulation of building standards in my electorate. I have long raised concerns about buildings in my electorate, specifically regarding fire safety and building standards. In the past five years, hundreds of residents in Mascot, Rosebery and Zetland have suffered due to substandard buildings, being rendered homeless or being unable to use their own balconies out of fear of collapse. Regrettably, I have been informed of yet another apartment complex plagued by major structural defects in Waterloo. It is a story that adds another blow to the hardworking people and young families already struggling to find housing in our congested market.

Unfortunately, when residents of that particular building block talk to me about their home, they do not speak about the creature comforts and perks of living in the great suburb of Waterloo. Instead, they speak of persistent waterfall-like leaks, fire hazards and a systemic and blatant disregard for Australian standards throughout the building. I have always believed that the government of the day should have taken more responsibility to ensure that residents and prospective home owners were protected. No-one should have to face the indignity and dread of bankruptcy or homelessness due to the shonky work of others.

I assure residents in Heffron that this Labor Government is actively untangling the disastrous web of inadequacy, scandal and neglect left by the former Government that left nothing behind but the decaying bodies of fairness, certainty and integrity. Of course, it comes as no surprise that we have witnessed an alarming number of defective apartment complexes over the past decade. How could we have possibly trusted a government to regulate residential construction effectively when its own projects were riddled with defects and oversights? Let us not forget the trains that were too wide for tunnels or the ferries that failed to fit under bridges.

While the former Government eventually appointed a building commissioner and established Project Intervene, its incompetence rendered those interventions merely tokenistic gestures. It is evident that more must be done to restore confidence in the building sector. We cannot allow the usual spin and scandal we have come to expect from those opposite to become the standard for the crucial work that lies ahead. I am proud to see my colleague the new Minister for Building, the Hon. Anoulack Chanthivong, step up and flag significant reforms for the construction sector. We fulfilled our commitment to appoint a Minister for Building and will establish a New South Wales building commission by the end of the year.

The commission's crucial work will enhance scrutiny over the construction of high-rise apartments, instilling greater confidence in home buyers regarding the final product. In addition, the Government has extended Project Intervene until 30 November to put an end to years of frustration and fear felt by owners by rectifying costly defects. The extension will prevent protracted and expensive legal battles that have left home owners

stripped of their options. Furthermore, the Government will enact a plain-English building Act, specifically designed to simplify and modernise the complex legislative framework governing the residential building sector.

The Act will clarify the rights and responsibilities of builders, developers and residents alike, fostering the construction of high-quality homes. It is important to me and this Government that home owners know where they stand and what recourse is available to them to manage disputes and rectify defects efficiently. I am confident that providing residents with a pathway for a clear and identifiable process will empower them to proactively manage defects and hazards. A cultural and systemic shift in this sector will be a long and difficult road, but I more than expect this Government will deliver confidence and quality back to the market. As the housing crisis looms, the delivery of high-quality, affordable housing is more important than ever.

### GLEBE PUBLIC HOUSING

**Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain) (17:48):** I bring the attention of the House to the important issue of public housing. One of the things that is so welcome and positive about my electorate of Balmain is its social and economic diversity. Critical to that is the prevalence of public housing, providing genuinely affordable homes throughout our community. Like so many communities across our city and the State, ours is facing outrageously high house prices and rents. The high level of public housing in the electorate of Balmain has allowed those on lower incomes to make secure and stable homes, put down roots and establish strong community ties. It has ensured that the inner west does not simply become an enclave for the rich.

Nowhere is that more evident than in Glebe. The history of public housing in Glebe is both interesting and important. Much of it was built in the late nineteenth century, as residential development of the suburb intensified into rows of terraces to accommodate a rapidly growing population. For the next 100 years or so, those terraces became homes to working-class families who lived through the Great Depression and two world wars. In time, those houses deteriorated, leading to redevelopment plans, euphemistically known as "urban renewal". Unsurprisingly, those plans meant that those homes would be knocked down to make way for high-rise apartments and motorways.

The community rallied. Organisations such as the Glebe Society, backed by the wonderful Jack Munday and the Builders Labourers Federation, organised to stop those destructive projects. In response, under the visionary stewardship of Labor Minister Tom Uren, the Federal Department of Urban and Regional Affairs decided that the Glebe Estate should be rehabilitated rather than renewed. The properties were acquired and later transferred to the New South Wales Department of Housing, where, thankfully, they remain today.

Well, some of them remain. Over the past few years we have seen a steady decline in the availability of those properties for those on the public housing waitlist. Some have been totally neglected, boarded up as soon as they have become vacant. Shamefully, several have been sold off to raise revenue for the department—cannibalised to pay for repairs and maintenance on other properties. Again the community has rallied. Residents and local groups such as Hands Off Glebe and Action for Public Housing have called on the Government to stop this sell-off of public housing and to renovate and refresh those properties so that more low-income families can make Glebe home.

I was so pleased earlier this year when the Government announced a pause on the sale of this public housing. Our resilient community's years of campaigning, rallying and calls for change have finally been heard. Just last week the community's determination to prevent the demolition of public housing and privatisation of public land on the Franklyn Street estate has also paid off. The previous Government's plan was to knock down public housing on Franklyn Street and build a new complex, with 70 per cent of the new homes to be sold privately and only 30 per cent retained as social housing, run by a private provider—100 per cent publicly owned housing was to become 100 per cent private. This too was stopped last week. I congratulate the Government on listening to the community and on putting the interests of public housing tenants and applicants ahead of property developers and investors.

Now we must see real investment from the State Government into public housing and stop the cannibalisation of public housing altogether. This model is simply unsustainable. But there is still public housing in Glebe that the community remains concerned about, as the Government has confirmed that it will press ahead with the demolition of 82 Wentworth Park Road. While it is positive that it would remain public housing, the question about whether demolishing existing good-quality public housing in the middle of a housing crisis is the best approach must be asked. I was so proud to stand alongside residents and community activists as they rallied once again to save this property, with a week-long occupation.

Since the occupation, a scheme to refurbish and renovate, rather than demolish and rebuild, this property has been put forward by the Glebe Society with the support of Hector Abrahams Architects. While indicative only, the scheme demonstrates that there are alternative options for this site, which could deliver more housing,

do not require demolition of the site and would remove the need to relocate tenants who currently reside in the property—all this while saving embodied energy and saving money. Exploring and pursuing such an option makes sense. It would allow the New South Wales Labor Government to deliver more public housing in the high-demand and historically significant inner-city suburb of Glebe, which would be a good result for everyone.

### **SOUTH COAST ELECTORATE EVENTS**

**Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (17:53):** I take this opportunity to recognise three amazing events in my electorate of South Coast: the Shoalhaven Autumn Celebration of Food, the Viking Festival Sussex Inlet and StoryFest in Milton and Ulladulla. We all know that the South Coast is a special place. We have some of the most beautiful and unspoilt beaches in the world. We have a beautiful hinterland dotted by farms. And, thanks to Bob Carr, we are surrounded by national parks. It is a tourist mecca. In fact, after Sydney, the South Coast is the most popular tourist destination in New South Wales. The South Coast relies heavily on small business. In fact, small business is the backbone of the South Coast and the largest employer in the electorate.

Our fabulous restaurants, places of accommodation, unique retail stores and building and manufacturing sectors are the small businesses where we work and they are what allow us to live in this beautiful area. In return, small business is heavily reliant on the tourists who flock to our region, and over the summer season they come to the South Coast in droves. However, winter on the South Coast can be grim for small businesses. This year, we have had three not-for-profit community groups help address this by putting on major events that have attracted thousands of visitors to the region over the past six weeks.

The first group was the Shoalhaven Food Network, which put on the annual event of Autumn Celebration of Food. This amazing celebration showcases and promotes the Shoalhaven's finest chefs, cheesemakers, baristas, pâtissiers, brewers, winemakers, bakers and growers. However, it is not just about food. The network views its role as a vehicle to showcase other local businesses, such as accommodation and reception venues. I give a big shout-out to Di Laver, the president and founder of the Shoalhaven Food Network. Over the past year, Di has embarked on a program to encourage the next generation to choose hospitality as a great professional career of choice. This was evident at the launch of the celebration, with young people from our local TAFE and Ulladulla High School students working to prepare and serve the food.

The next event I mention is the Viking Festival Sussex Inlet. This amazing event celebrates the Scandinavian heritage of Jacob Ellmoos and his family, who came from the little Danish village of Ensted and settled in the area in the late 1800s. The Viking festival also recognises the importance of the local Aboriginal community, who were instrumental in helping the early settlers like the Ellmoos family when they arrived in the area. The festival showcases local businesses and food venues and has a Viking village with tents and a fire pit, where visitors can experience how the Vikings lived.

Visitors can also watch re-enactments of the fierce battles and the games that Vikings played. The Viking festival and the Shoalhaven Food Network even collaborated and held a long-table lunch at the Viking festival as part of the Shoalhaven food and wine festival. I was delighted to attend the Viking festival with my friend Fiona Phillips, the Federal member for Gilmore. We and everyone else in attendance had a great day. Even better, all accommodation places were booked out and businesses have reported outstanding results. I thank the Sussex Inlet District Chamber of Commerce for organising this amazing event. I especially mention Sandra Gray, who has done so much for the Sussex Inlet community.

Last but not least is StoryFest in Milton and Ulladulla. StoryFest is an extremely popular winter event. It is a celebration of storytelling in all its forms, featuring events with writers, filmmakers, poets and songwriters. I was privileged to attend the opening night with Her Excellency the Governor of New South Wales, the Hon. Margaret Beazley, AC, KC, who officially opened the festival. The four-day festival featured a wide array of events, thought-provoking talks and truly inspiring book readings from some exceptionally talented people. Especially great was the talent coming out of Ulladulla High School. I congratulate all students. They all have a bright literary future in front of them. I thank Adam Jeffrey and the StoryFest committee for all their hard work in organising the fantastic event. These events are truly unique and so special. Showcasing our top-quality produce, our extremely talented locals and the breathtaking natural environment all adds to the amazing, rich tapestry of the South Coast, a region that is always evolving but never loses touch with its roots.

### **TAREE RESCUE SQUAD**

**Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes) (17:58):** I today draw attention to an issue that affects the dedicated volunteers of the Taree Rescue Squad, who are part of the esteemed Volunteer Rescue Association [VRA] in New South Wales. It is a matter of concern that these selfless individuals are forced to fundraise to cover the day-to-day running costs of their squad—power, phone bills, fuel and even the purchasing of life-saving equipment—while other first responders receive the necessary resources as part of their operational support.



Taree VRA plays a vital role in Myall Lakes, providing primary and specialist rescue services in our coastal and rural areas. Its commitment and expertise complements the efforts of other emergency services, working hand in hand to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our fellow citizens.

I experienced firsthand how our local emergency services work together in Myall Lakes and beyond. On 21 January this year I attended "Who let the boats out?", a NSW SES-led multi-agency flood rescue exercise designed to develop the capability of on-water operators and incident management team members, while also fostering relationships and partnerships between emergency service agencies. I joined the core volunteer units in our region, including the NSW SES Taree City Unit, the Cape Hawke and Pacific Palms surf lifesaving clubs, the Tuncurry Rural Fire Brigade, Marine Rescue Forster Tuncurry, Marine Rescue Crowdy Harrington and the Taree Rescue Squad. "Who let the boats out?" is a valuable exercise to ensure that our volunteers are better acquainted with each service's vessels and operating styles so that they can join forces effectively to serve the community when needed. Whilst taking part in "Who let the boats out?", it was brought to my attention that the Taree Rescue Squad, along with many other VRA units, face a significant challenge in acquiring the essential resources required to carry out their lifesaving work.

The Taree Rescue Squad, like all VRA units, provides an invaluable service to our community. The team's tireless efforts and selflessness should not be overshadowed by financial constraints that hinder their ability to respond promptly and effectively to emergencies. By forcing those volunteers to allocate a substantial portion of their time and energy towards fundraising, we inadvertently detract from their primary objective of saving lives. I recognise Taree VRA deputy captain Adam Webster and rescue operator Jackson Fechny, both of whom attended the annual State Road Crash Rescue Challenge last month. Adam and Jackson were selected to form part of a VRA Rescue NSW State team. Due to their outstanding abilities and dedication, Commissioner of VRA Rescue NSW Brenton Charlton selected them as members of a team to compete in the Australasian Road Rescue Organisation competition, which will be held in Adelaide next week. Rescue operator Daniel Ney from Taree will join them as a support member.

The Australasian Road Rescue Organisation is the peak body in Australasia for the development and exchange of information, knowledge and skills in road and trauma rescue. Rescue teams as well as rescue and trauma experts from across Australia and Asia will be at the event, sharing their knowledge and experiences with those present. The selection of these volunteers from the Taree Rescue Squad is a testament to their level of skill, dedication to training and ability to work as a team in their service to our local community. It is our duty as representatives to acknowledge the invaluable contributions made by the Taree Rescue Squad and the Volunteer Rescue Association as a whole. By rectifying the funding disparity and providing adequate support, we will enhance their capacity to fulfill their mission of saving lives and providing essential rescue services to those in need. Together, we can make a tangible difference and demonstrate our commitment to supporting those who put their lives on the line to protect our communities.

### CENTRAL COAST MARINERS

**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) (18:02):** The Central Coast Mariners are the 2022-23 A-League champions. I will say it again because it sounds really good: The Central Coast Mariners are the 2022-23 A-League winners, defeating Melbourne City 6-1 in the grand final in front of over 26,000 fans, consisting of mostly Mariners supporters. They invaded Parramatta, pouring off the trains onto the streets and into the stadium. Central Coast put on a show to secure the title. Before the grand final, I told the House that the Mariners were the definitive underdogs—the Davids in the battle against Goliath. The Mariners' mantra this season was "Believe", and believe they did. The emotion at the end of the game was quite magical, with players, staff and fans shedding tears of relief and joy, tinged with disbelief at the amazing scoreline. Even the Prime Minister of Vanuatu was in the crowd, cheering on Brian Kaltak.

After a tough 10 years—and it was tough since their last grand final—the Central Coast Mariners are A-League champions again. The spirit of our local club—including chairman Richard Piel, CEO Shaun Mielekamp, the backroom staff, the academy players, and the first team players—is contagious. The Mariners went up 2-0 early before Melbourne City stole a goal back just on half time. The fans tensed up, wondering whether the Melbourne juggernaut might reel us in. There was nervousness in the crowd. But in a masterstroke, coach Nick Montgomery introduced super-sub Jacob Farrell. The 20-year-old Mariners local strode onto the field and what happened next after just a few seconds completely changed the dynamic of the season's final contest. With just his second touch of the game, Farrell earned a penalty. Andrew Nabbout made a foolish challenge, leaving referee Chris Beath with no alternative but to blow his whistle and point to the spot. It was a game changer.

Minutes later, Farrell earned a second penalty—who would have believed it? He had earned two penalties after just a few minutes on the field. After the penalty conversion, the Mariners led 4-1. We would have been happy to win the grand final 4-1, but there were more goals to come. Beni Nkololo and Moresche scored two

beautiful length-of-the-field goals to create a dizzyingly delicious 6-1 final scoreline. Jason Cummings scored three goals on the night, including two penalties and another goal, breaking the record for the most goals scored in a season by a Central Coast player. It was very good to see that Moresche is back from an anterior cruciate ligament injury, and he scored his first goal since returning. Sammy Silvera and Beni Nkololo both scored also to take us to that 6-1 victory.

Kudos goes to coach Nick Montgomery, former Sheffield United player and captain, and title-winning player at the Mariners. Montgomery is studious and inspirational. He demonstrated belief in his charges, and they rewarded him with great performances. "Monty" had a plan and he executed it successfully. As we say on the coast, "In Monty we trust". The magnitude of this triumph goes well beyond the addition of a second title for this little club with a huge heart. It has shown how the right people making good decisions can create a club identity that is both inspirational and effective—and on a very small budget, I must say. As one media outlet said:

Nice guys (and local heroes) can come first, and their club can stand for something. Other clubs in the competition might wish to take note.

It is no secret that I am a passionate Mariners supporter. I bleed yellow and navy. But this club has created a family atmosphere, and is doing the small things well. At the conclusion of every home game, there is a family photo with fans and players to celebrate either a win or a loss, which shows that united feeling. Right across the board, whether it is school-based programs or other community programs that are run by the club, the Central Coast Mariners are kicking goals. Whether or not one lives on the coast, true football fans can support the team. I again congratulate the players and coaching staff. Some of them will move on to further their careers, and we wish them well. But the 2022-23 men's A-League champions are the mighty Central Coast Mariners. We will sing loud and proud for the next 12 months.

**The SPEAKER:** Hear, hear! The member for Terrigal would like to offer a speech in reply.

#### **TARRAGAL OUTRIGGER CANOE CLUB**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:07):** I will not speak in reply, but before I make my private member's statement, I note I received updates on the score from my dad. He watched the game on my behalf because I was in Adelaide for the surf lifesaving awards, but it was a great night—and that was a great speech from the member for Wyong. Recently I had the pleasure of attending a blessing ceremony for the Tarragal Outrigger Canoe Club, a fantastic organisation headed by president Louise Vangestel. Tarragal outriggers is an Indigenous culture-based club founded in 2022 by Ms Vangestel and vice-president Kerry Miller. My first interaction with Louise was in 2022, when she wrote to me of the newly founded organisation and its vision.

The club's vision is to recognise our local Indigenous peoples and to work to increase the social equity of Indigenous youth, specifically through its partnership with the Frank Baxter Youth Justice Centre and the Bara Barang Corporation. The team at the club dedicate their time to train and mentor Indigenous youth as they re-enter society, providing them with a sporting pathway for their future. The club was able to create the program thanks to another local organisation, VERTO, which donated 12 floatation devices as well as hats, drink bottles and backpacks—a great way of establishing a connection between the kids and the club, as well as being an example of the typical Central Coast mateship that our organisations have. Louise has rightly been recognised for her efforts to better the community as a nominee for the Terrigal electorate Woman of the Year. It was my pleasure to host her and the team at the Women of the Year presentation. However, like all community organisations, the club has faced its own struggles.

To the community's sadness and disappointment, the canoe club's compound was the victim of blatant acts of vandalism in February, when fence poles were ripped from the ground, snapped in two and stolen. The compound was to be dedicated for the storage of the club's canoes, which at that stage were old canoes that club members had purchased themselves. However, our community spirit of helping one another is significant and came to the support of the Outriggers. Local organisations came to the rescue to support the club after the vandalism of the compound, with a team of 15 from Traden Trade and Construction School donating rapid set concrete, and BlueScope Steel stepping up and donating all the new steel posts for reconstruction of the compound. There is only good news from the reconstruction of the compound onwards. In 2022 Louise and the team came to me for a letter of support for a Community Building Partnership grant. The goal for the club was to purchase a brand new outrigger canoe to replace one of its old ones. I was proudly able to provide my support for its application.

I am very happy to say that the club was successful and received a grant of \$32,000 through the Community Building Partnerships program, which is incredibly valuable to our communities. The club invited me to attend the Terrigal Haven to witness the canoe blessing of that vessel. The ceremony was a heartwarming occasion, when everyone saw the dedication and hard work of all the Outriggers team pay off. At the conclusion of the blessing of the fleet by the pastor, it was a joyous occasion watching the club members do their inaugural paddle in the

brand new outrigger new canoe. I was grateful to be invited to be an honorary member of the Outrigger mob—a position I now hold very dearly—and cannot wait to go for my first paddle with the club, hopefully when it gets a bit warmer.

Local organisations like the Tarragal Outriggers are an integral part of the community fabric on the Central Coast. Despite being founded only recently, it has already made strides with its educational programs working to help Indigenous youth re-enter our community. Despite facing challenges, the club kept going, thanks to the support of the Central Coast community. People like Louise, Kerry and the countless volunteers and club members who have focused on making meaningful changes in the community through those organisations are what matters. That is why I am extremely proud that an organisation like the Tarragal Outrigger Canoe Club is in my electorate. As I said, after being made an honorary member of the mob that morning, I am certainly looking forward to having my first canoe paddle—probably, as I said, not in the freezing cold weather we have been experiencing recently.

Again, I saw the excitement, passion and emotion when that first brand-new outrigger kayak was launched, thanks in no small measure to not only the incredible Community Building Partnership funds but also the incredible hard work, dedication and passion of Louise and the rest of the team at the Tarragal Outrigger Canoe Club. It would not have been possible without them driving that initiative. It is great that, as local MPs, we are able to provide that support and encourage our community to support those organisations through thick and thin and good and bad. I wish the Tarragal Outrigger Canoe Club all the very best for a very bright future.

### INCONTINENCE

**Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (18:13):** Today I speak on World Continence Week, which is taking place this week from 19 to 23 June. The annual initiative is managed by the World Federation of Incontinence and Pelvic Problems and is supported by multiple Australian and international agencies. As a former gynaecologist and former member of the Urogynaecological Society of Australasia, I have some 40 years' experience of the effect of incontinence on women's health, and specifically 20 years' experience of the effect on rural women in the Bega electorate. Despite the topic of my private member's statement, as all politics is local, so too are continence problems. They are not only a problem in developing countries; they are also a First World problem, with an increased burden on our people and our healthcare system. They are not only a problem for women but also for men and children of both sexes. Indeed, they can be a problem from birth to the end of life for some men, women and children.

Unfortunately, rural and regional residents lack the options available to those in metropolitan centres. I ask members to consider something that we all take for granted: the control, restraint and suppression of our urinary and bowel excretory systems. Consider a life without that most basic functional expectation. Consider a life affected by incontinence of urine, faeces or flatus. One-quarter of Australians live with that uncomfortable concept at some stage of their lives. Incontinence is never normal and should never be dismissed or trivialised. It is not a normal part of ageing nor of having a baby. Over five million Australians experience continence problems. That is expected to rise to 6.5 million by 2030. According to the Continence Foundation of Australia, one in three women, one in 10 men and one in five children experience urinary incontinence. Additionally, one in 20 people experience incontinence of faeces or flatus.

However, due to embarrassment, lack of knowledge about options, fear of surgery and lack of available resources, 70 per cent of people affected by incontinence do not seek help. As we stand or sit comfortably clean and dry, unencumbered by incontinence protection, consider the consequences for those individuals affected by incontinence. It can be a life without quality affected by depression, anxiety, work impairment and social isolation; a life of sexual dysfunction; and a life troubled by perineal and urinary tract infections. Those afflicted by incontinence feel they are a burden for their caregivers. The expense of sanitary protection, creams, medications, consultations and investigations can be prohibitive for many without government support.

There is help for those individuals affected by or at risk of incontinence. Prevention comes first. We must have education in the community regarding the physical, mental and social effects of incontinence and the available options for management. Nurses, midwives, GPs, physiotherapists and continence advisors are on the front line to provide that education and prevention. Management may be uncomplicated with insight into the varied problems of incontinence, where simple history, examination and investigation may lead to successful conservative management to improve the quality of life of those people. Referral to secondary level specialist services including gynaecology, urology or general surgery is the next step and, again, people may need non-invasive or medical treatment rather than surgery. Those primary and secondary multidisciplinary levels of service should be freely available to men, women and children in both metropolitan and rural areas.

Tertiary referral to metropolitan subspecialist centres should be required only by those few people who have resistant or recurrent incontinence or who have failed primary or secondary management. All levels of

government can contribute significantly to improving the lives of those affected by incontinence. Local government can provide accessible public toilets with facilities for hygienic change and disposal of sanitary aids. I commend the Federal Government Continence Aids Payment Scheme, which assists selected individuals who require continence protection. I also inform the House of the National Public Toilet Map app, which helps people find a nearby toilet without difficulty. New South Wales needs to provide equity of access and quality within the public health system to the men, women and children of this State, particularly those in rural and regional areas.

**The SPEAKER:** I thank the member for Bega. He raised an important and sensitive issue that affects too many people. I am pleased to hear such a well-articulated speech in this Chamber on that subject. I hope that it will help people. I am certainly pleased that the member is such a strong advocate in that area.

#### **DRUMMOYNE ELECTORATE BUS ACCIDENT**

**Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoynes) (18:18):** This evening I report on an event that occurred earlier today in my electorate. Just after midday, a bus crashed on Victoria Road at Lyons Road in Drummoynes. The bus ended up perched on a concrete median strip, balancing on two wheels with the barrier propping up one side. It has been reported that all passengers who were on the bus at the time of the accident were freed and able to get off the bus and received medical attention at the scene. Some 20 people were assessed by NSW Ambulance paramedics, and the bus driver, one passenger and the driver of the ute involved in the accident were taken to hospital. An eyewitness remarked that he had never seen anything like it; another commented that it was like something out of a movie—something we might all call a freak accident.

Four Fire and Rescue NSW trucks responded and promptly arrived on the scene, as well as the police and ambulance. Traffic diversions were swiftly put in place and the accident was cleared within a few hours—a truly remarkable team effort. I sincerely commend, acknowledge and thank the first responders who were on scene today. I convey my deepest sense of appreciation for the work they do not just today but each and every day. On behalf of my community, I thank them for keeping my community safe, arriving at the site so quickly, looking after those involved in the incident, clearing the accident so quickly and being there for us when we needed it. Victoria Road is a major thoroughfare, and it was a truly remarkable effort. I thank our brilliant emergency services crew because the road was back in operation by peak hour this afternoon.

We are thinking of the passengers on the bus, the bus driver, the driver of the ute involved in the crash and those involved in the accident. I have not had an update on those who were taken to hospital, but I sincerely hope that all are okay. On behalf of my community, I say that we stand with them. It was a traumatic event, and both I and my electorate office are available to offer help and provide whatever assistance is needed. I encourage anyone affected by today's accident to use the 24/7 New South Wales Mental Health Line on 1800 011 511. I have written to the Minister for Roads seeking a meeting, and I thank him for his reply. I will take the opportunity to discuss traffic safety on Victoria Road, and I want to work with him and with the new Government to ensure our roads are as safe as possible.

#### **JESUIT REFUGEE SERVICE AUSTRALIA**

**Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (18:22):** On 16 June I attended the Jesuit Refugee Service [JRS] Australia Finding Freedom event at St Patrick's Cathedral Parramatta to celebrate World Refugee Week, alongside my parliamentary colleagues the member for Granville and the member for Auburn. The room was filled with those whose lives have been touched by the work of JRS Australia—children, men and women. We gathered to learn more about the incredible work the service does and to hear the remarkable testimonies and experiences of survivors escaping dangerous circumstances, finding a new home in Australia and pursuing their dreams.

The Parramatta, Liverpool and Fairfield local government areas have the largest refugee populations in New South Wales. Those asylum seekers are predominantly from Sri Lanka, Iran, Bangladesh, Iraq, Pakistan or Afghanistan, or are stateless. Australia has approximately 10,000 to 15,000 people on temporary visas and seeking asylum—including children, the elderly and people with disabilities—who are ineligible for Commonwealth support. About 5,000 of them live in New South Wales. The Parramatta electorate is recognised as accommodating the largest asylum seeker population, particularly in the suburbs of Westmead, Parramatta, North Parramatta and Harris Park. Keeping that in mind, the importance of the presence of JRS Australia within our community cannot be overstated. It offers comprehensive support services to assist displaced persons, aiding them through emergency assistance, food bank support, specialist casework, community development activities, employment assistance, school engagement, domestic and family violence support, homelessness support, legal clinics and advocacy.

For most of us it is hard to imagine how terrifying it would be to find ourselves in a completely foreign environment, often with no possessions, no identity documents, no recognition of our previous skills, homeless and needing to start from scratch. In those circumstances, the support of an organisation like JRS Australia makes

an indelible impression on lives. The experience of asylum seekers and refugees is not a new Australian story. However, many of us are oblivious to the number of asylum seekers and refugees that are living amongst us in our communities today, seeking refuge and protection in this country. Having lived through unimaginable trauma and great hardship on their journeys to Australia, the fact that so many refugees overcome it to become some of the greatest contributors to our community is nothing short of remarkable and serves as an inspiration to us all.

Among the speakers at the Finding Freedom evening was Idrissa, a displaced person from Sierra Leone who had been the victim of persecution and torture throughout his life. Embarking on a perilous journey, he fled Sierra Leone seeking freedom and asylum—in his words, "hoping the land of the kangaroos would offer him sanctuary". Idrissa has learnt English, and he works and is a leader in the community that embraced him. The road to asylum can be complex and demanding, and the support of services like JRS Australia is invaluable in ensuring that others like Idrissa are given the opportunity to bring their strengths, skills and cultural diversity to our community.

It is important to always remember that the people behind the stories are real. They are our children's school friends and footy teammates and our work colleagues, neighbours and friends. They are just like my parliamentary colleague the member for Cabramatta, who, in his inaugural speech, spoke of the experiences he and his family endured as refugees 40 years ago and the path his life has taken since arriving in Australia. Importantly, refugees and asylum seekers are not defined solely by those experiences. Each is a unique individual with their own dreams, ambitions and loves.

I am very proud that our Parramatta community provides support and is home to so many of those remarkable people. I thank JRS Australia for its tireless work, carried out on the sniff of an oily rag. I look forward to continuing to work with JRS Australia to advocate for financial security so that the help they give 24/7 to some of the most vulnerable in our community is made that little bit easier. In the spirit of the World Refugee Week theme, "Finding Freedom", we all have a role to play to ensure that all who live amongst us achieve that basic human right.

#### **LIVERPOOL INVESTMENT PRECINCT**

**Mrs TINA AYYAD (Holsworthy) (18:26):** On Thursday 8 June the Liverpool Investment Precinct prospectus document was launched at the University of Western Sydney campus in Liverpool. The document lays out the investment opportunities to transform Liverpool into south-west Sydney's gateway to world-class health, education and innovation facilities. Liverpool is well positioned to drive economic development in the south-west. Whilst we have so much potential, we need to make sure we get it right to ensure we maximise the benefits that come from key infrastructure such as the Moorebank Intermodal Precinct and Western Sydney international airport. In attendance were 120 leaders in business, industry and community, along with my State Parliament colleagues the Treasurer, the member for Liverpool and the member for Leppington.

Whilst there was an abundance of diversity in the room, everyone was united in taking advantage of the once-in-a-generation opportunity to elevate Liverpool's status as Sydney's third CBD. The vision outlined in the prospectus leverages Liverpool's current strengths as building blocks and lifts them to the next level. Liverpool Hospital anchors the precinct as a health and research hub, aided by the \$790 million investment in expanding the facility into the Southern Hemisphere's largest hospital. The right choice was made to turn the hospital into the precinct's anchor, as over 15,000 health and knowledge workers currently reside in the Liverpool local government area. That number is set to double to 30,000 workers by 2036. It is a prime example of the prospectus expanding upon Liverpool's existing strengths.

To further strengthen the sector and capitalise on its potential, it is vital that our education system adapts to the specific needs and demands of the healthcare industry. That entails collaborating closely with healthcare providers, academic institutions, and industry experts to develop tailored educational programs that equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in healthcare-related careers. By nurturing a pipeline of highly skilled healthcare professionals, we can attract investment, enhance patient care and, most importantly, provide more high-skilled and high-paying jobs to the people of south-west Sydney.

We are already on that track, with three universities—the University of Western Sydney, University of Wollongong and University of Notre Dame—as well as the TAFE campuses operating in the Liverpool CBD. With more children attending university and TAFE, those universities now have the opportunity to cater to the precinct's focus on health. That provides a unique opportunity to turn the Liverpool CBD into a one-stop shop for tertiary education and long-term employment, all within a 500-metre radius. It is in stark contrast to what we are used to in south-west Sydney, where travelling over two hours to and from work or university every day is not beyond the norm.

There are so many other aspects to the precinct that will transform the Liverpool CBD into a desirable place to live, work and study. The imminent opening of the Western Sydney international airport and the Moorebank Intermodal Precinct presents an extraordinary opportunity to diversify our local economy and create job opportunities in a range of industries. To maximise the potential of these emerging sectors, it is imperative that we align our education system with the needs of industries, such as aviation, logistics and advanced manufacturing. Education, therefore, plays a pivotal role in realising the full potential of the Liverpool Investment Precinct. We must invest in our educational institutions, ensuring they have the necessary resources, infrastructure and partnerships to deliver high-quality training and education programs.

This is not just for the future, either. We can start now by upskilling adults to encourage lifelong learning and upskilling. As industries evolve and new technologies emerge, it is incumbent upon us to provide ongoing opportunities for individuals to acquire new skills and adapt to changing workplace requirements. The prospectus builds a bedrock upon what we can do now and into the future where its vision to nurture, collaborate, accelerate and activate is well on its way. I congratulate co-chairs David Borger, executive director of Business Western Sydney, and Amanda Larkin, chief executive of the South Western Sydney Local Health District, as well as Mayor of Liverpool, Ned Mannoun, on their work on this document. I look forward to seeing the ideas and vision on paper come to fruition. I have no doubt this vision will become a reality in the future.

### SICKLE CELL DISEASE

**Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (18:30):** Today I speak about an issue that recently was raised with me by constituents of mine. Earlier this week, on 19 June, we marked World Sickle Cell Awareness Day. Sickle cell disease, or SCD, is an inherited condition that affects the production of haemoglobin in red blood cells, which carry oxygen around the body. As it is relatively rare in Australia, it is not well understood. However, the genes for SCD are more often found in people with any of the following ethnic backgrounds: African, Middle Eastern, southern European, South Asian, South American and Caribbean. In a patient with SCD, rather than healthy round cells, a C-shaped cell is formed, similar to a traditional farming tool called a sickle. The shape and limited lifespan of sickle cells lead to an ongoing shortage of red blood cells and may also cause blood vessels to be blocked.

It can be a life-threatening condition and causes chronic pain, infections and other medical complications. It can be managed with regular blood transfusions and medication. A bone marrow transplant is the only known cure. Australian Sickle Cell Advocacy, or ASCA, was founded in 2014 by Agnes and Preston Nsofwa to provide education, information and support for patients with SCD and their families. Recently, the ASCA held an information and support session in the Liverpool area in recognition of the fact that an increasing number of those living with SCD have made Liverpool their home. I congratulate Dillys Chi on organising such an important event. The evening featured a presentation on the latest treatments available for those with SCD by Dr Annmarie Bosco, a haematologist specialising in blood disorders at the Prince of Wales Hospital, and a session on looking after mental health and wellbeing by Dr Winnie Foley. The evening also featured lived experience speakers, or warriors, entertainment and food.

Importantly, I was advised by ASCA that New South Wales does not have systematic data collection of those who have been diagnosed with SCD to better understand factors impacting quality of life and the level of interaction with the healthcare system. This also means that we do not even know where those who live with SCD are located around our State. It is of vital importance that we better understand the circumstances of those who live with SCD so that we can better plan and deliver the services that are required for their care. ASCA is advocating for the introduction of a newborn screening process for Australia. Newborn blood spot screening aims to identify babies at risk of developing certain rare conditions and metabolic disorders where early intervention can improve health outcomes. This is available for SCD in many countries, but currently not in Australia.

Often the only way that some parents know to request in utero genetic testing for SCD when they fall pregnant is because they have previously been identified as genetic carriers in their country of origin. Others are not so lucky and are only diagnosed after experiencing a crisis. Early testing would ensure that diagnosis is made when a range of different treatment options is available. We know that when it comes to chronic illness early intervention is crucial to improving quality of life, and it reduces the impact on the healthcare system down the track from further complications. Furthermore, a number of healthcare professionals who attended the evening identified that there is a disconnect between the location of services used to help manage SCD, such as thalassaemia and sickle cell haemoglobinopathy, and where the population living with SCD is concentrated. This means that while those who live with SCD live and often work in south-west Sydney, such services currently are concentrated in central and eastern Sydney.

When people are forced to travel great distances for vital healthcare treatment, they may encounter many barriers, including the cost of transport, time to travel and undergo treatment, lack of childcare options while receiving treatment, and other barriers. We are very fortunate in New South Wales that our healthcare system

offers wraparound treatment and support for many chronic conditions to ensure that people in our communities have the opportunity to live their best lives, all for the cost of their Medicare card. However, as our community in south-west Sydney rapidly grows and changes, we must pay attention to the changes required on the ground for our community to access much-needed services. Our increasingly multicultural and geographically dispersed communities deserve equity in access to life-changing and life-preserving interventions and services.

### **MR358 COULSONS CREEK ROAD UPGRADE**

**Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (18:35):** It is fantastic to see the member for Drummoyne in the chair, taking up the Temporary Speaker role. I add my congratulations on the other great news of this House, which is the member's recent engagement. I am sure we hope to have the engagement party here in Parliament House. We will look forward to that. I am here to tell members about a very important road in the Upper Hunter electorate. It is known as the Merriwa to Willow Tree road. It is also known as Coulsons Creek Road and as MR358. This road has to be the unluckiest road in New South Wales. It is like that last child of the family who is a problem, and this road is a problem. We need it, we love it, we want it—but, my goodness, it tests the patience of everyone. It is an important road that links the communities of Merriwa and Willow Tree. It is important for that area in terms of regional connections, agriculture and community connections. It disrupts the linkage between the people in Merriwa and the health services in Tamworth. It is a really important road for community reasons, but it is damaged and it has been damaged for some time.

I have spoken in the House a number of times about this road, but to inform the House again I need to go back into some history of what has actually happened. If we cast our minds back to 2016, an upgrade for the road was obtained through a Federal Government grant under the Heavy Vehicle Safety Initiative. The work started but unfortunately we had a whole bunch of problems that led to the failure of the road. We went from a single-lane road to nearly a double-lane road, but now we have lost the road completely. We are really in a bit of a pickle. Anyway, we managed to get some funding for the road. We got \$38 million in Federal funding out of a total cost of \$48 million, which is the good news. We are all pretty happy about that. Everyone is giving each other a high five. There was an incredible amount of community pressure on the local council. I think the local council did an amazing job of trying to produce a design with contractors to now get the road fixed. I commend Mayor Collison, who advocated very strongly to make sure of the funding so that we could get underway with fixing the road.

In December last year, after a commitment that the money was coming, the tender process opened. In March this year tenders came in and were assessed, and council was ready to award the tender in May 2023. One may think that is fantastic and that it is all good news up to that point; however, there have been a few challenges. The main challenge was the State election, which put some death wobbles in the project. I thank the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, who managed to get the funding. We are back on the road again and moving forward. It was fantastic work.

Federal Minister Catherine King reaffirmed that she would fund the project but, suddenly, the Federal Government announced a 90-day review of all infrastructure and we all panicked. Luckily, the Minister came forward and said that the road is not included in that 90-day review; it is fully funded. We were happy again and ready to go. The council has had several meetings with the Federal Minister. The funding has been allocated in this year's forecasts. It is all good news. However, the money is not coming through, and I do not know why the Federal Government is holding out on the money. It needs to step up. If we do not get the tender signed in the next couple of weeks and the money does not come through, millions of dollars of taxpayers' money will be spent because of the delays. I ask that the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads speak to the Federal Minister and chase that money down to ensure that this important road is delivered for the electorate of Upper Hunter.

### **GREEK ORTHODOX PARISH AND COMMUNITY OF BELMORE**

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (18:41):** I congratulate you, Madam Temporary Speaker, on your engagement and wish you all the best. I recognise the Greek Orthodox Parish and Community of Belmore and the remarkable contributions it makes to our society. In particular, I express my deep appreciation for Father Christos Triantafyllou and Father Dimitrios Papaikonomou, and acknowledge the students, teachers, principal, deputy principal and the P&C of All Saints Grammar in Belmore. They embody the values and traditions of the community. The Greek Orthodox Parish and Community of Belmore holds a cherished place within our community and my family. I was christened at Belmore at the All Saints Greek Orthodox Parish in Belmore. With a rich heritage and a strong sense of cultural identity, it has become an integral part of our diverse community. Through its religious services, cultural events and charitable initiatives, it consistently demonstrates a commitment to fostering unity, love and compassion.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to Father Christos Triantafyllou, whose guidance and wisdom has been instrumental in shaping the spiritual lives of community members. His unwavering faith, tireless efforts and

dedication to his parishioners is truly inspiring. Father Christos' leadership and commitment to promoting the Greek Orthodox faith has positively impacted the lives of countless individuals. I also acknowledge Father Chris's wife, Presvitera Sevasti, and his family for their decades of service to the community. I also express my sincere gratitude to Father Dimitrios Papaikonomou, who has been a beacon of compassion and pastoral care for the Greek Orthodox community of Belmore. He has also been involved in the Kogarah parish. Through his sermons, counselling services and outreach efforts, Father Dimitrios has provided comfort and support to community members during times of joy and adversity. His compassionate leadership fosters a strong sense of belonging and promotes the values of empathy and understanding.

Furthermore, I recognise the head of school at All Saints Grammar, Elfa Lillis, and the wonderful students, who embody the rich traditions and values of the Greek Orthodox community. These young individuals demonstrate academic excellence, cultural pride and a commitment to community service. Through their participation in cultural events, educational programs and charitable initiatives, they exemplify the future leaders who will carry on the legacy of the community. I also thank the Philoptochos for their important work, particularly during COVID. There are wonderful people in the kitchen at the parish every day doing important, charitable work. I am proud of the relationships that have been established between the Riverwood Community Centre, Barnardos and the local schools. Having been a part of that, I am proud of how it brought everybody together, especially during COVID. Those partnerships have been extended, particularly during this time when families are going through difficult times.

The Philoptochos and the parish board do wonderful work. I acknowledge Ulysses Ntombos, who has done a fantastic job as the board president, as well as the board members. I thank them for their outreach and commitment. I also thank them for the honour of being at their All Saints Day a couple of Sundays ago. I acknowledge the wonderful dancers. It is fantastic to see third-, fourth- and fifth-generation young Australians speaking Greek, dancing, learning the values of charity and understanding the actions of faith. I acknowledge the entire community for its wonderful work.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua):** I thank the member and join her in acknowledging the Greek community. I also have a thriving Greek community in my electorate in the inner west. I acknowledge the Greek Orthodox Church for its work in our community.

#### **PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY**

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (18:46):** I too congratulate you, Madam Temporary Speaker, on your engagement. Marriage is a wonderful thing. I also congratulate you on your appointment to the Speaker's chair. I commend the Speaker for that appointment. A fair and dynamic society ensures that everyone can participate in all aspects of community and economy and can live as they choose. Inclusion is sanctioned in national law, but New South Wales is a long way from meeting obligations to ensure that people with disability can live and contribute to their full potential.

People with disability should be able to live independently with who they want, safe from violence, abuse and neglect. But people with disability are struggling to secure appropriate housing. They are disproportionately affected by the rental housing crisis because they have few options and can suffer discrimination. I am increasingly hearing from tenants with disability who are facing a rent increase and are unable to find a new accessible and affordable home near their supports and services. Without an adequate social and affordable housing safety net, people with disability are being pushed into insecure, unsafe and undesirable living situations.

We must build 5,000 new social and affordable homes each year for the next 10 years, with every new build being accessible, to meet demand. We need a program to retrofit existing social and affordable housing to improve options for people with disability. Even those with means struggle to find an accessible home because accessible housing stock is so low. The problem is so bad that people with disability often cannot even visit friends and family because they cannot access their homes, yet the State is not changing the way it builds homes. Unlike other States, New South Wales has not adopted the 2022 National Construction Code silver-level accessibility standards, despite it costing 22 times more to retrofit an accessible home. It is time that the State moved forward.

The Disability Royal Commission found shocking prevalence of violence, neglect and abuse of people with disability in group homes. We must improve oversight and independent monitoring of group homes, aged-care homes and mental health facilities with increased coverage and visits under the Official Community Visitors scheme. Everyone should have the opportunity to obtain well-remunerated and meaningful employment. Ableism in the workplace and segregating people with disability for lower paid work is not only unfair but thwarts innovation and cuts productivity. People with disability have significant job opportunities in the public service, and I welcome the new Government's promise to fulfil unmet past commitments of 5.6 per cent public sector disability employment. People with different disabilities must be included and people with intellectual disability should make up at least 1 per cent of those roles.



Similarly, all children deserve high-quality inclusive education to set them up to participate in employment and the community. The focus must be on support and resources, over exclusion and segregation, and I acknowledge that the Government has promised investment in new resources. We need a road map to achieve inclusion and a work transition pilot project to help children with disability enter the workforce. The education system needs policies to keep students who miss school for extended periods due to illness or treatment connected with their classrooms.

People with disability struggle to get to education, work, appointments and social events. Deregulation of point to point transport has taken accessible taxis off the market without replacement, forcing customers to wait hours. We urgently need to resolve the matter to provide a modern and reliable 24/7 taxi option for people with disability. Our public transport system fails to meet the 2002 transport standards, which were due by 31 December 2022. The standards are now out of date. We must deliver on commitments to upgrade all railway stations, and we must train transport staff members in disability support. Transport inclusion must extend to cognitive accessibility. People with cognitive disability face significant challenges to accessing timetable information, wayfinding, and buying and topping up tickets. There will always be people who cannot use digital systems, and we cannot leave them behind.

Accessing government information and applications has become increasingly complicated. People now need various usernames, passwords, PINs, security questions, multi-factor authentication, separate accounts and downloaded apps. Access is challenging for older people who have not grown up with computers, and the complexity of processes and steps also presents challenges for people with cognitive impairments. Alternative options to digital communication and applications must always be available.

The starting point is to establish an inclusive communications plan for people with disability in collaboration with people with lived experience. People with intellectual disability should be permitted to make decisions about their lives for themselves, and I support a transition away from the State guardianship model to one of supported decision-making with substituted decision-making as a last resort, as recommended by the Law Reform Commission. Inclusive communities are socially and economically healthy. We need to move forward with our obligations to ensure that people with disability have real opportunities and choices in life. I welcome the new Government's promises so far and call for inclusion to be a priority. I thank my constituent Yasmina Bonnet for encouraging me to deliver this private member's statement.

### **RAINBOW CLUB**

**Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill) (18:52):** Madam Temporary Speaker, I join all other members in congratulating you on your wonderful engagement.

**Ms Sophie Cotsis:** We should have a celebration.

**Mr MARK HODGES:** We should have a celebration here. I join with everyone else to congratulate you also on your appointment as Temporary Speaker and congratulate the Speaker on making a good choice. I am pleased to inform the House of the contribution made by Rainbow Club to members of my electorate. I was invited by Rainbow Club to attend two open days over the last weekend: one at Castle Hill and one at Norwest. Members of the House may know that Rainbow Club was founded in 1969 by the late Ron Siddons, OAM, MBE. I note that the Leader of the Opposition is an advocate and ambassador of Rainbow Club, and I congratulate him on that. Rainbow Club is committed to children with disability. It offers a fun and safe community for children with disability to learn to swim, interact and play. On Rainbow Club's website, its mission states:

To provide a network of social swimming clubs for children with a disability, enabling them to learn, achieve and enjoy participating in aquatic activities.

Rainbow Club teaches children with disability how to swim at Castle Hill and Norwest. I am delighted to inform the House that Rainbow Club will shortly be opening a third training venue in my electorate at the Waves Fitness and Aquatic Centre at Baulkham Hills. I attended the open day at Castle Hill on Saturday 17 June 2023. I recognise the attendance at the open day of Mike Yeo and David Hand from the Castle Hill RSL club. I take time to express my gratitude to the Castle Hill RSL club for its continued support and commitment to my community and for its commitment to children with disability through Rainbow Club. I was able to view the incredible and dedicated team of instructors. More importantly, I observed the enjoyment on the faces of the children as they learnt to swim.

I attended the open day at Norwest on Sunday 18 June 2023. I also acknowledge the attendance of Councillor Rosemarie Boneham from the Hills Shire Council, who gave up time to attend the open day. The Carlisle Swimming Centre at Norwest generously opens the centre on Sundays to allow Rainbow Club to teach children with disability. Over the weekend I spoke with the CEO of Rainbow Club Australia, Catriona Barry. I acknowledge the contribution given over many years by Catriona as the CEO of Rainbow Club. Under Catriona's

leadership the club's membership has grown from 400 to almost 2,000 members and the number of clubs has expanded from 16 to 50. Four new clubs—at Sans Souci, Seven Hills North, Mt Annan and Taree—were opened during the first term this year. I spoke with Robyn Bayliss, who is the development manager of Rainbow Club. I thank Robyn for her work and dedication to the Rainbow Clubs in my electorate.

Jenny is a mother of two children. She had taken her 13-year-old to Rainbow Club for swimming lessons and her 10-year-old daughter was watching. Jenny informed me that her 10-year-old daughter attends dancing lessons and that the funding for the dancing lessons was partly funded by Active Kids vouchers. The Labor Government's winding back of Active Kids vouchers will mean that parents like Jenny may not be able to afford to continue to take their children to dancing and swimming lessons. The increase in membership of Rainbow Club, is no doubt attributable to the ability of parents to fund part of the cost from Active Kids vouchers. I am concerned that parents may forgo enrolling their children into programs such as Rainbow Club for swimming lessons and, as such, the children of our community may not have the benefit of learning to swim.

The importance of swimming clubs cannot be underestimated. Teaching swimming to our children, particularly those with disability, is critical in our society. *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported in December that there were 57 drownings of children in the year up to December. A child drowns quickly if not properly taught to swim. Clubs like Rainbow Club save our children's lives. As such, on behalf of my community, I am extremely thankful that Rainbow Club operates from the Castle Hill RSL club, the Norwest Carlile Swimming Centre and will shortly operate from Waves Aquatic and Fitness Centre at Baulkham Hills. Lastly, I express my gratitude to Rainbow Club and to all those involved in the operation of the club for the ongoing work to keep our children safe in our community.

### HUNTER VALLEY BUS ACCIDENT

**Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (18:57):** Madam Temporary Speaker, I take this opportunity to ask you to pass on my congratulations to your fiancé, Andrew. I congratulate him on his wonderful choice. In the House this week we have heard heartfelt contributions to a condolence motion honouring the victims of the horrific tragedy that occurred in Greta in the Hunter Valley on Saturday 10 June 2023. That terrible event has affected so many in the Hunter area, and today I too recognise and pay my respects to the victims of that tragedy and offer my condolences to their families, friends, colleagues and communities.

I also acknowledge and pass on my sincere gratitude to the first responders who attended that dreadful incident: paramedics, police officers and Fire and Rescue NSW personnel who attended the scene of the accident and rendered assistance. I understand that some of them are residents of Lake Macquarie. I acknowledge the 000 call centre staff, who coordinated the incident response and, no doubt, were also terribly affected by this incident. The traumatic and confronting scenes of the Greta bus crash will be carried in the minds and hearts of all those involved for years to come. It is a timely reminder of not only the critical service our first responders provide to our community but also the terrible burden our first responders carry as a result of their chosen vocation.

I acknowledge and thank the health professionals, doctors, nurses and hospital staff who subsequently provided treatment and support to the survivors of the crash and continue to do so. Thank a First Responder Day was held on 7 June 2023. Today I thank all first responders in Lake Macquarie and across New South Wales for not only their efforts and the heroic work undertaken during the Greta bus tragedy but also the work they do day in, day out for the Lake Macquarie and New South Wales communities. First responders are often confronted with traumatic and, at times, dangerous incidents. They attend to those incidents with professionalism and commitment. Yet the incidents no doubt take a personal toll.

In recent years Lake Macquarie residents have experienced many events when they have relied on the support and services of our emergency services personnel. Just over three weeks ago the Lake Macquarie area was battered by severe hail and thunderstorms. The Lake Macquarie and Cooranbong SES units were there to answer Lake Macquarie residents' calls for assistance. Only last week Marine Rescue Lake Macquarie crews joined the multi-agency search for a Lake Macquarie resident. I thank those individuals for their efforts during that incident and for the unique service they provide to the residents of Lake Macquarie.

The Lake Macquarie electorate is a naturally beautiful area, filled with national parks, conservation areas and an abundance of picturesque waterways. Residents of Lake Macquarie are fortunate to be able to enjoy those naturally beautiful areas each day. But in recent years our region has seen an increase in adverse weather events, including bushfires, floods and major storms. During those events we rely on the efforts and support of our rescue services, many of whom are volunteers. In the 2019-20 bushfires that affected many across New South Wales, the Rural Fire Service crews of Lake Macquarie protected the people and property of Lake Macquarie, the region and far beyond, as they do each and every year. I thank the RFS crews of Awaba, Cooranbong, Dora Creek, Killingworth, Mandalong, Martinsville, Peninsula, Wakefield, Wyee and Wyee Point, along with every RFS volunteer across the State for their dedication and time.

The Lake Macquarie Fire and Rescue stations of Teralba, Toronto, Morisset and Wangi Wangi, like many across the State, are manned on a retained basis, which means the dedicated people who form those brigades are not, in the majority, employed permanently but work on an on-call basis. They are on call to protect the people and property of Lake Macquarie from emergency fires and other incidents, whilst holding down jobs and balancing family and other commitments. Without the support of those individuals' families, employers and the general Lake Macquarie community, the doors of our Fire and Rescue NSW stations in Lake Macquarie could not stay open. My heartfelt thanks go out today to not only the members of the Teralba, Toronto, Morisset and Wangi Wangi Fire and Rescue NSW brigades but also their families, employers and communities, who support them in the work they do.

Lake Macquarie, along with the entire State, is filled with heroes. They can be found in our NSW Police Force, Fire and Rescue, RFS, NSW Ambulance, SES, Marine Rescue NSW, emergency control centres and hospitals. They are there for our communities at our lowest moments. Our first responders carry a heavy burden and no doubt carry scars from the work they do and incidents they attend. Today I say thank you to the brave, professional and dedicated individuals who are our first responders.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua):** I also express my appreciation to our State's first responders. I put on record my sincere gratitude to the Speaker of the House, and member for Lake Macquarie for appointing me to the Speaker's panel. I look forward to working with and learning from the Speaker. I have witnessed him in the chair for the past couple of weeks and it is evident that he is firm but fair. I hope to follow that example. The Speaker is a great role model for new members like me, who have recently entered this place. Thank you.

#### *Bills*

### **RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT (RENTAL FAIRNESS) BILL 2023**

#### **Returned**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Ms Stephanie Di Pasqua):** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill without amendment.

**The House adjourned, pursuant to standing and sessional orders, at 19:05 until  
Tuesday 27 June 2023 at 12:00.**

#### *Written Community Recognition Statements*

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

#### **TIM PAGE**

**Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)**—One of the world's best-known war correspondents and photojournalists has been awarded a Medal in the Order of Australia, nine months after his death at his Fernmount home. Tim, who was one of the first photographers to document the Vietnam War, was 78 when he lost his battle with cancer in August 2022. He defied death several times on the frontlines of Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. Awards for Tim Page were as plentiful, but his greatest legacy is the change brought about by the publication of his often shocking and heart-wrenching images and books, his philanthropy, and his advocacy for the victims of war. Tim Page was born in Kent, UK and was a self-taught photojournalist. Considered a counter-culture icon, his work was published by the biggest magazines and news agencies in the world, including United Press International, Time-Life, Newsweek, Le Monde, AAP and AP. He moved to Australia in 2002 and worked in East Timor with the UN and as an adjunct professor of photojournalism at Griffith University – among many other roles. He became an Australian citizen in 2011 and in 2020 was named in the 'Top 100 Most Influential Photographers in the World'.

#### **PIPES AND DRUMS**

**Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)**—Recently I had the pleasure of watching the Macleay Valley Pipes and Drums band. Since 1914 there has been a Pipe Band in the Macleay Valley (known as the Macleay Caledonian Society Pipe Band). The band eventually morphed into the Port Macquarie Wauchope RSL Pipes and Drums. The revival of the Macleay Valley Pipes and Drums started again in 2002, meaning our region now has two pipe bands servicing the region. Players and committee members in both bands are volunteers. ANZAC Day is one of the most important days on the Pipe Band calendar, however there are events the band plays at, including Australian Day, hospitals, schools and Christmas shows. Currently the bands have 11 piping students currently learning, with nine of them being from our lower socioeconomic community in our area. Funding from Schools Pilot Program and Creative Kids Voucher has given them the ability to start these children off and supply practice chanters and

a tutor. A big mention to the Life Member Ross Scott. Ross was a playing member of both bands until the last couple of years. Unfortunately, Ross can longer play and is in a Nursing Home in the Macleay area.

#### **COLIN BALL**

**Mr MICHAEL KEMP (Oxley)**—I'd like to congratulate Colin Ball has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia in the King's Birthday 2023 Honours List. Mr Ball, of South West Rocks, is being recognised for his service to surf life saving over a period of 60 years. Mr Ball's involvement with the SWRSLSC began in October 1951 when he received his qualifier certificate. He went on to become a member of the boat crew, a winning swimmer, president of the junior club, an ongoing sponsor, and, as of 2013, a life member. As president of the SWR junior club for a decade between 1978 – 88, Mr Ball was heavily involved in Nippers, organising carnivals and interstate branch competitions. Mr Ball and his late wife Pam, who held the title of Secretary and Treasurer of the branch, finished up their time with the club in 1988 to focus on raising their children. However, Mr Ball continued his involvement in the form of sponsorship. Through the family business, Balls Butchery, he and his wife held meat raffles to raise funds for the club. Mr Ball's sons and grandson are keeping up the family tradition by being a part of it too.

#### **LIZ NOAKES**

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)**—I wish to recognise Parkes resident Liz Noakes, who regularly makes a 200km round trip from her hometown to Orange, where she volunteers at Ronald McDonald House Charities Central West. Since beginning her commitment as an overnight volunteer at the Orange house in 2021, Liz has contributed 479 hours supporting families from the central and far west in their time of need. After finishing her busy working day as a teaching professional, Liz gets in her car to make the 100 km trip to Orange. This is often in fading light and challenging road conditions which are found in rural areas in the Orange electorate. With a 24-hour NSW emergency helicopter based out of Orange, it is often during the night that families find themselves in a situation where they require accommodation after their child has been rushed by air or road ambulance to Orange Hospital. Liz is on hand to welcome families, settle them in and provide them with an emergency meal in a safe, comfortable and secure environment. This enables the family to focus on their seriously ill baby, child or adolescent who is receiving specialist or life-saving treatment in Orange Hospital. Thank you, Liz.

#### **REBECCA WALSH**

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)**—I wish to recognise Executive Officer of Ronald McDonald House Charities Central West, Rebecca Walsh. Rebecca has been in her role since 2014, however her passion and dedication to helping sick children and their families stretches back years prior to her appointment in the role. As a volunteer fundraiser, Rebecca came forward to be part of the fundraising effort to build a Ronald McDonald House in Orange when she was employed in a senior role with the Electrolux organisation. Not only did Rebecca put in many hours as part of the fundraising team, she also played a pivotal role in liaising with the Electrolux organisation who so generously contributed a range of whitegoods for the Orange house. That arrangement continues today. Rebecca is more than an employee. Many of her spare hours, both after work and on weekends, involve a range of activities all designed to help with the running of RMHC Central West supporting families in their time of need. This can range from cleaning out the garages and storage sheds, to loading up the ute and trailer and heading to one of the towns in the catchment to set up a fundraising stall. Thank you, Rebecca.

#### **CAROL SMITHERS**

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)**—I recognise Carol Smithers for her many years of commitment to volunteering in Orange. For more than 25 years, Carol has dedicated herself year-round to the organisation and planning of the City of Orange Eisteddfod, which has run for more than 50 years. The competition, which runs over five weeks and attracts more than 5,000 competitors from across the state and inter-state, would not be possible without the many hours of planning by Carol. Every year she is an integral part of the organisation process and has held the positions of honorary President, Vice-President, and Co-ordinator of dance. During the competition held each year over August and September in Orange, Carol is on volunteer duty organising competitors, stage managing and playing music for competitors often in daily sessions which run from 8.30 a.m. in the morning until 9.00 p.m. at night. Over the years she has regularly used her annual leave from her employment to ensure she is able to provide the volunteer hours necessary. Her philosophy that children studying the arts can learn and grow through performance and her gentle and encouraging manner is admired by all those associated with the City of Orange Eisteddfod. Well done, Carol.

#### **GRAHAM FORD**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)**—Today the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges Berry's Graham Ford who has recently been recognised for his distinguished service to Surf Lifesaving through leadership roles at the national and international level, and to the community. In a career spanning over three decades,

Mr Ford began his career with Bronte Surf Life Saving Club in the late 1980s when his children signed up to nippers. Mr Ford's dedication to surf lifesaving during his tenure has ensured that the future of the service is in a strong position. In 2014, he initiated the groundwork for a corpus fund that has raised over \$23 million for the organisation. He has been awarded numerous awards, along with being the recipient of more than 120 national awards including SLSA Life Membership in 2017. Despite living in Berry, he makes the trip up to patrol Bronte Beach. Mr Ford and his wife Trish have travelled to beaches all across the country and done patrols and listened to many volunteers. He removed paperwork for volunteers, used technology to deliver frontline services, introduced several initiatives to simplify regulations and policies, while continuing to remove barriers to participation.

#### **THE GROTTO NORTH NOWRA**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)**—Today the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges that protecting our local environment takes a collective effort, and people are invited to lend a hand during the community planting day at The Grotto in North Nowra this Sunday 25th June 2023. A total of 200 canopy trees will be planted at The Grotto walking track in the day organised by Shoalhaven City Council and The Grotto Bushcare group. This work continues the enhancement of biodiversity values, natural aesthetics, and riverbank stabilisation of the Shoalhaven River. Planting will commence at 9.30 a.m., followed by a morning tea. I acknowledge Mr Michael Smith, Bushcare Coordinator and also Mr Michael Irving and the Mahogany Creek Bushcare North Nowra team for the important work they do. I also acknowledge the late Les Chittick who was actively involved in The Grotto Bushcare Group and also received a gold medal during the 2014 Shoalhaven Medals presentation at the Shoalhaven Entertainment Centre for his community service. Our Shoalhaven environment is incredibly special and important, and I'm so pleased we have so many dedicated to its conservation and protection.

#### **KNIT IN PUBLIC DAY**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)**—Today the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges Worldwide Knit in Public Day which connected local knitters around the world twice in our region this year. On Wednesday 7th June 2023 a special thank-you afternoon tea was held for the dedicated knit group at Bonaira Care Home at Matterson Hall. This group have been meeting each week for the past year to knit and chat. Entertainment was provided by the new ukulele group based at Bonaira ILU. On Thursday 8th June 2023, Gerringong Library and Museum hosted the second free public event. A special effort was made this year to support provision of Wrap With Love blankets to those still affected by flood and fire in NSW and internationally, for those affected by the major quake disasters in Syria and Turkiye. I acknowledge and thank the Wrap with Love co-ordinators Boni and Peter Maywald and Thea Blanch. The organisers have also arranged for a delivery of our display blankets this June long weekend to residents of Eugowra where 80 per cent of the town was swept away by rapid flooding in November 2022.

#### **STUART BRAGA, OAM**

**Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)**—Author and Historian, Stuart Braga, was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in the General Division for service to education administration, and to community history. He was educated at Barker College in Hornsby, where he taught as the History Master. He worked for 14 years as the Senior Master of Trinity Grammar School until 1998 when he became a professional historian. He is a Fellow and Life Member of the Australian College of Education and the Teachers' Guild of Australia, and a Life Member of the Royal Australian Historical Society. Dr Braga has written several books and articles on educational, church and military history, including Anzac Doctor, Kokoda Commander, and Barker College: a Brief History. Also active within his community, Dr Braga was Chairman of the Beecroft Cheltenham History Group and Vice-President of the Beecroft Cheltenham Civic Trust, and for more than twenty years a member of Rotary Clubs. Finally, he was awarded his PhD by the Australian National University in 2013. His thesis was titled "Making Impressions: a Portuguese family in Macau and Hong Kong, 1700-1945", which was published in 2015 by the International Institute of Macau. My congratulations to Stuart Braga for this well-deserved award.

#### **BORTOLO (TAS) BAITIERI**

**Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)**—Bortolo (Tas) Baitieri was recently awarded Member in the Military Division for service to rugby through administrative roles. He is an administrator within Rugby League, after having played and coached professionally, and was a key contributor to the global expansion of the Rugby League from 1980s to 2010s. During his professional career in the league, Mr Baitieri played with the Canterbury-Bankstown Bulldogs and the Penrith Panthers. He spent the off-seasons in France playing for Paris Châtillon XIII. Mr Baitieri spent some time as a coach for the French national side, and upon his return to Australia, coached the Cumberland College of Health Sciences League team in the NSW University Rugby League Competition. In their first season under Baitieri, the Cumberland side won the 1991 2nd division grand final. They

were then elevated to the first division where the "Cumbo Cunnies" finished grand finalists in their first season in the top division. Following these victories, the Cumberland Club renamed the Best & Fairest award; it became the Tas Baitieri Shield in recognition of the efforts and leadership by Baitieri and the esteem in which he was held by players. Congratulations, Tas, for your inspiring efforts within Rugby League, internationally and close to home.

#### **WALLSEND COMMUNITY RESPONSE TO GRETA BUS TRAGEDY**

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)**—On 11 June, a tragic accident occurred in Greta where a bus carrying wedding guests crashed and 10 people tragically lost their lives and a number of others were injured horribly. Following this horrific incident, the community response was overwhelming, a number of residents in the Wallsend electorate reached out to me to offer accommodation for the victims' families to stay near the Hospitals where their family members were. Phil Gardner, CEO of the Wests Group generously offered 10 rooms, free of charge, to any affected family and friends of the victims and survivors of this tragic event. A number of emergency services, nurses and hospital staff from the Wallsend electorate were involved in the treatment, support and assistance to the victims, survivors and their families. I would like to extend my most sincere thankyou to everyone who has gone out of their way to assist or offer assistance to the victims of this terrible incident. You have demonstrated that our community contains the best people who will put their hand up to assist those who need it most. Thank you.

#### **NICHOLAS BRADY – MAN ON A MARATHON MISSION**

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)**—Nic Brady will tell you he is not a runner. Despite this, he had a "crazy, hare-brained idea" that he would run 40 kilometres a day for 40 days to raise money for charity to celebrate his 40th Birthday. He then had to decide which charity would benefit. Nic's wife is a midwife and works at the John Hunter Hospital's NICU unit. He knows how hard she and her colleagues work, so he chose the John Hunter Children's Hospital as the beneficiary. Nic started the run on 8 April and his target date was his 40th Birthday on 18 May. With a small delay due to some injuries, he still managed to finish just two days after his initial target. Despite consuming 3,500 to 4,000 calories a day to sustain him, mostly by tucking into fried chicken from his Newy Fried Chicken business, he still managed to shed about five kilograms. Nic has raised almost \$22,000 of his \$40,000 target and is still pushing to reach it. Congratulations, Nic, on an awesome feat, no pun intended. I'm sure the donation will be very much appreciated.

#### **JOHN CONAGHAN**

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)**—A Huntington's disease diagnosis can be devastating for patients and their families. For his work in helping them navigate the rare brain disorder, John Conaghan has been awarded an Order of Australia Medal as part of the King's Birthday Honours. John's work as part of a broad team of neurologists, psychologists, and geneticists has helped many families across the Hunter to link with services that can help with the disorder. He also runs support groups for carers and gene positive people. While treatment for the disorder is greatly limited, John acts as an advocate that provides patients and families with options – including a test to provide a diagnosis for the rare condition. Above all, John approaches his work with empathy and compassion, acting as both friend and advocate and supporting the patients and their families through the progression of the disease. The frequency of the disease in the Hunter is 50 per cent greater than anywhere else in the state, so John has certainly had his work cut out for him. He has helped so many people in the community through his work, and I would like to congratulate him on his deserved award.

#### **CARINGBAH GARDEN CLUB**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)**—I acknowledge the work of the Caringbah Garden Club, which has been providing its members and community with charitable works and education in gardening since 1953. The club was founded by the late Mrs Gladys Byers, who passed away 4 years ago. She undoubtedly would have been pleased to see the club celebrate its 70th anniversary later this year. The club runs numerous activities and outings for its members to learn more about gardens and plants. It supports many local floral and garden shows (such as Engadine Garden Club Show) and sells gardening supplies. The club annually raises funds for cancer research with its 'Biggest Morning Teas' and previously for the Save the Children Fund. Last year the club assisted students with disabilities at Sutherland, with a garden working bee. The club helped to establish and renew plants for the Rose Garden at the E G Waterhouse National Camellia Gardens in Caringbah. The club holds an annual open day each October. I wish all members of the club a successful year ahead and early congratulations on its 70th anniversary.

#### **THE LATE DR JEAN LEYENDEKKERS**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)**—I pay tribute to Caringbah South local Dr Jean Leyendekkers, who died on 28 May aged 95. Her husband Joost had died in 2004. Her working career spanned 70 years including

as a secretary, a nurse, a teacher, a scientist and a renowned mathematician. She held a Doctorate of Science in Solution Theory. With Professor Tony Shannon she wrote 93 papers published in international journals and several books published worldwide. Locally Dr Leyendekkers was a member of Sutherland Shire Environment Centre when it began in 1991. She later formed the first precinct committee in Sutherland Shire, at Caringbah South. She actively supported the Wattlebird Bushland Reserve backing on to the rear of her property. In 2018 she very generously donated the rear 800 square metres of her property, valued at \$1.7 million, to Sutherland Shire Council for addition to the reserve. Dr Jean Leyendekkers was a long time significant donor to many worthy charities, particularly those that supported animals that were cruelly treated by humans.

#### **BE CENTRE**

**Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)**—I pay tribute to wonderful work undertaken by the Be Centre in the Pittwater and Northern Beaches community. The Be Centre is pioneering play therapy, creating a safe space for kids to simply "be" and work through their challenges under the care of highly qualified therapists. Thank you to founder, Deborah Killelea, CEO, Michelle Carlyle, Clinical Manager, Penny Bird, for meeting with me and sharing all about the life changing work of the Be Centre. Thank you to Fiona Geoghegan for giving me a practical understanding of play therapy by showing me through how a typical session might run. I look forward to supporting the Be Centre's work in the years ahead. I am pleased that these words of thanks will now be preserved in the records of the oldest Parliament of our country, as a small recognition of your work.

#### **NORTHERN BEACHES ART SOCIETY 77TH ANNUAL AWARDS ART EXHIBITION**

**Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)**—Initially founded in 1946 under a different name, the Northern Beaches Art Society, has gathered artists and painters for an exchange of views, to hold public art exhibitions and to invite other artists to give demonstrations and workshops. Recently I was honoured to attend the Society's 77th Annual Awards Art Exhibition. Dozens and dozens of exceptional works filled out the exhibition space. Congratulations to all the entrants. And, congratulations to Heather Macorison for her first placing! Thank you for having me along and I look forward to your next exhibition!

#### **OLI JONES**

**Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater)**—On Saturday, 17 June 2023, Oli Jones of the Avalon Soccer Club was badly injured during their match against the Beacon Hill Football Club. I understand that the Beacon Hill players and supporters were very caring for Oli and one of their supporters, a nursing student, even drove Oli to the hospital for treatment. What wonderful sportsmanship from all involved! Oli, I wish you a speedy recovery and hope you can be back on the paddock sooner than later!

#### **PAUL SALMON**

**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)**—Paul Salmon will be making the move from Yarramalong Valley after many years of hard work and dedication to the community and the local hall. Paul will be residing on the Central Coast, and after joining the committee in 2005, he will be sorely missed by the community though they are delighted to have Paul accepting the role of hall president for another year. Paul has a very special connection to the 109-year-old Wyong Creek Hall on Yarramalong Rd as his grandfather, Frederick, donated the land to the community to build the hall. In the early 1900s Frederick and his two brothers and volunteers established the hall, built mainly from timber cut in the valley completing the building in August 1914. Over the years it has been the venue for local dances, weddings, card nights, birthdays, plays, concerts, art shows, stage shows, wakes and school presentation nights. Paul and Di Salmon created the well-known annual Scarecrow competition where locals show their creative, crazy, funny characters scattered throughout Yarramalong Valley. It is wonderful to see community spirit in the local area, especially through family. I wish Paul all the best and his new adventure in the coming year.

#### **CENTRAL COAST HOCKEY ASSOCIATION U16**

**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)**—Congratulations to Dakota Drennan, Zoe Kneller, Olivia Booth, Hailee Gibson, Sophia Grey, and Reese Mexon for being selected in the 2023/24 U16 Hockey NSW Girls Field Squad. Each year Central Coast Hockey teams compete in carnivals and Field State Champs in various age groups from U11 through to Opens and Masters. The club holds trials ensuring teams are selected to compete in the correct divisions. Goodluck to the U16 Hockey NSW Girls Field Squad on upcoming competitions.

### WYONG CREEK PUBLIC SCHOOL

**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)**—Recently Wyong Creek Public School created and hosted their Harvest Festival at the school grounds on June 10th. The scenic drive through Yarramalong Road is breathtaking and don't forget to make a memorable stop at the historic school grounds. The festival was an amazing turn out attracting a big crowd featuring food stalls, art show by young talent, petting zoo, fun games, and prizes, second handbook stall, toy stall, pot painting, RFS and SES Display. There was live music by Primary Music Institute Central Coast and singer/songwriter Lucy Beveridge. School leaders and staff worked hard with their stalls to raise money to put towards their chickens. Congratulations Wyong Creek Public School, P&C and the helpers on a wonderful and successful event.

### LILLIE HOBDEN

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)**—I would like to congratulate Lillie Hobden, from Shellharbour, on her outstanding results at the recent Wollongong Eisteddfod. Lillie placed first in the Senior Classical Vocal Championship and also won the Alice and Laurie Fitzsummons trophy for that section. Her other outstanding achievements were 2nd place in musical theatre, 1st place in song from films, 3rd in country song, Highly Commended in the Pop Championship and 1st in the Senior Musical Theatre Championship. Lillie was also the inaugural winner of the Arcadians Theatre Trophy and Runner Up in the BlueScope WIN Vocal Scholarship. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour community, I would like to express our warmest congratulations to Lillie and we wish her well in her future vocal performing endeavours.

### JUSTINE WALLIS

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)**—I would like to congratulate Justine Wallis, from Flinders, who as a result of her passion for street libraries, has encouraged Shellharbour City Council to plan for a street library in a public park in each of its four wards. Ms Wallis used the skills from her day job as a project manager to create a 10-page submission on street libraries and even set up one in her front yard which she acknowledges has been very successful. Under this project Council will install the street libraries and then members of the community will take responsibility for maintaining them. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour community, I would like to express our warmest congratulations to Justine for campaigning for this community initiative.

### LILLY PARTRIDGE

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)**—I would like to congratulate Lilly Partridge, from Shell Cove Public School, as she travelled to Tamworth, in June, representing her school as part of the South Coast PSSA hockey team. Lilly scored 3 goals and her team was undefeated the entire tournament. They came away as joint premiers after a tough 1-1 draw in the final. Lilly will be competing in future hockey tournaments, including the State Championships. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour community, I would like to express our warmest congratulations to Lilly and I wish you well in the State Championships and with your future sporting endeavours.

### MORRIS WHISKY STRIKES GOLD AGAIN

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)**—I extend my congratulations to Darren Peck of Corowa, head distiller for Morris Whisky, and the entire Morris Whisky Team, for their recent triumph at the 2023 London Spirits Competition and the San Francisco World Spirits Competition. Your achievement is truly commendable and a source of pride for the Australian whisky industry. It is inspiring to see that a brand that has only been in existence for five years has received such high recognition for its product and its makers - Darren and the team's hard work and dedication. The latest wins add to their already impressive collection of over 30 gold medals and other prestigious awards. I applaud Mr Peck and those who work with him on the whiskey beverages for their passion and commitment to producing exceptional whiskies that continue to delight the expectations of spirit enthusiasts and experts alike. Your achievements have set a high standard for the industry, and I wish you continued success with your great spirits.

### RIP ROBERT KLEIN BOONSCATE

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)**—I extend my condolences on the passing of Robert Klein Boonschate who made a profound impact through his art. Born in The Netherlands, Robert migrated to Australia where he made his home in Tallangatta. Studying Graphic Art at Swinburne College he went on to become a professional artist and art facilitator in Melbourne over a seven-year period. From there he moved to Alice Springs working closely with the Arrernte People for twelve years. He was inspired by the 'Arrernte' artist Albert Namatjira, creating beautiful landscapes which reflected his own connection to the Australian landscape and the 'Arrernte People'. In due course Robert opened an art studio welcoming Arrernte, Luritja, Warlpiri, and Pintupi artists. Later Robert returned to NSW and settled in the town of Walla Walla, a place with its own rugged natural landscape.



His dedication to his craft and love for the land were evident in his renowned artwork, with Twilight River setting a record price in 2022. His connection between art and landscape will continue to inspire generations. Vale Robert Klein Boonschate.

### **RSL SUB-BRANCH MAKES HISTORY**

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)**—I extend my congratulations to the Corowa RSL Sub-Branch who made history on International Women's Day this year by electing an all-female executive committee. Lesley Rinehart-Muir, a former Navy officer, was elected as president, with Lucille Thomas and Lynne Mills as vice president and secretary, respectively. I wish the new committee all the very best with their commitment to continuing the sub-branch's tradition of serving the local community by offering a range of services, including support for veterans and their families, in marking commemorative events, and through provision of social services and social activities for the people under their care. The RSL continues its unfailing duty to those who served, and in this regard these community-based organisations remain a vital part of our towns and cities across regional NSW.

### **AMY COCHRANE**

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)**—Completing a Certificate III in Individual Support has served a dual purpose for 21-year-old Bathurst woman Amy Corchrane. An employee with Whiddon Kelso, Amy was a finalist in the recent Western NSW Training Awards for 2023. While the study with trainer provider TAFE NSW gave her new skills to further her career options, it also enabled Amy to better her knowledge of the care required for the ageing community and in turn be able to better care for her father. Thanks to her studies, Amy is now doing something she is passionate about and as an Assistant in Nursing, can make a difference in the lives of the elderly by spending time with them improving their quality of life in their golden years. Furthering her education has now acted as a catalyst for Amy who is eager to continue learning, with plans to enrol in further courses with TAFE NSW, and a long-term goal of completing a Diploma in Nursing. And I know that Amy is very grateful for the support she received from TAFE educators which was a key factor in enabling her to complete the course and look to the future with confidence.

### **GEORGIA MILLIGAN**

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)**—Congratulations to Denison College of Secondary Education (Kelso High Campus) student Georgia Milligan for being a finalist in the recent Western NSW Training Awards for 2023. Georgia featured in the School Based Apprentice or Trainee of the Year division of the awards after taking on a Certificate III in School Based Education Support with the support of her employer, Kelso Public School. It was a natural progression for the Bathurst lass as she is passionate about all things in the school setting and loves supporting the students around her. Thanks to her training, Georgia's communication skills have come ahead in leaps and bounds and has learned that it's okay to go outside your comfort zone while practicing on the job skills. And there's no doubts that Georgia truly believes that traineeships and apprenticeships are a great pathway and should be considered by everyone. In a nutshell, VET was the right pathway for her as she could still stay at school, complete her HSC, and also have the chance to have on a positive impact on children.

### **LILLI TICKLE**

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)**—Congratulations to Denison College of Secondary Education (Kelso High Campus) student Lilli Tickle for being a finalist in the recent Western NSW Training Awards for 2023. Lilli lives at Triangle Flat on the outskirts of Bathurst and featured in the School Based Apprentice or Trainee of the Year division of the awards. At the end of Year 10, Lilli undertook work experience with Elders Emms Mooney and was subsequently offered a school-based traineeship. This enabled her to work at two of the company's branches, one involved with real estate and the other with livestock. Lilli's determination and drive is to be commended but all that hard work is now starting to pay off. Originally planning on leaving school before Year 12, thanks to her involvement with TAFE and VET she now has her future mapped out. That includes being offered a fulltime position with Elders Emms Mooney, but in the meantime there's plans to explore the agricultural industry further with some station work in northern Australia, before returning to Agency work. These are exciting times for Lilli and a big part of that comes courtesy of taking on a school based apprenticeship.

### **CHRIS NEAVES**

**Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote)**—Teaching is not a profession that people choose for the salary. They become an educator because they want to shape our future leaders and help them be better people at the same time. It's a career that takes passion, dedication, hard work and perseverance. Chris Neaves is the epitome of what a teacher is – and should be. After 42 years with the NSW Department of Education, the past 15 as deputy principal at Bulli High School, Chris will retire at the end of this term. His retirement, whilst much deserved, is a huge loss for the Bulli High School community. He is so highly respected by all – staff, students, and families.

I have spoken to principal Denise James on several occasions about Chris and every time she has spoken incredibly highly of his contribution to the school. Chris began his education career in special education and remained committed to supporting all students throughout his time as an educator. He has always prioritised the needs of the school community over his own – but now it's time Chris focuses on himself. Thank you again Chris for your service, efforts and the success of so many students over the past 42 years.

#### **DR TREVOR GARDENER OAM**

**Ms MARYANNE STUART (Heathcote)**—The outbreak of COVID-19 was a challenging time for us all. Locked down, unable to see our friends or relatives, fearing what might happen when we contracted the virus that spread throughout the globe. However, we should never forget that while most of us were in lock down, there were many others who had no choice but to go to work – like our health professionals. And it was Stanwell Park resident Dr Trevor Gardener who was tasked with overseeing many aspects of the local health system. In June, Dr Gardener was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for his efforts as deputy lead at Illawarra and Shoalhaven Local Health District during COVID-19 in 2020. It is important to note that Dr Gardener's contributions have not only been at a local level. More than a decade ago, he was deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan as the senior medical officer for the Australian Defence Force. Prior to that he had also spent time in Rwanda and East Timor, as well as being a part of Bali Assist 2. Congratulations again Dr Gardener of your latest and much deserved accolade.

#### **MS HONG-DAO DANG**

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)**—I would like to acknowledge and recognise Kogarah resident, Mrs Hong-Dao Dang, for her commitment and dedication to Sydney Technical High School. Mrs Dang is a parent volunteer at Sydney Technical High School and willingly gives up her time and energy to help the school community. Over the years, Hong-Dao has led and organised countless fundraisers and significant events aimed at improving student and family connection within the school. The funds raised from these events have been vital in providing quality teaching and learning equipment to students and resources for the school. In addition to this, Mrs Dang is always helping out with other school events and always puts her hand up to help in whatever way she can. I want to thank Mrs Dang for her dedication to improving student outcomes and for fostering a positive and enjoyable environment for both students and parents at the school.

#### **MADHULIKA ROY**

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)**—I would like to thank and acknowledge long-time volunteer, Ms Madhulika Roy, for her amazing contributions to our local community. Ms Roy was one of the founding members of the South Asian Australian Association in Kogarah and currently serves as principal of the Hindi Language School. The unwavering passion, empathy and patience she has shown has made her a beloved figure among students, parents and fellow volunteers. Importantly her consistent presence and active involvement have had a profound impact on the growth and success of the school. The fact that the language school continued to thrive during the COVID-19 pandemic is not only a testament to Madhulika's leadership but also her dedication to helping others. Ms Roy has played a pivotal role in developing and implementing innovative teaching methods. Her creative approach has revitalised the school, making it a vibrant and enriching education space for over 300 students. I sincerely thank Ms Roy for playing a crucial role in shaping the direction and future course of the Association and I express my deepest appreciation for her dedication, commitment and ongoing support to our local community.

#### **JENNY YUNG**

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)**—I wish to acknowledge and recognise the wonderful work of tireless volunteer, Ms Choi Ying Jenny Yung. Ms Yung has been volunteering in Special Religious Education [SRE] for over five years at both Kogarah Primary School and St George School. Jenny dedicates her time to helping and educating children with special needs from kindergarten all the way up to Year 6. Jenny has pioneered new and innovative methods such as singing songs and making teaching material with tactile features to enhance engagement and involvement amongst students. It is no wonder why, the students are so excited to see Jenny come in week after week. On top of this, Ms Yung regularly makes visits to her local hospitals with food and gifts for children and young mothers. As a former member of the Sydney Anglican Safe Ministry Board, Ms Yung understands the importance of providing a safe space for women, particularly those who lack English literacy skills. I would like to thank Ms Yung and express my deepest appreciation for the wonderful work she does to spread joy and happiness throughout our local community.

#### **LORRAINE BURT, OAM**

**Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)**—I would like to offer my congratulations to Lorraine Burt who has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for her service to Veterans and their families. Lorraine is a deserving recipient. She dedicates her time to helping families of those who fought for our country. Lorraine is a

former national board member of 20 years to the Partners of Veterans Association of Australia and is the current Vice-President of the NSW branch of the Partners of Veterans Association of Australia. Lorraine has been involved with the organisation for over 20 years. Lorraine has been a member of the Clarence Valley Vietnam Veterans Association for 30 years, and she has been Secretary since 1998. Lorraine was the founder of the Clarence Valley Vietnam Veterans Havachat Group in 1998. In 2004 Lorraine was awarded with a Pristine Waters Australia Day Community Award. I congratulate Lorraine on this well-deserved recognition and thank her for her selfless service to our community.

### **GOODSTART EARLY LEARNING MOUNT HUTTON**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)**—What a pleasure it was to join in National Reconciliation Week activities with the students, staff and artist Jakeob Watson at Goodstart Early Learning Mount Hutton. Goodstart Early Learning welcomed the local community on Friday 2 June for a special afternoon of art immersion Jakeob, their artist in residence, as part of their National Reconciliation Week celebrations. Jakeob is a proud Gomeroi man with deep connections to Wonnarua country with lots of experience working with young people to teach culture, well-being and art through his perspective. This year's National Reconciliation Week theme was "Be a Voice for Generations", underscoring the importance of a multi-generational approach to reconciliation. Reconciliation is a year-round priority at Goodstart, and National Reconciliation Week is a particular chance to highlight the importance of culture, community, connection, art exploration, joy and knowledge. It was a fantastic afternoon, and it was wonderful to see the community come together and celebrate National Reconciliation Week. I would like to thank centre manager Paige Smith and her staff for inviting me, the students for being such good hosts and Jakeob for his fantastic work.

### **STAR STRUCK IGNITE**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)**—Every year, young people from public schools across the Hunter gather to put on Star Struck: a showcase of all the extraordinary talent our public school students have to offer in dance, drama, music and stage production. In 2023, Star Struck put on its thirty-first arena spectacular with the theme of Ignite. And the performers and stage workers absolutely lived up to that theme, setting the Newcastle Entertainment Centre alight with colour, music and movement. A big thank you to the organisers and supporters for helping make Star Struck such a success for over three decades. Many schools in the Charlestown electorate contributed to Star Struck Ignite, and I would like to congratulate the students and supporting staff from: Adamstown Public School, Belair Public School, Cardiff Public School, Cardiff South Public School, Charlestown East Public School, Charlestown Public School, Charlestown South Public School, Dudley Public School, Eleebana Public School, Garden Suburb Public School, Kahibah Public School, Kotara High School, Kotara South Public School, Mount Hutton Public School, Warners Bay High School, Warners Bay Public School, Whitebridge High School and Windale Public School. What a fabulous event and here's to many more Star Struck extravaganzas!

### **SISTER PAT DAVIDSON**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)**—Sister Pat Davidson has been a mainstay at St Paul's Primary School in Gateshead for more than two decades, and recently celebrated her eightieth birthday at the school. A dedicated teacher for more than sixty years, including serving as principal of St Pius Windale and other schools in the Hunter Region, Sister Pat's commitment to education started in her childhood. She was raised at the Monte Pio Girls Home and Orphanage in Singleton, and joined the Sisters of Mercy Convent—the nuns who ran the Monte Pio facility—at the age of nineteen. Starting off with no formal qualifications, she learnt the basics of teaching from senior nuns before completing a diploma and earning her Bachelor of Education in Melbourne. Sister Pat now spends a lot of her time teaching children who are having trouble with their literacy, helping young people to achieve their goals. She was something of a quiet trailblazer in this field, teaching phonics even before it was part of the curriculum! Sister Pat is a beloved member of the St Paul's Gateshead school community and the importance of her work cannot be overstated. Happy birthday, Sister Pat, and thank you for everything.

### **HARMONY DAY CELEBRATIONS**

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney)**—An abundance of primary and secondary schools in Londonderry have celebrated Harmony Day, embracing our community's cultural richness and diversity. Schools including Montgrove College & Jordan Springs Public School and many more participated in an array of activities to celebrate the occasion. Activities included performances of cultural dance, cultural dress parades and international buffets that feature traditional dishes from different cultures. It is important that we recognise and celebrate

Harmony Day as it fosters inclusiveness, encourages equality and respect among cultures and reinforces multiculturalism within the community. I commend all schools and other community groups that celebrated the occasion and congratulate all that were involved in the activities and organisation of Harmony Day.

#### **ST MARYS LIGHTS UP FESTIVAL**

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney)**—Penrith City Council's St Marys Lights Up festival on Queen Street was a huge success across the month of May. The festival featured an array of food trucks, performances, creative workshops, amusement rides, live music and children's activities to bring family, friends and the community together. This is an inclusive event where thousands of locals came together to enjoy the activities and experiences on offer at St Marys. It is great to see businesses and community members come together to organise the event and encourage involvement within the community. I commend all that were involved in the organisation and running of the event and congratulate the community on the success of the Lights Up festival.

#### **NEPEAN MULTICULTURAL ACCESS**

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney)**—The Nepean Multicultural Access is an organisation in St Marys that offers an array of daily activities to assist migrants and refugees settle into the wider Nepean area. They host TAFE Employment Courses, art, dance and drumming classes, Conversational English Classes and many more activities daily, to integrate migrants and refugees into daily Australian life. This service has revolutionised the lives of new Australians within the Nepean area, providing support to successfully integrate into their community. The Nepean Multicultural Access has done great work within our community, I commend this organisation on their efforts and thank them for the significant contributions they make to the local community. I look forward to seeing the future work they provide to the wider Nepean area.

#### **ALBERT EDWARD (TED) FISH OAM**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)**—I would like to congratulate the outstanding achievement of Ted Fish, who earlier this year was honoured with the NSW Seniors Local Achievement Award. This award recognises the invaluable contributions of seniors in making our community a vibrant, diverse and inspiring place to live. Ted has demonstrated commitment and dedication to his community through his role as the Honorary Treasurer of the St Marys RSL sub-branch. His selfless service has had a profound impact on the lives of many individuals, particularly our veterans and their families. This well-deserved recognition reflects Ted's outstanding contributions and the positive influence he has had on the lives of those around him. Ted serves as an inspiration to seniors and individuals of all ages. On behalf of the community, I extend my congratulations to Ted for receiving the NSW Seniors Local Achievement Award.

#### **CHRISTINE DANIELS**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)**—I wish to commend Christine Daniels, an inspiring resident of Erskine Park, whose passion for succulents has blossomed into a thriving business. During the challenging times of the COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020, Christine discovered her love for these beautiful plants, little realising that it would lead to a remarkable entrepreneurial journey. Driven by her passion and fuelled by the support of over 7000 followers on Facebook, Christine's hobby soon transformed into a booming business. As her followers expressed a keen interest in purchasing her plants, she seized the opportunity to share her green thumb with the community. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Christine Daniels on her well-deserved success. She serves as an inspiration to aspiring entrepreneurs, reminding us all that pursuing our passions can lead to remarkable outcomes.

#### **KEILEY DOWDS**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)**—I congratulate Keiley Dowds, a talented young athlete and a true source of inspiration in our St Clair community. At just 12 years old, Keiley has already achieved a remarkable amount in her sports participation making several representative teams for Rugby Union, Rugby sevens, Oz tag and even Touch Football, having started her journey in sport at the tender age of 8. Keiley's dedication, passion and unwavering commitment to sports have not gone unnoticed. Her dreams stretch beyond local competition, as she aspires to play in the NRLW and represent Australia on the international stage. With her talent, drive and determination, I have no doubt that Keiley will continue to excel and make her mark in the sport she loves. It is with great pride and joy that we celebrate Keiley's achievements, as she is the most recent recipient of the esteemed Penrith Valley Sports Foundation Junior Sports Star Award. This recognition is a testament to her hard work, skill and outstanding sportsmanship. I congratulate Keiley on this significant achievement and look forward to a long and successful career in sports.

### GORDON ROTARY MARKETS

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)**—On the second Sunday of every month, Ku-ring-gai Rotary and Turramurra Rotary organise the Gordon Markets on level two of the Gordon Council Carpark. This wonderful initiative has been operating for over 25 years and provides opportunities for entrepreneurs across the local community to come together. Stalls sell a variety of products, including clothing, antiques, furniture, stationery, books, plants, home-made agricultural consumables, and glassware amongst other items. As the Member for Davidson, it is always a pleasure to hold my own stall at the markets every two months. It allows Davidson constituents to directly raise their concerns and issues with me directly, as well as an opportunity to say hello. These interactions are just as important to me as it is to the people of Davidson. I would like to pay tribute to the 2022-23 Ku-ring-gai Rotary President Chris Lewis and Turramurra Rotary President Ian Spencer who led their respective clubs and boards. I look forward to continuing my presence, engagement and attendance at the Rotary Gordon Markets.

### ST IVES ROTARY BUNNINGS BELROSE BBQ

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)**—The St Ives Rotary Bunning Belrose BBQ is an initiative that perfectly embodies the spirit of volunteerism and grass-roots community support. This dedicated group of individuals, of which I am proud to contribute, devotes their time and energy to organise numerous BBQs throughout the year, all in the name of raising funds for projects and worthwhile organisations such as the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter. Our local volunteer organisations, such as Rotary, play a pivotal role in addressing local needs and making a positive impact on our community. The importance of volunteer organisations cannot be overstated. They serve as the backbone of our communities, giving their time and resource to uplift others. I pay tribute to St Ives Rotary – in particular BBQ organiser Harold Morgan and Treasurer John Steel. Finally, let's not forget about the sausage sizzle! These events have become an integral part of Australian culture. Who would have thought that a sausage, onion, bread and sauce could bring so much joy and camaraderie. It's a light-hearted reminder that even while fundraising for worthwhile causes, we can come together, enjoy some delicious snags, and share a good laugh.

### MACQUARIE BUSINESS SCHOOL OCCASIONAL ADDRESS

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)**—I was honoured to deliver the Occasional Address to the graduates of the Macquarie University Business School on Monday 8 May at Macquarie Park. As a long-term participant in the Macquarie University Lucy Mentorship Program – which provides female students with professional mentoring, training and development – I was grateful to speak with many people completing their degrees, including graduates from Davidson. The graduates' futures look incredibly promising and bright. I was also fortunate enough to be given an exciting tour of the facilities at Macquarie University, including new developments across engineering, arts and sport. I would like to thank Professor Eric Knight, Executive Dean of the Macquarie Business School, other faculty members, and the university staff for overseeing this remarkable event. In my address, I shared two personal stories which I believe can be lessons for life – the importance of taking care of yourself and following your passion. I look forward to engaging with Macquarie University. Look out for these graduates – they will change the world.

### WILLOUGHBY SYMPHONY CHOIR

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)**—I take great pride in the musical talent to be found in my local community, and I especially want to pay tribute to the Willoughby Symphony Choir which marks its 50th anniversary this year. Formed in 1973 from the Northside Choral Society, the Willoughby City Choir is now widely recognised as one of Australia's finest community choirs. Performing for at least eight concerts a year, the Choir serves as both a performing ensemble and as a symphonic chorus for the Willoughby Symphony Orchestra. As well as performing for concerts including annual favourites such as the 'Last Night of the Proms', the Choir also sings for community events including the Willoughby Spring Festival and Carols in the Park. Boasting a national and international reach, the Choir has performed in popular music concerts at the Sydney Opera House and in 2008, it conducted a successful tour of Europe. I congratulate the Willoughby Symphony Choir and all those who contribute to its strength on this milestone anniversary and wish it every continued success.

### VALE DR ANTHONY PUN OAM (1946-2023)

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)**—I would like pay tribute to the life and legacy of Dr Anthony 'Tony' Pun, a prominent medical scientist and leader of the Chinese Australian community who died last month at 77 after a long illness. Born in Malaysia in 1946, Dr Pun emigrated to Australia in 1964 and pursued a distinguished career in science, becoming chief research scientist at St Vincent's Hospital. In conjunction with his scientific career, Dr Pun contributed to Australia's cultural life as the founding President of the Chinese Community Council of Australia and one of the founding members of the Chinese Australian Forum. In NSW, he also served two terms

as chair of the NSW government's Ethnic Communities Council. Dr Pun worked well with both sides of politics, enjoying positive relationships with Gough Whitlam and Bob Hawke, as well as John Howard and Tony Abbott. For his public service and contribution to community life, Dr Pun was awarded an Order of Australia Medal in 1997. Long after his retirement, Dr Pun remained active in the Chinese Australian community and I was proud to know him. His loss will be felt by many in the community of Willoughby.

#### CHATSWOOD SERVICE CENTRE

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)**—Service NSW and the 275 Service NSW centres across the state were introduced in 2012 to vastly improve the delivery of and access to a range of state government services to our community. Serving as a 'one stop shop', it is the single point of contact for multiple NSW government agencies including Transport for NSW, Fair Trading NSW, the RMS and the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages. On Thursday 14 June, it was terrific to visit the Chatswood service centre of Service NSW and thank some of the 28 great staff who diligently serve about 500 customers every day. The centre has just established a permanent Quiet Hour on Thursdays 10.00 – 11.00 a.m. to ensure people sensitive to light or overstimulated by sound can complete Service NSW transactions in a comfortable and safe environment. The Chatswood Centre will celebrate its 10th anniversary this year. I sincerely thank all the staff for a decade of serving our local community.

#### GOLF GIRLS

**Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)**—I would like to congratulate three outstanding young golfing rising stars. Hollie Fuller from Grafton has been selected to represent Jack Newton Junior Golf at the 2023 Pearl Junior Open international tournament at Pearl Country Club in Hawaii in July. I know the Grafton Golf Club is running a raffle to assist Hollie in achieving her dream trip. I wish her well. Annalese McKee and Tana Lowe were also selected to represent "Team North" at the annual Regional Academies of Sport, North v South Cup played at the Catalina Golf Club in Batemans Bay, and yes the North won for the fifth year in a row with both girls playing some great golf. Annalese most recently won the Grafton Junior Golf tournament in an exciting playoff in Grafton. I know all three are eyeing the Women's NSW Open championships which are coming to the Yamba Golf and Country Club. I wish them all the best for their golfing journey.

#### GRAFTON PROBUS

**Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)**—I would like to congratulate the organisers of the Vivid Sydney Festival. Now I am the first to admit the festival is well outside the electorate of Clarence that I represent, but I can report that many people from my patch travelled to Sydney and enjoyed the festival. Fifteen members from Grafton Probus recently returned to the beautiful Clarence from Sydney where they enjoyed the spectacular views of Vivid, including the lighting up of the Opera House and other buildings, along with the drone display at Circular Quay which was rated as brilliant. At the same time, the light show in the Botanical Gardens and on the clock tower at Central Railway was a hit with all the members who attended on the trip. I'm told the crew from Grafton Probus were very happy to use their gold Opal cards; in fact, they were working overtime with all the sights of Sydney and the trams, trains, and ferries getting a big workout.

#### VAISHNAV SANGH OF SYDNEY

**Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)**—I had the pleasure of attending the Vaishnav Sangh of Sydney's 22nd Annual Utsav. It was wonderful to welcome their Spiritual Head, His Holiness Je Je Shri, to mark the occasion. I was moved and inspired by seeing so many people from all ages and backgrounds preserve and promote their values of Vaishnavism. Being of service is fundamental to their beliefs, which they do through providing spiritual, cultural and social services within and beyond their community. Most importantly, their wonderful charitable work within and beyond their community is commendable. Although it is part of the Vaishnav Dharam, we can all learn from it. As it is stated in a Vaishnava Upanishad: "The charity or gift is the armour in the world. All beings live on the gift of the other. Through gifts, strangers become friends, Through gifts, they ward off difficulties, On gifts and giving, everything rests, That is why Charity is the highest." I sincerely thank the Vaishnav Sangh of Sydney for inviting me to participate in such a special event. In particular, I am grateful to Executive Members Himanshu Shah, Aakash Shah, Akshay Butani, Milin Chokshi, Shishir Patel, Ramesh Desai and Vikash Parekh.

#### PHILIPPINES INDEPENDENCE DAY

**Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)**—Last week I celebrated the 125th Philippines Independence Day at the wonderful Mary Immaculate Parish Church in Quakers Hill. I'd like to acknowledge Philippine Consul General Aviquivil, Father Oliver Aro, Bobby Lastica, Rommel and Therese del Valle, and all the great cultural performers for making the event so special. Philippine Independence Day is celebrated annually on June 12th to commemorate the country's declaration of Independence from Spanish colonial rule in 1898. This year's theme: 'Freedom, Future, History' serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by the Filipino heroes who fought for

independence. This year's theme created a sense of unity, strengthened community bonds, and passed on cultural heritage to future generations. In Australia, the Independence Day activities are observed with great patriotism and pride by the Filipino diaspora. Filipinos are the third largest Asian Australian Immigrant group and approximately 75 per cent live in the Blacktown LGA many in my Electorate. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the community for their unwavering commitment in making a difference across all facets of society. Your dedication, support, and collaborative spirit have made a positive impact and created a nurturing and thriving environment for all.

#### **PUJA OPENING ELECTORATE OFFICE**

**Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)**—I thank members of the Arya Pratinidhi Sabha of Australia for marking the opening of my Office with a special ceremony. My staff and I were privileged to participate in a 'Yajna' or Hindu Ritual with blessings performed by President Suresh Chand, Vice President Bindu Khattar, Community leader Yogesh Khattar, and Executive member Piyush Sharma. It is believed to be the first time in Australia a Member of Parliament's Office has been inaugurated in this way. The Yajna was both significant and symbolic. Important because the 'Agnihotra' or lighting of the flame with the Sanskrit Mantra is considered auspicious and removes any negativity in your surroundings. Symbolic because my Electorate has one of the largest Hindu populations in NSW; this is an honour for me and a mark of respect for those practising the oldest religion in the world. Those who observe Yajnas are believed to attain spiritual contentment and attract an aura of enlightenment. Yajna is also supposed to unite oneself with humanity to create social harmony. Importantly, it's meant to provide peace and prosperity so one can give back to the community- something I hope to achieve as the Member for Riverstone.

#### **24-HOUR FIGHT AGAINST CANCER MACARTHUR**

**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)**—Many residents of Macarthur have lived locally their entire lives, and many have moved in from outside the area. But this does not mean that there is a lack of community-mindedness – 24-Hour Fight Against Cancer Macarthur shows that the opposite is true. This charity was started by the late Councillor Fred Borg OAM in 2005 to support funding for local cancer services. Every dollar raised goes towards the Macarthur Cancer Therapy Centre, the Oncology Ward and Paediatric Ambulatory Care Unit at Campbelltown Hospital, and the Palliative Care Unit and associated Outreach Service at Camden Hospital. This assists the treatment, care and comfort of children and adults dealing with cancer. This month I attended the launch of the 2023 fundraising year for 24-Hour Fight Against Cancer Macarthur in preparation for its annual weekend walkathon on 14 and 15 October. This annual event has raised more than \$5 million over the past 19 years. I thank the incredible efforts of Chairperson Warren Morrison and all those involved. I know that the Macarthur community will again show their community generosity.

#### **MOTO FIRE BRAVERY**

**Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)**—I rise to recognise the Kundle/Moto Rural Fire Brigade. The Kundle/Moto Rural Fire Brigade has received a Commissioner's Unit Citation for Bravery during the 2019-2020 Black Summer fires, and four members of the brigade have individually received bravery medals. The Citation for Bravery and the Bravery Medals were awarded for courage and determination during a devastating firestorm at Johns River village on November 8, 2019. Members receiving the Bravery Medals were captain Nicholas Wright, and firefighters Samantha Bartlett, Peter Wiss and William Neale. I congratulate Kundle/Moto Rural Fire Brigade on being recognised for their bravery and thank its members for their selfless courage and commitment in responding to saving lives and property.

#### **BIRDS OF A FEATHER**

**Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)**—I rise to recognise Birds of a Feather, a Hallidays Point women's group. The group reaches out to women in the community to create a space for connection. They regularly meet up for get-togethers, day trips and fundraising. Lorraine Ryan, a Birds of a Feather group instigator hosted a very successful Australia's Biggest Morning Tea in her home. With the support and donations from local businesses, Birds of a Feather raised \$2130.50 to make a difference for people impacted by cancer. Donations were received from: Rachel Pavitt-Rumery, Katy from Lash and Brown, Diane Willey, Diamond Beach Cellars, Tuncurry Beach Bowling Club, The Point Bakery Cafe, FoodWorks Hallidays Point, Hallidays Sports Club, The Artisan Farmer and Hallidays Point Tavern. I congratulate Birds of a Feather and thank them for all the wonderful things they are doing in the Myall Lakes. I look forward to attending one of their get-togethers.

### JOHN TURNER OAM

**Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)**—I rise to recognise John Turner OAM. John has recently been recognised for his service to the community and to the Parliament of NSW in this year's King's Birthday Honours. John has been involved in state politics for 23 years. He was the Nationals' deputy leader from 1999 to 2003 and was campaign director for the federal seat of Lyne in 1996 and 1998 and for Paterson in 1993. John was also the member for Myall Lakes between 1988 and 2011 for the National Party. Since leaving Parliament he has chaired a taskforce reviewing the Local Government Act, acted as administrator during the merger of MidCoast Council and chaired 10 coalmining consultative committees. He was appointed chair of the Hunter branch of federal government agency Regional Development Australia in 2018, a position he still holds. I congratulate John on his well-deserved recognition and thank him for all he has done for the Nationals and the Myall Lakes electorate.

### WAVES FITNESS AND AQUATIC CENTRE

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Kellyville)**—Waves Fitness and Aquatic Centre has achieved national recognition for being one of the most inclusive and accessible community facilities in the entire country. The aquatic centre beat 24 other nationwide nominations to secure the win in the Cohesive Communities Category at the National Awards for Local Government. I would like to congratulate the previous Councillors, under the leadership of then Mayor Dr Michelle Byrne, from The Hills Shire Council for their vision, and everyone that was involved in making this incredible project an award-winning reality. You created another jewel in the crown of The Hills.

### WEST WYALONG PUBLIC SCHOOL

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)**—I wish to thank a local school in my Electorate for hosting me on Thursday 8 June 2023. Upon my arrival at West Wyalong Public School, I was warmly welcomed by school principal, Victoria Jenkins, staff and students. My visit was to open the schools new Wiradjuri Native Garden and Turf Playing Field funded to the P & C Committee under the previous governments Stronger Country Communities Fund Round Four. During the opening celebrations, it was a privilege to watch the students perform a local Wiradjuri song about native flora and fauna, this performance was a highlight of my visit. Joining Ms Jenkins, Leanne Cox, President of the P & C, Aboriginal Elder, Linton and the school captains and prefects to open the garden and playing field, I enjoyed a wonderful morning tea put on by the staff and parents. Thank you once again West Wyalong Public School for having me. I can't wait for my next visit.

### DEDICATION TO SUPPORTING GRENFELL

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)**—I would like to acknowledge the dedication and commitment made by Meryl Hunter of Grenfell who has volunteered her time to the community for over 40 years. A patron of the Senior Citizens, at 96 years young, Meryl has been instrumental in leading the way for future generations to understand the importance of volunteering in rural communities. A life member of the Hospital Auxiliary where she has been a member since 1978 including being appointed their secretary. Meryl has also spent the past 25 years volunteering her time and showcasing her talents of knitting and cooking up wonderful treats for Grenfell Gunyah. Having previously volunteered at the Grenfell Christian Book Shop, Presbyterian church committee where she held the position of secretary, along with the secretary of the Women's Bowling Club, I am amazed that Meryl still has time in her busy day to enjoy her gardening. Well done, Meryl you are a true inspiration to so many, making a positive impact on the lives of many. Thank you for all that you do to support the Grenfell community, your service to others is appreciated.

### STEVE ORR MARCHING FOR MENTAL HEALTH

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)**—I would like to congratulate Steve Orr a Junee local who has recently completed his Soldier on March challenge for veteran mental health, a 192km walk raising over \$5,000 for veterans. This money raised will pay for 435 peer support sessions, 261 employment support and 25 psychology sessions for our veterans. Over 6,650 participants have travelled over 532,160km and raised over \$2,000,000. The Solider on March challenge has been a big step forward in supporting mental health. Soldier On has been supporting the veteran community since 2012, who have been physically or psychologically impacted by their service. Participants have the option of walking either 96km to represent the length of The Kokoda Track or 192km to represent the return trip. The Kokoda Track marks the course of one of the most important battles for Australians in the Second World War. The men who defended this rugged track were the only line of defence protecting Australia from imminent invasion. Congratulations Steve and all who have donated, your efforts will go a long way to making a positive impact on the lives of our veterans.



**MEREDITH EVANS – PAUL HARRIS FELLOW**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—I rise to extend warmest congratulations to Meredith Evans, Immediate Past President of the Rotary Club of Port Macquarie West on recently receiving a Paul Harris Fellow [PHF] at the Rotary Changeover held on 20th June 2023. A Paul Harris Fellow is Rotary International's highest honour, bestowed on an individual "in appreciation of tangible and significant assistance given for the furtherance of better understanding and friendly relations among peoples of the world." Meredith embodies the Rotary motto of "service above self" through her actions and leadership on community projects which have made a lasting difference in people's lives. During her 2022-2023 Presidency, Meredith established the Winter Woollies Program aimed at providing warm blankets and clothing for our homeless sleeping rough. A call-out to the community for new winter items received hundreds of donations benefitting organisations like YP Space, Endeavour, Port Macquarie-Hastings Homelessness Support Services and Community Housing. Meredith has also secured a partnership with Rotary and Yipirinya Public School in the Northern Territory to end the prevalence of trachoma in remote Aboriginal communities through the purchase of ninety hygiene items annually. A role model to many, I congratulate Meredith on her well-deserved Paul Harris Fellow.

**RAFAEL D' SOUZA**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—I rise to commend a gifted young man from St Joseph's Primary School in Port Macquarie who recently secured his name on the Honour Roll of the 2023 Bebras Australian Computational Thinking Challenge. Nine-year-old Rafael D' Souza is the first student from St Joseph's Primary School to be included on the Honour Roll after scoring full marks in computational thinking and problem solving. Bebras is a process of deduction and multiple choice, through an interactive environment. To be recognised on the prestigious Honour Roll each student is asked fifteen questions with the highest possible score equalling 135 points. Competing at the Challenge were 52,945 students nationally and from that 242 were successful in achieving 100 per cent and Honour Roll status. Digital Technologies leader Sarah Blundell is one of the amazing educators from St Joseph's School that has assisted Rafael in reaching this phenomenal result both for himself and for his School. Sarah notes St Joseph's strong emphasis on testing and evaluating their students to prepare them for future success. I applaud Rafael for his strong dedication and commitment to learning which I'm sure will go a long way in achieving a successful career in the future.

**LEANNE SPEEDY TACKING POINT PUBLIC SCHOOL VOLUNTEER**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—I rise to recognise Mrs Leanne Speedy for her 20 years of volunteering with the Tuckerbox at the Tacking Point Public School. The School canteen has been managed by the school's Parents and Citizens Association and if not with the many volunteers the operation of the Tuckerbox would not be possible. On her last day of volunteering, Mrs Speedy was recognised for 20 years of service acknowledging her contribution to the school, supporting both parents and its children. No surprisingly, Mrs Speedy has seen a number of changes at the canteen over that time. She was a volunteer during the 2014 changes to introduce healthy food choices for children using the school's vegetables and eggs in the canteen and last year she saw the canteen renovated and updated. Feedback from children and parents reflects how highly valued the many volunteers in the canteen are and Mrs Speedy is always a well known and respected friendly face at the Tuckerbox. Congratulations to Leanne on her contribution to the school and I wish her well in the future.

**PRINCIPAL VANDA QUINN**

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport)**—I wish to recognise and congratulate Ms Vanda Quinn, Principal of Arncliffe West Infants School in my electorate, on the occasion of her retirement at the end of 2022. Ms Quinn was at Arncliffe West Infants for over a decade, and I have personally known her in that time to be a hard-working, committed educational leader, who dedicated herself to giving the children under her charge their best possible futures. Under Vanda's leadership Arncliffe West Infants became one of those schools that parents are eager to get their children into, and indeed the school has almost outgrown its site as a result of the influx of children whose parents want them to experience the loving, supportive and fun environment that she built. Notably Vanda introduced practical music education across the entire school in 2015, after she undertook a pilot music teacher mentoring program founded by the late Richard Gill AO with the Australian Youth Orchestra. That musical legacy has benefited hundreds of children so far and it will benefit hundreds more in the future. Congratulations Vanda on an outstanding career and a lifetime of service to our children. Enjoy your well-earned retirement.

**STACY JACOBS NOMINEE FOR THE LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)**—Stacy Jacobs' significant contribution and commitment to the Maitland community has been acknowledged with a nomination

to the 2023 Local Woman of the Year Awards. Stacy has worked tirelessly to support youth in the Maitland area promoting equity. She has organised free formal wear events for Year 12 students ensuring no one is disadvantaged. A cornerstone of her activities has been running low cost and free courses in youth Mental Health First Aid. Stacy has supported over 66 young people to get their Provisional licences by supervising their driving hours – 1600 hours in total! Stacy was named the 2022 Youth Worker of the Year for NSW recognising not only her professional contribution but also her hours of volunteering. Stacy is a member of the NSW Youth Work Professional Board and the International Association of Community Development promoting Maitland. In the sporting field she has dedicated 20 years to Maitland Basketball, and she was one of the first female umpires in cricket in Maitland. Stacy is truly an asset to the Maitland community.

#### **HOLLY MCNAMEE LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR NOMINEE**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)**—Holly McNamee was a recent nominee in the Maitland Local Woman of the Year Awards. Holly McNamee is dedicated to bringing history alive in Maitland as an active volunteer and member of the National Trust. In her role as Chair of the Grossmann and Brough Houses Management Committee, Holly has formed partnerships with community volunteers and other organisations such as the Maitland City Council, historical societies, local Aboriginal community - Wonnarua People and Reconciliation Australia to hold Reconciliation Art Exhibitions. Holly actively works in partnership with other National Trust properties to find clever ways to attract visitors such as an Artist in Residence program. She liaises with the Department of Education to offer educational programs that align with syllabus needs, ensuring school excursions as engaging and relevant to both teachers and students. Holly is always looking to enhancing the visitor experience, organising a Jane Austen Garden party when the National Trust toured a Georgian Glass display throughout NSW. Holly is most worthy of her highly commended recognition as a valued and valuable member of the Maitland Community.

#### **HOLLY PICTON LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR NOMINEE**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)**—Holly Picton was a recent nominee in the Maitland Local Woman of the Year Awards. When times were tough in her local community Holly Picton stood up to support families. In the 2022 flood events in Gillieston Heights, where the community was isolated, for over a week, Holly reached out to families in the area via social media and generously gave away her business stock to local children, for free. She stayed up late and made enough play-dough for all the kids to enjoy whilst they were isolated. Holly is the first to respond when the local day care has emergency evacuations, she regularly attends the oval to help the kids and school by setting up a marquee for the children so they don't get sun burnt or be impacted by weather, as well as supplying toys for the children to keep them occupied during times of incidents. Holly is most worthy of recognition as a valued and valuable member of the Gillieston Heights Community. Congratulations Holly, you truly epitomise what community spirit is all about.

#### **PATHWAYS MUSIC FESTIVAL**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)**—I would like to recognise the efforts of the organisers of the Pathways Music Festival, and their venue, Pratten Park Bowling Club Ashfield, for hosting yet another fantastic festival, building on the success of last year. Pathways Music Festival is an annual event organised by Sacred Currents, that prides itself on hosting the "next wave of culturally diverse artists". The festival this year was held on June 18th from 12.00 p.m. – 5.00 p.m., and was a free and family friendly event and activities included a jumping castle, with Polish Bistro food provided. The line up for this year included: Box of Chocolates – a singing, dancing and storytelling duo made up of Torres Strait Islander songman Murraywa Dow Sailor and talented flautist Chloe Chung; Maissa Alameddine – an experienced vocalist performing multi-disciplinary works influenced by Arabic, Persian and Western music; Mirko Golub Balkan Jazz Ensemble – A jazz musician of 20 years experience performing Balkan and Latin jazz as well as classical piano; Avaye Rood – A talented quad performing original music infused with the poems of Rumi, and featuring traditional Iranian instruments; and, Dani Blaz & Atihcual – Chilean Australian hip-hop fusing together touches of Jazz and Latin American music.

#### **TRISH WYNER - AMY LARGE VOLUNTEER AWARDS**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)**—This year, Trish Wyner received an Amy Large Volunteer Award for her efforts with Dress for Success. Dress for Success is a Marrickville based community organisation that aims to "empower women to achieve economic independence by providing a network of support, professional attire, and development tools". Dress for Success is a brilliant initiative to make the lives of women entering the professional workforce just a little bit easier, and helps many women overcome some of the challenges they face in re-entering the workforce. Trish is described as a quiet achiever who has worked tirelessly to deliver the best outcomes for members of her community. So far this year she has helped organise eight fashion fundraising events, with all the proceeds going to support the women who rely on Dress

for Success. I have spoken in this place previously about the fantastic work of Dress for Success, and it gives me great joy to see Trish's hard work recognised. Congratulations Trish and the Dress for Success team.

### **BANKSTOWN SLAM POETRY**

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)**—Congratulations to Bankstown Poetry Slam on their big win at last week's NSW Premier's Literacy Awards. Bankstown Poetry Slam is the first ever organisation to win the award for "their contribution to the literary life of Australia", an admirable achievement. Bankstown Poetry Slam is a community platform that empowers individuals to express themselves through spoken word. With a monthly attendance of over 300 people, it has become a renowned gathering place for local and international artists. I am proud to serve such an extraordinary organisation in my electorate. In addition to its monthly events, Bankstown Poetry Slam organizes workshops, performances, and programs in high schools and other venues. These initiatives provide opportunities for individuals, particularly young people, to explore their creativity and develop their skills in poetry. This organisation plays a crucial role in empowering individuals to find their voice and connect with others through the transformative power of the spoken word. I particularly want to acknowledge Bankstown Poetry Slam Co-founder Sara Mansour, Bilal Hafda who runs the monthly slam events, and the program officer Yasmin Lewis. Their initiative in running and facilitating poetry slam events is what keeps this organisation at its best.

### **NANCY WU ART EXHIBITION**

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)**—Congratulations to Nancy Wu on her art exhibition at the Bankstown Art Centre on 17th of June. "Taboo" curated by Nancy Wu is an exceptional display of art and performance conducted by artists of diverse backgrounds. Through vibrant splashes of colour, captivating sculptures, and fascinating performances, this exhibition aims to push boundaries and redefine societal norms. "Taboo" ventures into various sensitive and often unspoken topics such as mental health, sexuality, aging, dementia, language, culture, and more. Ms Wu's most inspiring piece was an 80kg suit of ancient Chinese Armour made entirely of recycled crystal glass remnants. She eloquently captures the essence of her creation with her words, and I quote: "The original historic armour weighed about 60kg, but for these purposes, it represents the weight we put on ourselves. We almost wear our pride like armour, and if I fall, there's a chance it might break and cut me." Occasionally the weight of the responsibilities we carry as, representatives in this place, can be overwhelming. But sometimes it's okay to let down the barriers of pride and embrace vulnerability in leadership. There truly is a valuable lesson in Nancy's art for everyone.

### **BANKSTOWN POLICE AREA COMMAND MEDAL & AWARDS PRESENTATION CEREMONY**

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)**—On Thursday 8 June, Bankstown Police Area Command held its annual Medal and Awards Presentation Ceremony to celebrate the hard work of the police that serve our local community. This year due to other commitments, I was unable to attend however I am pleased to say that Kylie Wilkinson, Member for East Hills was in attendance. Being in the police is never easy and there have been times, particularly over the last few years when the police have been required to go above and beyond the call of duty. The giving of these medals and awards help to encourage our police command and serves as a reminder to our community that police work is challenging. These awards are also in recognition of service, courage, bravery, and dedication to the protection of our state and local community. I would like to thank Superintendent Adam Johnson for inviting me and I am pleased to extend my congratulations to the officers on receiving such prestigious accolades. I also acknowledge their families who play an incredible support role and carry the emotional weight of their loved ones potentially being in harm's way.

### **WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY NUMBER ONE IN THE WORLD**

**Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)**—Western Sydney University City Campus is on a bustling corner of Parramatta Square. It's hard to miss the stream of university students filtering in and out of tutorials, workshops and lectures. With so many students in the Parramatta Electorate choosing Western Sydney University [WSU] as their place of study for tertiary education, it comes as no surprise that for the 2nd year in a row, WSU is number one in the world for its social, economic and environmental impact. Established in 2019, The University Impact Ranking is the main global ranking system focused exclusively on tertiary education facility's commitment to the United Nations Seventeen Sustainable Development Goals. WSU has scored highly in several Sustainable Development Goal categories, ranking 1st in the world for 'Gender equality, responsible consumption and production' and 2nd for 'clean water and life on land'. I congratulate WSU on this achievement and recognise the committed team, under the leadership of Vice Chancellor Professor Barney Glover AO, current Chancellor

Professor Jennifer Westacott AM and former Chancellor Professor Peter Shergold AC, for the crucial work they do in addressing critical, social and environmental challenges facing local and global communities.

#### **INNER WEST COMMUNITY ENERGY**

**Ms KOBI SHETTY (Balmain)**—Today I bring to the attention of the House the wonderful work of Inner West Community Energy, an independent community group formed by local people to promote energy efficiency as well as renewable and solar energy in Sydney's Inner West. IWCE plays a crucial role in helping local individuals, businesses and community organisations install solar systems which are good for the climate, promote local jobs and save people money. Over the last 5 years, IWCE has helped over 250 households go solar, as well as running dozens of community information sessions on everything from community batteries to creating a net zero home. I want to thank the IWCE Committee, Kathy Bluff, Gavin Gilchrist, Meloni Muir, Susan Coates, Peter Lawson, Penny Biggins and Barb Matchett, as well as Roland Lawrence Electrical, Evolution Solar, Brightside Solar, Lynton Electrical, Lily Pejic, the SolShare Project and all the volunteers whose work has helped make our area a powerhouse for the renewable energy transition.

#### **VALE – FRANK SPILSBURY**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)**—I recognise the many achievements of Mr Frank Spilsbury, a long time Stock and Station Agent in the Armidale area, who passed away recently. Mr Spilsbury made an outstanding contribution to Australian Agriculture and was immensely respected among his Agency peers and the wider agricultural community. Mr Spilsbury spent almost 50 years as a Stock and Station Agent, starting in 1956 and moving his way through the ranks to specialising in Rural property sales. He had an extensive knowledge of the New England and Northern Tablelands regions, from farming, grazing and pasture management perspectives. I commend the late Mr Spilsbury on his enduring and accomplished career, as well as his contribution and commitment to the Agricultural and Agency industries. Such a highly regarded leader in his field, his passing will be a considerable loss to the industry, his community and to his wife Jill and family. Through loss, there is an abundant legacy left by Frank.

#### **NORTH WEST REGIONAL LANDCARE AWARDS – RANALD (RAN) MITCHELL**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)**—I recognise the achievements of Ran Mitchell who has been honoured with the Individual Landcare award at the North-West Regional Landcare Awards recently. This accolade recognises an individual who has made a significant contribution to Landcare, has demonstrated outstanding leadership, as well as shown a commitment to Landcare. I congratulate Mr Mitchell on receiving this outstanding award and acknowledge he and his wife Jenny Mitchell (OAM), for being actively involved in many community groups and organisations, particularly in the North Star district. I commend Mr Mitchell, as well as other nominators Richard and Janet Doyle (Doyle Estates) from Boggabilla and The Green Triangle Group, each of whom are champions for the land and environment. I also wish Mr Mitchell well in the NSW State Awards will be held later in the year.

#### **WALCHA CENTRAL SCHOOL STUDENTS TO BE COMMANDED**

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)**—I would like to recognise the achievements of the Walcha Central School students for their achievements in Wingham Beef Week held recently. Twenty Seven students travelled to take part with students featuring in the prize list for many of the events. I congratulate the Walcha students for being part of the beef parade, beef appreciation, inter-collegial meat judging, as well as the education sessions. The students were part of a 400 cohort from across all areas of NSW taking part in this competition. Many thanks goes to all the Judges, Businesss Sponsors, Cattle Donors and in particular to Jodie Provost and James Sweeney, who assisted the Walcha students to achieve this. I commend the Walcha Central School for providing an extremely valuable opportunity for their students and we wish those students well, who are going on to compete in the Scone Beef Bonanza in October.

#### **NATALIE SHIEL OAM**

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government)**—I rise to congratulate Miss Natalie Shiel OAM on receiving the Medal of the Order of Australia [OAM] in the General Division of the Order of Australia as part of the 2023 King's Birthday Honours list for her service to nursing. This prestigious recognition serves as a testament to Natalie's unwavering dedication and exceptional contributions to the field, spanning over many years. As the Director of Nursing for the COVID-19 Vaccination and Screening Program and a Nurse Manager for COVID Operations, she has played a pivotal role in safeguarding public health during these unprecedented times. Natalie's leadership, strategic planning, and tireless efforts have been instrumental in the successful implementation of vital healthcare initiatives. Her tireless efforts and genuine concern for the well-being of others have undoubtedly had a significant impact on the lives of numerous patients and colleagues.

Natalie's compassionate and skilled care has provided comfort, healing, and hope during challenging times. Congratulations, Natalie Shiel OAM.

#### AUDREY MCCALLUM OAM

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government)**—I rise to congratulate Mrs Audrey McCallum OAM on receiving the Medal of the Order of Australia [OAM] in the General Division of the Order of Australia as part of the 2023 King's Birthday Honours list for her service to community through a range of organisations. Audrey's dedication to the Waverley Historical Society as President, Vice-President, Tour Conductor, and Exhibition Coordinator has greatly contributed to the preservation and celebration of the community's rich history. Similarly, as Treasurer of the Waverley Community and Seniors Association, her enthusiasm for creating meaningful experiences through tours, holidays, and community gatherings has brought joy and enrichment to many individuals. As President of the Volunteer Service at Prince of Wales Hospital, Audrey's commitment to supporting healthcare and creating a compassionate environment has positively impacted patients and their families. Her volunteer work, leadership, and historical tours have made a significant difference. Meanwhile, through her involvement with Soroptimist International, both in New South Wales and the South West Pacific, Audrey has demonstrated admirable dedication to empowering women and effecting positive change in diverse communities. Congratulations, Audrey McCallum OAM.

#### VINNIES VAN

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government)**—It is my honour to bring to attention the valuable and spectacular team behind the Vinnies Vans in my electorate of Heffron. The Bayside and Sydney Central Vinnies Vans have provided essential services for many of my constituents in Waterloo and Eastlakes including valuable meals, snacks and mateship. These services uplift locals experiencing hardship seven days a week. The impressive impact of the service can be measured by the long lines and wide smiles of the dozens of people enjoying a healthy salad, sausage sandwich and assortment of cakes. The Vinnies Van encapsulated the good spirits and mateship in my community. I commend the hard work of the volunteers who put in the hard work week in and week out. Without their hard work and community-mindedness many would miss out on a warm meal each week and life-altering pastoral care.

#### JANELLE AND JOHN DODD

**Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)**—Janelle and John Dodd were honored this year with the Order of Australia Medal [OAM] for their outstanding contributions to the community. Janelle's OAM recognises her service to the community, with a special focus on her involvement with Rotary, alongside a myriad of other community-driven endeavours. Throughout the years, Janelle has tirelessly dedicated her time and energy to initiatives that uplift and support those in need, leaving an indelible impact on countless lives. Similarly, John's OAM acknowledges his commitment to community service, with a particular emphasis on his contributions to Rotary. Having served as the Ryde Rotary Community Director from 2019 to 2021 and intermittently as President from 1992 to 2002, John has demonstrated exemplary leadership and a deep-rooted passion for positive change within the community. The recognition of their dedication and selfless acts of service is a testament to Janelle and John's impact on the community. Their contributions exemplify the spirit of volunteerism and inspire others to make a difference in the lives of those around them. Janelle and John Dodd's OAMs symbolize the gratitude and admiration of a grateful community that has been touched by their compassion, generosity, and commitment to strengthening our community.

#### RITA LEPEDJIAN

**Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)**—Rita Lepedjian OAM, founder and chair of the Ryde Hunters Hill Symphony Orchestra [RHHSO], has been recognized for her service to the community through various organizations. With an impressive tenure as a Justice of the Peace [JP] since 1984, Rita has played a vital role in ensuring justice and upholding the values of fairness and integrity. Over four decades, Rita has been a highly engaged member of the community, dedicating her time, skills, and passion to uplifting those around her. As the driving force behind the RHHSO, she has enriched the cultural fabric of the community, bringing the beauty of symphonic music to Ryde. Rita's tireless efforts and unwavering commitment to service have left an indelible impact, inspiring others to get involved and make a difference. Her selfless dedication to the community exemplifies the values of compassion, inclusivity, and unity. This well-deserved recognition for Rita Lepedjian is a testament to her outstanding contributions and commitment to fostering a vibrant and harmonious community. Her legacy will continue to resonate for years to come, reminding us of the power of service and the profound impact one individual can have on the lives of many.

### **RYDE ATHLETICS**

**Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)**—Ryde Athletics held its annual combined awards day on 21 May 2023 at Kent Road PS. It was an impressive season, with the senior athletes earning 21 gold, 29 silver, and 20 bronze medals at the State level, and 5 gold, 11 silver, and 9 bronze medals at the national level. Specifically I acknowledge the following athletes who were personally recognised for their various achievements throughout the season: Ruby Worrell; Jessica Johnston; Mat Woodhouse; Steven Barlow; Puspesh Kumar; Jon Baker; Nick Pawsey; Jacqueline Pawsey; Zara Pawsey; Aiden Wright; Yahya Ali; Josh Smith; James Woods; Adam Bruntsch; Axel Bruntsch; Georgia Phillips; Benjamin Woodhouse; Ratu Viliame Lewanavanua; Brendan Mannasz; Sophie Kavanagh; Mikayla Duncombe; Maddison Duncombe; Lachlan Waldron; Eloise Stewart; Joshua Ekers; Ilya Passmore; Alexander Evans; Olivia Moala; Dara Curley; Nathan Barbara; Oscar Lombardo; Tyler Marando; Asher Dixon; Delphine Halos; Andrea Wang; Rhys Chandler; Mitchell McCarthy; Claudia Barlow; Daniel Cox; Timothy Forster; Eliza Bosnic. We have some exceptional local talent, made possible because of the efforts of tireless community volunteers like Seniors President, Simon Bergfield and Juniors President, Donna Armstrong. Thank you for what you do, and congratulations to our wonderful athletes!

### **MARONITE COLLEGE OF THE HOLY FAMILY GOLDEN JUBILEE**

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)**—I was delighted to attend the momentous Mass to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Maronite College of the Holy Family on 28 April. This significant milestone, observed at Our Lady of Lebanon Co-Cathedral in Harris Park commemorates 50 years of educational excellence, spiritual growth, and community engagement. The Maronite College of the Holy Family is an educational institution that has shaped the lives of countless students, fostering academic achievement, cultural understanding, and moral values. The Golden Jubilee serves as a testament to the unwavering commitment of the college to nurturing the minds and spirits of the next generation. I extend my heartfelt congratulations on reaching this remarkable milestone. The dedication and passion of the staff, students, parents, and former staff have been instrumental in creating an environment of learning and personal growth. Your collective efforts in shaping the lives of young individuals and fostering a sense of community have left an indelible mark on our society. In conclusion, I would like to thank you for your invaluable contributions to education and community building over the past 50 years. May your legacy continue to inspire future generations.

### **PHILIPPINE INDEPENDENCE - 125 YEARS STRONG!**

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)**—I was delighted to represent Premier Chris Minns at two events recognising 125th anniversary of Philippine Independence: the Alliance of Philippine Community Organisation's Pista sa Nayon (Community Festival) on 10 June; and the Philippine Consulate General in Sydney's official commemoration on 13 June. Australia has been a steadfast friend throughout the Philippines' challenging journey. Our diplomatic ties, dating back 75 years, have forged a lasting bond rooted in respect and solidarity. The Filipino community holds a special place in Australia, with over 400,000 Australians of Filipino ancestry. Their contributions enrich our nation's cultural tapestry and strengthen our diversity. Of the 126 ethnicities represented in the Cumberland Council area, Filipinos are the ninth most numerous. On this momentous occasion, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Philippine Consul General and APCO their kind invitations. Mabuhay!

### **KWIBUKA 29**

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville)**—I was privileged to attend KWIBUKA 29, the 29th Commemoration of the Genocide against the Tutsi, at the Australian Catholic University in Strathfield on 3 June to honour the victims and stand in solidarity with the survivors. The Rwandan community in Western Sydney has grown steadily over the years, establishing vibrant cultural and social networks. Many Rwandan Australians have settled in suburbs such as Granville, Auburn, and Blacktown, among others. They actively participate in community events, cultural celebrations, and promote Rwandan heritage and traditions. The community also focuses on preserving and passing on their rich cultural heritage to future generations through language classes, dance groups, and community organizations. I joined African Australians from my electorate and from across Sydney to reflect on the tragic events of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. As we come together at events such as this, let us not only remember but also actively promote peace, reconciliation, and justice, both within Rwanda and on a global scale. I and congratulate the Great Lakes Agency for Peace and Development for their remarkable work in supporting Rwandan Australians and assisting migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers deserves our appreciation. Never again should we witness genocide.

### **NSW POLICE FORCE STATE CRIME COMMAND EXCELLENCE IN POLICING AWARD – DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE ANTHONY SACCO**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—Congratulations to Detective Senior Constable Anthony Sacco 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 Senior Constable Sacco has 21 years of service with the NSW Police Force, with 10 of those years attached to the State Crime Command. He is currently serving with the Drugs and Firearms Squad and was nominated for his investigation under SF Digil which investigated an organised crime syndicate manufacturing drugs and illegally supplying firearms. As a result, three persons were arrested for supplying firearms and prohibited drugs and a submachine gun and 14 firearms were seized. Detective Senior Constable Sacco was further nominated for his role as a site controller under SF Bogalong which investigated organised crime syndicate manufacturing large commercial quantities of prohibited drugs. This investigation resulted in the discovery of the largest ever clandestine drug laboratory in Australia. Thank you, Detective Senior Constable Sacco, 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 –  
CONSTABLE VEIKUNE TUIFUA**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—Congratulations to Constable Veikune Tuifua 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. Constable Tuifua has four years of service with the NSW Police Force, with two of those years attached to the State Crime Command. He is currently serving with the Raptor Squad and was nominated for his investigation under SF Raptor-OSG-2022 which investigated a large brawl between two Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs. As a result of the investigation, nine search warrants were executed a Firearm Prohibition Order compliance search. Additionally, 10 persons were arrested, with two further offenders presenting them to NSW Police. All offenders pleaded guilty to affray and participation in a criminal group. Constable Tuifua exceeded his regular duties during this investigation by reviewing CCTV for extensive hours, liaising with intelligence and businesses, preparing reports, organising search warrant applications and operational orders. Thank you, Constable Tuifua, 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 SENIOR CONSTABLE LUKE HARDING**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—Congratulations to Detective Senior Constable Luke Harding 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 Senior Constable Harding has 11 years of service with the NSW Police Force, with three of those years attached to the State Crime Command. He is currently serving with the Robbery and Serious Crime Squad and was nominated for his investigation under SF Armytage which was established to investigate numerous break, enter and steal offences involving significant amounts of tobacco and e-cigarette products at commercial properties. Detective Senior Constable Harding was able to identify suspects and establish links to interstate organised crime networks using a range of complex strategies. He led a multi-disciplined team that resulted with seven offenders charged and the disruption of further criminal activities perpetrated by this group. Thank you, Detective Senior Constable Harding, 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.

**THE GUNNING FISH RIVER RFS**

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)**—I rise today to recognise The Gunning – Fish River Rural Fire Brigade. St Florian's Day is named after the Patron Saint of firefighters and provides and promotes the opportunity to celebrate and recognise volunteers and staff who go above and beyond to serve their communities. It is with great salutation that The Gunning – Fish River Rural Fire Brigade has been recognised and awarded at the St Florian's Day ceremony in May. The Brigade received The Commissioner's Certificate of Commendation (Unit), which recognises service or outstanding actions in relation to fire service duties, administrative leadership, or exemplary performance of a specific project or task. It may be awarded to an individual or unit for service beyond the scope of responsibility normally expected of that person or unit in their assigned duties and is therefore worthy of acknowledgement and commendation. The Gunning – Fish River Rural Fire Brigade was recognised for their response and co-ordination of the flood emergency, threatening Gunning in October 2022 following heavy rainfall and the rising waters of Meadow Creek. The Brigade worked tirelessly organising equipment, redirecting water flow and setting up pumps.

**GOULBURN BRANCH NSW KNITTERS GUILD**

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)**—I rise today to recognise the Goulburn Branch of the NSW Knitters Guild. Worldwide Knit in Public Day is held on the second Saturday in June, which celebrates the art of knitting that inclusively can be enjoyed by all within communities right around the world. The Worldwide Knit in Public Day was founded in 2005 aiming to bring people together not only to share their love of knitting but

also a great way for people to meet each other and reap the many physical and mental wellbeing benefits that are associated with the craft. Locally, Beverly Artiss the convenor of the Goulburn Branch of the NSW Knitters Guild, organised the event at the Goulburn Soldiers Club, which was opened to Guild members and anyone in the community who had an interest or wanted to learn to knit. The event presents the opportunity for those who may have become disconnected from their community to reengage, learn and meet new or reacquaint with old friends or acquaintances. I take this opportunity to thank Beverly and other members of the Goulburn Branch of the NSW Knitters Guild hosting and celebrating the day.

#### **BARBARA NELL**

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)**—I rise today to recognise Barbara Nell. Barbara is a Goulburn based artist and teacher who has taught art, at primary, high school and TAFE and adult art classes in the Goulburn Canberra region. Barbara has described herself as a figurative artist, meaning her art is derived from real objects and/or the human figure. Barbara's classes and workshops, inclusive of those who maybe recovering from mental health issues and/or those who have a disability, believing art has the tremendous potential for people to unleash their creativity. Barbara founded CREATIVE SPACE in Goulburn which offers art classes, courses, and a range of media workshops. In early June Barbara, held "The Winter Exhibition" at the studio to raise money for cancer research. The exhibition displayed student artworks and featured an exclusive linocut print called "Tea is Served: Where Are You", with half of the proceeds donated to the Cancer Council. A workshop held on the following day, saw half of the fee again donated to the Cancer Council. I take this opportunity to commend Barbara's passion for art, her inherent characteristics to share her knowledge to inspire and encourage others to embrace their creativity and fundraising activity.

#### **IT'S OUR TURN! - TIMBA & RELATIONSHIPS AUSTRALIA**

**Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)**—I am pleased to recognise and acknowledge the significant community impact that This Is My Brave Australia and Relationships Australia will have with their production and sponsoring of IT'S OUR TURN. IT'S OUR TURN is a showcase where individuals will share the challenges they have faced with disability in their lives. Wagga Wagga locals Heather Hallam and Valkire Silverwolf have overcome disability in their lives and want to be recognised as the individuals that they are rather than the disabilities that they have. Heather said to local media outlet Region Riverina. "Far too often we end up in situations where our identity is just our disability". In 2021, some 5.9 per cent of the population in Wagga Wagga City Council reported needing help in their day-to-day lives due to disability. This is a significant section of the population who are increasingly vocalising their needs, wants and desires. It is time that we end the stigmas associated with disability. IT'S OUR TURN will take place on the 8th of July from 3.00 p.m. at the Wagga Wagga Charles Sturt University Playhouse Theatre and I look forward to being there.

#### **LIFEBLOOD CENTRE WAGGA WAGGA**

**Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)**—National blood donor week has just passed but that doesn't mean that the need for blood donors has! The charity and care that the regions have to their community is shown through our local Australian Red Cross Lifeblood Centre Wagga Blood Bank. 2450 people in this electorate are active blood donors which makes this centre the highest performing in New South Wales on a per capita basis. These donors would have saved more than 26,000 lives in the past 12 months. On Friday the 16th of June I was greatly pleased to meet former NSW Police Officer Arthur Croft who had just made his 460th plasma donation at Wagga Wagga. Arthur said to local media outlet the Daily Advertiser "My donation of plasma every fortnight gets broken up into about 1600 injections and a mother will need two injections, so it saves about 800 babies a fortnight". Plasma donations are 75 per cent of the centre's work and are critical to helping people recover from cancer and other illnesses. And these donations can be made every two weeks. I thank all those who make blood donations for our community.

#### **MRS TAI SIU - 100TH BIRTHDAY**

**Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)**—I rise to warmly congratulate my local constituent Mrs Tai Siu of Breakfast Point, who turned 100 on 7 June. I sincerely wish Tai all the very best on this very special occasion. I hope that she had a wonderful time celebrating this magnificent milestone with her loved ones, family and friends. On behalf of my community, I extend my very best wishes to Tai and wish her every happiness. Wishing Mrs Tai Siu a very Happy Birthday.

#### **VALE ANTHONY (TONY) MUSTACA OAM**

**Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)**—I rise today to recognise the late passing of Mr Anthony (Tony) Mustaca OAM. Born in Calabria, Italy, Tony migrated to Sydney in 1956. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather, brother, and friend. Tony was dedicated to his community, as a long-serving Councillor and Deputy Mayor of Willoughby City Council, and a highly respected leader. Tony received a Medal of the Order of Australia



in 2013 for his extensive achievements. He also received an Italian Knighthood in 2017, proof of his dedication to the people he served and his contribution to the Italian community. Tony will be remembered through his loving wife, children, grandchildren, siblings, and friends, and will be sorely missed. I wish to pass on my deepest condolences for their loss. May Tony Rest in Peace. Vale Anthony (Tony) Mustaca OAM.

#### **RHONDA SAMPSON**

**Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)**—I rise to recognise Kamilaroi artist Rhonda Sampson for her artwork titled 'Connected Journeys'. Commissioned by Transurban to create the murals for the WestConnex Motorway Control Centre at St. Peters, 'Connected Journeys' is a visual representation of our journeys on the WestConnex, keeping connected to country, ocean and each other. The artwork is installed on two walls within the Control Room, and since being installed has sparked a lot of conversation and encouraged visitors to learn about Indigenous Australians and their history, as well as the clans that make up the Eora Nation. Rhonda is very passionate about sharing her art and her vision is to empower others to embrace their creative talents and share that gift with the world. To dream beyond your ability and create your vision, to inspire future generations. I wish to congratulate Rhonda on her amazing artwork and on her inspirational journey.

#### **BLACKHEATH HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY**

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains)**—It was a pleasure to recently join the Blackheath Horticultural Society in belatedly celebrating its 2020 centenary. Blackheath's is the oldest continuing garden society in NSW, having held regular monthly meetings since its inception in 1920. The society has fostered and bolstered numerous community initiatives in the charming village of Blackheath. Their rich history is marked by an array of contributions, enhancing the local spirit. Showcasing the vibrant beauty of the area, they've hosted over 100 floral and craft exhibitions, spanning the invigorating seasons of summer and spring. The society has planted over 100 rhododendrons and azaleas in the Blackheath Soldiers Memorial Park. They have extended financial aid to many regional charities, and planted numerous daffodils, trees and rhododendrons throughout the area. I'd like to acknowledge former president Laraine Graham, current president, Heather Pye and their fabulous team! The presentation of a bench to celebrate the founding of the Society, with the agreement of the Collier family, has been placed in the arcade for locals and tourists to take the opportunity to 'sit a while, rest a while'. On behalf of our community, I extend my gratitude to the Blackheath Horticultural Society, and congratulate them.

#### **OZCHILD CENTRAL COAST**

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal)**—I want to recognise the great organisation that is OzChild Central Coast. I recently had the pleasure of meeting with Jared Gillard, the Director of Services for OzChild New South Wales who told me about the vital services OzChild provides to my community. OzChild Central Coast provides a Functional Family Therapy program to two hundred and forty-two families on the Central Coast, which addresses adolescent violence in the family home. The program addresses problematic behaviours within the family and aims to break the cycle for young people and their families. Families have said that positive changes in communication and relationships between parents and children are achieved, with a reduction in conflict and improved mental health for parents and adolescents. This program is absolutely vital for our region, being one of only two in the entire country. Mister Speaker, programs like these are what matters to our community, and that is why I am proud that we have such an organisation operating on the Central Coast.

#### **FAR NORTH COAST LEGACY**

**Ms TAMARA SMITH (Ballina)**—Today I recognise the extraordinary contribution made to the community in Ballina by the Far North Coast Legacy Club. I acknowledge the President Narelle Scott, Secretary Grahame Gooding, and Treasurer Hazel Bridgett as well as Louise McKenzie who has organised the Far North Coast Legacy Centenary Dinner. Legacy grew out of the negative and far-reaching impacts of World War and have volunteers within the organisation who have cared for tens of thousands of widows and their children over more than 100 years. The volunteers in the Far North Coast Legacy Club work tirelessly to assist the families of our veterans, in countless ways, and with sensitivity and care. I would like to congratulate the members of the Far North Coast Legacy club on their longstanding contribution to the community and extend my heartfelt gratitude for their efforts.

#### **JASPER ROAD PUBLIC SCHOOL P & C**

**Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)**—I am delighted to be able to inform the house that on 21 June 2023 a new covered outdoor basketball and netball facility was opened at the Jasper Road Public School. The school is a popular school located at Baulkham Hills. The new covered outdoor netball/basketball facility was funded from funds provided by the former Government pursuant to the Community Building Partnership program. The P&C received \$63,477.00 pursuant to the successful Community Building Partnership program. The new netball/basketball court, which is a completely covered facility, was opened today with the cutting of the ribbon.

Present today for the opening of the fabulous facility was Tilly McDonell from Giants Netball. Once the netball court was opened today, we watched the first netball match played on the new court. The match was a 'students versus teachers' match. The students were amazing in their commitment however in the end the teachers took out the match 6 goals to 2 goals. A highlight during the match for the students was when Tilly McDonell took to the court. Notwithstanding the injection of Tilly McDonell the teachers succeeded. I congratulate the Jasper Road P&C for the contribution.

#### **HELEN BANU-LAWRENCE OAM**

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)**—I would like to sincerely congratulate Helen Banu-Lawrence OAM, a Gladesville local, on being awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia, for service to youth and community health, in this year's King's Birthday's Birthday Honours. Helen has been a volunteer with St John Ambulance since 1974 and has served in the positions of State Superintendent and General Manager for Community and Services. Helen has also serviced as the CEO for StreetWork Australia and Chairwoman of Headspace Chatswood. These examples only scratch at the surface of the contribution that Helen has made to the Community and this recognition is long overdue. Congratulations Helen.

#### **DR MICHAEL MCGRATH AM**

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)**—I would like to congratulate Dr Michael McGrath AM, a Hunters Hill local, on becoming a Member of the Order of Australia, for significant service to medicine. Dr McGrath is an internationally recognised vascular specialist who has served in a variety of senior leadership positions at St Vincent's Hospital and is a former Senior Lecturer in Vascular Medicine at UNSW. Dr McGrath's contribution to medicine cannot be overstated and has worked tirelessly for his patients and his students, his recognition is long overdue. Congratulations Dr McGrath.

#### **LINDSAY MAR**

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)**—I would like to congratulate Lindsay Mar on becoming the City of Ryde's Volunteer of the Year. Lindsay's is a dedicated member of our community and works tirelessly as a volunteer. He is a longstanding Presenter for the 2RRR Community Radio Station, a member of the neighbourhood watch and an organiser of the Granny Smith Festival. This recognition of Lindsay's tireless community advocacy is long overdue, and I once again congratulate him on his achievement.

#### **DUBBO EISTEDDFOD**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)**—I would like to Congratulate the Dubbo Eisteddfod Committee, the resolute volunteers and all the competitors who have contributed to making the Dubbo Eisteddfod such a resounding success. The event serves as a remarkable platform for showcasing talent in various disciplines such as Dance, Instrumental, Vocal and Choral, Speech, and Drama. It provides a supportive environment for competitors and partnering with constructive adjudicators, an invaluable opportunity for individuals to gain training, experience, and enjoyment while being surrounded by positive encouragement. Eisteddfods extend far beyond the realm of competition and trophies. They have the incredible ability to bring people of all ages together, from the youngest dancers gracing the stage to the proudest grandparents beaming in the audience. I am thrilled to learn that this year's Dubbo Eisteddfod has been met with overwhelming success, with a number of days and sections completely sold out and waiting lists in place for eager audience members hoping to witness the exceptional performances of the talented individuals from the region and beyond. Once again, Congratulations to all involved on a job well done, we are so fortunate to have space where artistry can flourish, and talent can be displayed.

#### **DUBBO RAMS GIRLS U16'S**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)**—Congratulations to the Dubbo Rams Girls U16's basketball team on their incredible achievement at the John Martin Country Tournament! It's truly a remarkable feat to emerge as champions and be crowned the queens of bush basketball. Winning the tournament and becoming the top team in Country NSW is a historic accomplishment for the team, as they are the first female team from Dubbo to claim the country championships. This victory is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the players and coaching staff. I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Coach Tye Forrester and Assistant Coach Adam Winterton for their guidance and leadership. Their efforts in shaping the team's skills and strategy have undoubtedly contributed to this momentous victory. A special recognition goes out to the talented players: Tully Pickering, Shaylee Holmes, Millie Sutcliffe, Tayla Mongan, Clancy Toshack, Kiara McKeown, Alaqua Thompson, Cyarah Hargraves, and Jazzy Gordon. Your exceptional skills, teamwork, and determination have brought you success on the court. You have made yourselves and the entire Dubbo community incredibly proud.

### LORRAINE 275 BLOOD DONATIONS

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)**—I would like to congratulate local Dubbo woman Lorraine on an impressive milestone of 275 blood donations. Perfectly coinciding with National Blood Donor Week, a week designed to thank the nation's blood and plasma donors for over 1.6 million lifesaving donations each year. Lorraine started donating irregularly back in 1966, but it wasn't until far later that she really began to appreciate the incredible role that the blood bank can play in a person's life. Her late husband who was sadly diagnosed with leukemia received numerous transfusions in the last years of his life. Lorraine was so grateful for the donations other people had made, she knew she wanted to give back, and now donates each fortnight. With 1 in 3 of us needing blood or blood products in our lifetime, it highlights the importance of blood donations by incredible people like Lorraine. Lorraine, your selfless act of donating blood has undoubtedly made a significant impact on the health and well-being of others, and I want to thank you for your generosity and kindness.

### KIMBERLY GRABHAM

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)**—Today I recognise Kimberly Grabham, a woman who has a genuine care and interest for her community and is an ardent mental health advocate. Coming from a background of domestic violence and overcoming mental health struggles for nearly two decades herself has not been easy, but it has given her an innate understanding of others. Kimberly is not afraid to reach out to people and encouraging them to know they are valued and cared for. Kimberly has held jobs in many and varied sectors. Passionate about writing, although with no qualifications, and with this in mind she became a cadet journalist with the Riverine Grazier in Hay, in the Western Riverina, just over twelve months ago. Her team at the newspaper is very supportive, and her editor speaks very highly of her, not just her journalistic work, but her support for the community, and the respect they have for her. Courageously, Kimberly has committed to jumping out of a plane in July 2023, as part of a fundraising initiative, supporting the National Bullying Prevention Week appeal.

### LURLEEN MITCHELL

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)**—Today I would like to acknowledge Mrs Lurleen Mitchell of Hay, pony club stalwart and sports achiever. Lurleen is a founding member of the strong Hay Pony Club and gave forty-one years of service, including club instructor for thirteen. She was the secretary of Zone 21 of the Pony Club Association for twenty-six years. A lifetime of riding and service to the Hay Pony Club, Hay Show Society and a variety of equestrian events stood the amazing Lurleen Mitchell out from the rest, being awarded the Australian Sports medal in 2000. She was the first female athlete to be inducted into the Hay Sporting Hall of Fame when she received that honour in 2006 in recognition of her great contribution to sport. She has been awarded life memberships of Zone 21, Hay Pony club and the Hay Show Society. A member of the Historical Society, she was on the committee that raised funds to erect the bronze memorial to the Australian Lighthouse in Hay. Despite being in her 80s Lurleen is still active with her horses.

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