



**New South Wales**

# **Legislative Assembly**

## **PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES (HANSARD)**

**Fifty-Eighth Parliament  
First Session**

**Thursday 29 June 2023**

Authorised by the Parliament of New South Wales



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# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**Thursday 29 June 2023**

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

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

## *Announcements*

### LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY PHOTOGRAPHS

**The SPEAKER:** I advise members that a photographer has been approved to take photos during general business this morning. I also advise members that media photographers are approved to cover question time today.

*[Notices of motions given.]*

## *Bills*

### RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES AMENDMENT (RENT FREEZE) BILL 2023

#### First Reading

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

#### Second Reading Speech

**Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (10:18):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

On behalf of The Greens, I introduce the Residential Tenancies Amendment (Rent Freeze) Bill 2023 to freeze rents for two years and to put a stop to out-of-control rent increases. New South Wales is in a rental crisis the likes of which we have not seen in generations. Rents are increasing four times faster than wages, evictions are on the rise, and too many renters are just one rent hike away from homelessness. The NSW Council of Social Service this week estimated, based on census data analysis, that one in five renters in New South Wales are living in poverty. The Greens are introducing this bill because renters are in crisis right now. There is a need for immediate action to address skyrocketing rents.

Before the Government claims that it is making renting fairer by appointing a Rental Commissioner and planning a broader suite of reforms, I make it very clear that none of those actions will provide any relief for the crisis that renters face right now. This crisis requires an urgent response. I urge all members to think about the stories they have heard from people in their communities who have been subjected to massive rent hikes. People are in housing stress, living below the poverty line and paying well over 30 per cent of their incomes on rent. Members should consider whether they could face those people and look them in the eye if they do not support this rent freeze bill, which will give renters desperately needed relief from the ongoing stress of worrying about rent hikes or evictions. The Parliament has the power to act right now to make this change. We can give urgent relief to the renters in our community who are experiencing enormous financial stress; all we have to do is vote for it.

The Residential Tenancies Amendment (Rent Freeze) Bill 2023 will prohibit rent increases on all residential tenancy agreements in New South Wales for two years. Under new section 40A (3), all New South Wales residential tenancy rents will be frozen at their rate as of 30 June 2023. If a new tenant starts a lease at a property after that date, the property can only be rented at or below the June 2023 rate. If a property was not rented out as of 30 June 2023, then during the rent freeze period of two years it can only be rented out under a new tenancy agreement at or below the median rent for that postcode. These provisions—freezing rents as of tomorrow, 30 June 2023, and linking rental rates to the property rather than to the tenant—ensure that we will not see a massive rent hike before the bill is enacted, nor an increase in unfair, no-grounds evictions as a way for dodgy landlords to avoid the freeze. The rent freeze is linked to the property, and not to an individual tenant or lease agreement.

New section 40A (4) (a) also provides a maximum penalty for breaching the rent freeze at 50 penalty units for an individual or 100 penalty units for others. These penalties are in line with the Government's recently passed Residential Tenancies Amendment (Rental Fairness) Bill 2023 and are appropriately balanced against the significant profits that are to be made in the private rental market. New section 229 sets out the requirement for

the Minister to ensure that a review of new section 40A is conducted within one year of the legislation commencing. A report on the outcome of the review must be tabled in each House of Parliament no later than six months after the review is carried out. It is envisaged that the soon-to-be-appointed Rental Commissioner will be best placed to conduct this review.

The legislation sets out that the review must consider three elements: first, whether the policy objectives of the new section remain valid—that is, the two-year rent freeze—secondly, whether the terms remain appropriate for securing the objectives of the bill; and, thirdly, and most significantly, whether ongoing limits on rent increases are required to ensure that rents are and remain affordable. This will give Parliament the time to consider the impact of this temporary two-year rent freeze as well as any longer-term or ongoing actions required to ensure that rents are affordable. These actions might include the introduction of limits on rent increases and making it illegal for unlimited rent increases to be imposed on renters in New South Wales. To be clear, the bill does not do this. At this point, the intention of the bill is to introduce an interim two-year rent freeze to offer time to reform rental laws in the State and to deal with the immediate rental crisis.

I take time to respond directly to comments by the Premier and others expressing their concerns and opposition to a rent freeze. I believe in drafting this legislation The Greens have responded to those concerns and that they are all now addressed. We have heard concerns that freezing rent increases will somehow actually increase rent prices, suggesting that landlords and real estate agents will jack up rents in anticipation of or at the end of the rent freeze period. While this is a clear admission of what The Greens know to be true—that dodgy landlords and real estate agents are price gouging and profiting off the housing crisis—we share the concern that those who wish to profit off the housing crisis will stop at nothing to boost their bottom line. That is why the bill includes a number of safeguards to ensure that this does not happen.

New section 40A (3) (b) ensures that the rent freeze is not just linked to the individual tenant or tenancy agreement, and is set in place regardless of whether a tenancy ends at that property, to act as a safeguard against eviction for the purpose of a landlord wishing to avoid the freeze. The 30 June 2023 commencement date also ensures that landlords cannot pre-emptively increase rents ahead of the freeze period. New section 40A (2) clearly stipulates that rent increases after this date will have no effect. The review required by the bill also ensures that consideration will be given as to whether the ongoing limits on rent increases are required to ensure that rents are affordable. On behalf of The Greens, I will be clear: This bill is intended as an interim, emergency measure to get rents under control. Much bigger and longer-term reforms are still needed. But we also know that renters are struggling now, and a two-year rent freeze gives the new Government the time and space to implement the reforms that it believes will actually address the crisis.

During the 24-month rent freeze period, The Greens members expect to be working hard in Parliament and campaigning hard on the streets to ensure that the Government is taking the necessary action to put an end to no-grounds evictions and to implement long-term solutions that will get the cost of rents under control. That is the job of the Government. The Greens are committed to working with the Government on solutions to address the housing affordability crisis and to make renting affordable, secure and fair. We recognise that fairness is not enough. We need to ensure that renting is also secure and genuinely affordable. Sadly, we have repeatedly heard outdated and irrelevant studies rolled out to justify inaction and oppose a rent freeze—studies that do not take into account the scale of the crisis we face or reflect the temporary nature of The Greens' proposed rent freeze. They also misrepresent arguments about supply in a way that shamefully, but unsurprisingly, works to benefit big investors and those profiting from the current crisis.

One of the clearest examples I can point to is that of Berlin, where in 2019 residential rents were frozen on apartments built before 2014. The sky did not fall in, and neither did supply. Instead, as economist Dr Cameron Murray wrote in *The Guardian* last week, Berlin saw considerably faster new housing development than the 13 next-largest German cities in the two years following the introduction of the policy. We have also heard claims that in a rent-controlled market, investors will simply pull their investment properties off the market. Not only is there no evidence to back this claim, but also the reality of the housing crisis means that many renters would love to buy their first home but have instead been locked out by ever-increasing house prices, in no small part because big investors with access to more borrowing power are hoarding properties. If landlords have no interest in participating in a rental market that does not fleece renters, they can sell their investment properties and create an opportunity for first home buyers, while also reducing the demand in the private rental market.

Before we hear cries about the loss of rental supply, The Greens offer a simple solution. We can tackle the problem by building more public housing—and not demolishing existing stock—and by putting in place an immediate requirement for at least 30 per cent genuinely affordable housing in all new private developments. Too often we hear blame and excuses for why intervention is not possible. Whether it is the nimbys, migrants, wealthy overseas investors, international students or local councils, every week the Government seems to find someone else to blame for the housing crisis. Instead of playing the blame game when it comes to the rental crisis, the

New South Wales Government could act right now. When we come back from the winter break, we could pass legislation in this Chamber to freeze rents for the people of this State. Everything is possible until it is not; all we need is the political will in this Chamber to provide financial relief for the more than two million renters in New South Wales.

We are facing an unprecedented crisis right now. Governments need to take the necessary actions and intervene to address this and make a material difference in people's lives. During the pandemic the Federal Government doubled the rate of JobSeeker and lifted more than one million people out of poverty. I do not think any of us would have predicted that would happen under a Liberal-Nationals Government. In this very Parliament, at the peak of the COVID pandemic, we froze rents on commercial tenancies for six months and introduced a moratorium on evictions for residential tenants under the Retail and Other Commercial Leases (COVID-19) Regulation 2022. It was an emergency, and the Parliament acted accordingly. In Victoria, all residential and commercial rents were frozen for six months during that pandemic period, alongside a ban on evictions under the COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020. Just last December, after adjourning for the year, the New South Wales Parliament was urgently recalled in this Chamber—in fact, bizarrely, in a side room—to pass laws to cap coal and gas prices and reduce electricity bills in the face of escalating cost-of-living pressures.

That showed the Government has a responsibility to urgently intervene in unprecedented crises, and the rental crisis and financial stress that people are facing in this State are unprecedented. With no limit on rental increases, rents over the past 12 months have surged by 20 per cent in Sydney and by 6.7 per cent in regional areas of New South Wales, according to the Tenants' Union of NSW's rent tracker data. Rentals in New South Wales are at unprecedented levels of unaffordability. More and more people are experiencing severe rental stress, and there is a dire shortage of affordable rentals for people on lower incomes. Just this week the Tenants' Union of NSW, Shelter NSW, the NSW Council of Social Service and the Housing for the Aged Action Group jointly demanded government action on out-of-control rents. They said:

Too many are spending too much of their income on rent, leaving too little for other necessary expenses. The escalating cost of housing has placed a tremendous burden on individuals and families. Together, we draw attention to the urgency of addressing the problem of increasing rents. The NSW Government needs to provide clear plans to address the pricing of this essential service to bring it in line with community needs and expectations.

I have good news today, because this bill would do just that. It is not the only solution, but it is the start of a solution. The bill would give renters immediate relief and would cost nothing for the Government's budget bottom line. As a cost-of-living measure, it would have a much more significant impact on the weekly budget than the Active Kids vouchers, toll rebates or energy caps. It would not cost the Treasury a single cent. Every day that the Government refuses to act is another day that a renter will face eviction because of an unfair rent hike they cannot afford.

The Greens know that a rent freeze alone is not going to solve the housing crisis. It is the start, not the end, of ongoing, desperately needed reform to put a stop to the massive profits that big investors and developers are reaping from the housing crisis and to make renting more affordable and secure. The Greens look forward to the commitments that the Government has made to end unfair no-grounds evictions, appoint a Rental Commissioner and provide much greater transparency and oversight of the rental market. We believe that unlimited rent increases can and should be illegal. Whether it is through rent caps similar to those in the Australian Capital Territory—the only State or Territory in the country that has seen the cost of rent go down—through capping rent increases to 2 per cent per year, or through establishing an independent body to regulate and set rents, The Greens want long-term measures to get the cost of rent under control.

We also need to address the short-term and holiday renting issues in our communities. In regional holiday hotspot areas, families and local workers are finding it nearly impossible to find affordable rentals where they live. That is why The Greens are committed to cracking down on the profit motive underpinning the housing crisis, making those profiting from short-term rentals pay tax just like any other business, empowering local councils to set short-term rental caps as they see fit and imposing a 5 per cent tax—at least—on empty homes. But there also need to be viable alternatives to the broken private housing system. We need a massive investment in public housing. Australia has one of the most privatised housing markets anywhere in the world. By stepping up and making this a government responsibility, we can improve conditions, incentivise lower rents and ensure better living standards for private renters. If public housing is good, cheap and plentiful, private landlords have to offer something better to remain competitive. The State has a role to play.

Today The Greens are clear: We are here to work with the Government to make renting more secure and more affordable. There are many mechanisms, levers, policy reforms and new initiatives that can solve this crisis. We know the solutions are all there; this is just one small part. But we also know that renters cannot handle the financial stress any longer and that they need urgent relief while the rest is being worked out. The New South Wales Government and, indeed, every member of this Parliament, with this minority government, has a choice:

They can stand on the side of big investors and developers or they can relieve renters from soaring rents by supporting The Greens' rent freeze bill and working with us to implement longer-term solutions to the rental and housing crisis. It is time to listen to the 60 per cent of people who, as a recent Guardian Essential poll found, support a freeze on rental increases and to back this bill. A freeze on rents is not only possible but urgently necessary, and this Parliament has the power to do it. The time for blame is over; the time for action is here. I commend the bill to the House.

**Debate adjourned.**

*Business of the House*

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

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (10:35):** I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to provide for the following routine of business for the remainder of this sitting day:

- (1) The moving of a motion for which notice has not been given to refer the Minerals Legislation Amendment (Offshore Drilling and Associated Infrastructure Prohibition) Bill 2023 to the Legislative Assembly Committee on Environment and Planning for inquiry and report.
- (2) Debate to proceed on the referral motion, and at 3.00 p.m., if not completed prior, the question on the referral motion will be put.
- (3) The introduction and second reading speech of the member for Murray for the Water Management Amendment (Transfer of Water) Bill 2023.
- (4) Consideration of general business orders of the day or notices of motion (not being bills) for up to 70 minutes.
- (5) Any business before the House to be interrupted as required at:
  - (a) 11.00 a.m. for question time and the routine of business;
  - (b) At 1:30 p.m. for the Speaker to leave the Chair, with the Speaker to resume the Chair at 2.30 p.m.; and
  - (c) At 4.00 p.m., for the petition debate.
- (6) Community recognition statements for up to 30 minutes.
- (7) Private members' statements.
- (8) Adjournment without motion moved.

This motion ensures that all members who had private members' business today will be able to have that dealt with and that there will be debate on the Minerals Legislation Amendment (Offshore Drilling and Associated Infrastructure Prohibition) Bill 2023 now and when the legislation returns from the committee process. I make it clear that I support the legislation, which aims to stop oil and gas mining and exploration access across our beautiful and fragile coastline, but I want to make sure that it does not get overridden by the Federal Government or rendered invalid by a constitutional challenge.

When I proposed similar legislation at the beginning of the year, I was aware of potential constitutional conflicts that needed to be dealt with before the bill could proceed. My bill would have only dealt with onshore activities; the proposed bill also deals with offshore activities. I have negotiated with Government and crossbench members to establish a committee to look at the bill and at the best way to kill Petroleum Exploration Permit 11 [PEP 11], whether it is through this bill, an amended version or other mechanisms. The committee will have access to the best legal advice to ensure that this can be done in an incontestable way. Supporters of the reform proposed by the member for Pittwater should not be disappointed; they should be encouraged that this Parliament is working together to stop PEP 11.

**Mr RON HOENIG (Heffron—Minister for Local Government) (10:38):** The Government supports the suspension of standing orders as proposed by the member for Sydney. The Minerals Legislation Amendment (Offshore Drilling and Associated Infrastructure Prohibition) Bill 2023 poses serious constitutional issues that need to be resolved. The House appointed a committee last week to deal with this particular task and report back.

As member for Sydney said, this is a complex issue. Even though the member for Sydney's bill was able to deal with onshore issues, which may well be the prerogative of this sovereign New South Wales Parliament, it does not stop the Commonwealth creating an inconsistency with State legislation to obtain its objective. The Commonwealth has created inconsistencies in the past by regulation, not legislation, which was seen in cases such as *Botany Municipal Council v Federal Airports Corporation* [1992] HCA 52. If the House is interested in how that occurred, it was because the third runway at Sydney Airport was to be constructed on State land—that is, it would extend into Botany Bay—which required approval under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. The council commenced proceedings in the Land and Environment Court, seeking to prevent the Commonwealth from proceeding with the third runway without an environmental impact statement and examining the impacts on

the bay. The Commonwealth created regulations under its airports Act. Bizarrely, the regulation's first objective was to create an inconsistency with the New South Wales Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and then it went on to create a licensing regime.

The matter was referred to the High Court for determination. Surprisingly, the High Court held that by creating—virtually—a fictitious regulation, which was for the sole purpose of creating an inconsistency, it was sufficient to enable the inconsistency and, therefore, the regulation overrode the State's Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. I raise this because it is an extremely difficult, complex, constitutional issue to give effect to either the longstanding policies espoused by the New South Wales Government—and when I say that I am using the corporate expression to also refer to the policies of the previous New South Wales Government—or to the policies that have been expressed by the member for Sydney, the member for Wakehurst, the member for Newcastle and the other many members who have expressed a policy position to that. The bill should not proceed while many constitutional challenges seem to exist to achieve what appear to be different objectives but get the same result.

**Mr Adam Crouch:** I seek leave to make a contribution to the debate.

**Leave not granted.**

**Mr Adam Crouch:** Are you kidding? You're not going to allow the Opposition to speak? You're not allowing us to speak? You are gagging—

**The SPEAKER:** Leave has been denied.

**Mr Adam Crouch:** This is an absolute disgrace, Ron. You were too cowardly to move this yourself.

**The SPEAKER:** I direct the member for Terrigal to remove himself from the Chamber under Standing Order 249A for five minutes.

*[Pursuant to sessional order the member for Terrigal left the Chamber at 10:43.]*

**Mr Gurmesh Singh:** I seek leave to make a contribution.

**The SPEAKER:** Leave for further contributions has been denied. I call the member for Sydney in reply.

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (10:43):** In reply: I have nothing further to add, but I thank the Government for working with me to establish a process to get an outcome here. That outcome is to ensure that Petroleum Exploration Permit 11 does not proceed.

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

**The House divided.**

*[In division]*

**The SPEAKER:** With the agreement of the House, I intend to allow the member for Terrigal to return to the Chamber.

Ayes .....49  
Noes .....33  
Majority.....16

#### AYES

Atalla, E  
Bali, S  
Barr, C  
Butler, L  
Butler, R  
Car, P  
Catley, Y  
Chanthivong, A  
Cotsis, S  
Crakanthorp, T  
Daley, M  
Dalton, H  
Davis, D  
Dib, J  
Donato, P

Greenwich, A  
Hagarty, N  
Hannan, J  
Harris, D  
Harrison, J  
Haylen, J  
Hoenig, R  
Holland, M  
Kirby, W  
Leong, J  
Li, J  
McDermott, H  
McGirr, J  
McKeown, K  
Mehan, D

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

## AYES

Doyle, T  
Finn, J

Minns, C

Wilkinson, K

## NOES

Amon, R  
Clancy, J  
Cooke, S  
Cross, M  
Crouch, A (teller)  
Davies, T  
Di Pasqua, S  
Griffin, J  
Henskens, A  
James, T  
Kemp, M

Lane, J  
Layzell, D  
Marshall, A  
Perrottet, D  
Petinos, E  
Preston, R  
Provest, G  
Regan, M  
Roberts, A  
Saunders, D  
Singh, G (teller)

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

## PAIRS

O'Neill, M

Anderson, K

**Motion agreed to.**

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

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (10:57):** I move:

That standing and sessional orders be suspended to return to the order of business set out in the standing and sessional orders for a Thursday sitting day.

I believe I have five minutes to speak on this. I do not need to seek leave. I believe I can move a motion to suspend the standing and sessional orders.

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** Point of order—

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

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** The motion is directly contrary to a decision that has just been taken by the House.

**Mr ADAM CROUCH:** I am seeking to move a motion for the suspension of standing and sessional orders. Under the standing orders, I am able to do that and have a debate about returning to the order of business.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Terrigal may move a motion to suspend standing and sessional orders, but I can rule it out of order. The suspension he seeks is directly contrary to the decision taken by the House five minutes ago. I uphold the point of order taken by the Leader of the House and rule the motion out of order.

*Bills*

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

**Referral**

**Mr ALEX GREENWICH (Sydney) (10:59):** I move:

- (1) That the Minerals Legislation Amendment (Offshore Drilling and Associated Infrastructure Prohibition) Bill 2023 be referred to the Legislative Assembly Standing Committee on Environment and Planning for consideration and report, for the purpose of inquiring into:
  - (a) any constitutional issues or unintended consequences raised by the bill, and whether any amendments may address those;
  - (b) whether there are other ways to achieve the intended outcomes of the proposed bill including through the New South Wales Government offshore exploration and mining policy;
  - (c) enforcement and compliance issues raised by the bill;
  - (d) environmental impacts of offshore drilling; and
  - (e) any other related matter.

- (2) The committee may seek independent legal advice.
- (3) The committee report by 21 November 2023.
- (4) The resumption of the debate on the second reading of the bill be restored to the *Business Paper* on the tabling of the committee's report.

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

*Members*

**MEMBER FOR MANLY**

**MEMBER FOR RYDE**

**The SPEAKER:** I wish the member for Manly and the member for Ryde all the best for their upcoming birthdays. I hope that they have wonderful celebrations over the break.

*Visitors*

**VISITORS**

**The SPEAKER:** I welcome many visitors to the gallery today. I am not sure how they perceived it, but I can certainly assure them that from my seat it has been quite an interesting morning. I extend a warm welcome to the guest of the member for Newtown, Jan Leong. The member's mother is watching question time from the Speaker's gallery. Ms Leong was in the Parliament earlier today as well. I also welcome to the Chamber a guest of the member for Upper Hunter, Kristian Brockmann. I welcome a guest of the member for Wagga Wagga, Atticus Blenkins. I acknowledge guests of the member for Tweed, Phil and Judy Alexander.

As the member for Lake Macquarie I acknowledge and welcome my guests: Julie Redman, Mario and Bianca Seminara, and Robyn and Colin Bond. I also acknowledge guests of the member for Davidson, Tony and Jan Ward. I welcome to the Chamber guests of the member for Coffs Harbour and the member for Oxley, Mr Noel Atkins and Mr Trent Whitby. Finally, I welcome student leaders from high schools in New South Wales who are attending the Secondary Schools Student Leadership Program conducted by the parliamentary education unit. I believe they are largely in the upper gallery. I welcome them to the Chamber.

*Announcements*

**CLERK-ASSISTANT HOUSE AND PROCEDURE BEN FOXE**

**The SPEAKER:** It is with a mixture of pride and regret that I inform the House that our current Clerk-Assistant, House and Procedure, Mr Ben Foxe, will soon be taking up a well-deserved promotional opportunity with the Parliament of Tasmania. In only a few weeks Ben will be the new Clerk-Assistant and Sergeant-at-Arms in the Tasmanian House of Assembly. Tasmania's gain is certainly our loss. Today will be Ben's last day in the Chamber. I take the opportunity to acknowledge the thoroughly professional and exceptional level of service Ben has given the Legislative Assembly and, indeed, the Parliament of New South Wales over 11 years.

While predominantly working in the Table Office, Ben also worked on committees and had a short secondment in the other place, which we do not mention! As Clerk-Assistant, House and Procedure, with the Legislative Assembly, Ben has capably, calmly and expertly helped us navigate through the procedural challenges of COVID and the transition from the Fifty-Seventh Parliament to the Fifty-Eighth Parliament. His contribution to the development and refinement of the standing orders by the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee is particularly welcome.

I know that the effect of Ben's absence is already being keenly felt by the Clerk and the other staff of the Legislative Assembly. His colleagues hold him in the very highest regard, and they have asked me to overexercise my authority as Speaker to prevent him from leaving the State. As I am fair, as the member for Terrigal would agree, I cannot do that at this stage. I am sure that the rest of the House will join me in wishing Ben and his young family all the very best in their exciting move.

*[Members and officers of the House applauded.]*

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PARLIAMENTARISM**

**The SPEAKER:** I advise the House that tomorrow is the International Day of Parliamentarism, which is celebrated every year on 30 June. The United Nations notes that:

Instituting an international day for parliaments is particularly important ... for parliamentary democracy ...



The International Day of Parliamentarism is a time to review the progress that parliaments have made in achieving some key goals to be more representative and move with the times, including carrying out self-assessments, working to include more women and young MPs, and adapting to new technologies.

That could not be demonstrated more clearly than within the Fifty-Eighth Parliament of New South Wales.

### *Question Time*

#### **BAYSIDE COUNCIL**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla) (11:07):** My question is directed to the Minister for Lands and Property. This week the Minister for Housing criticised Bayside Council for deciding to defer a Land and Housing Corporation planning proposal to redevelop public housing units in Mascot. However, Minister, your chief of staff, a Bayside councillor, voted in favour of the deferral. Who is right? The Minister's Cabinet colleague or his chief of staff?

**The SPEAKER:** Members will come to order. I call the Minister. I trust that his injury from earlier in the day is not bothering him. The member for Wahroonga will come to order. The Premier will come to order.

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport) (11:08):** I have many discussions with my chief of staff. I understand what his position is. His position is that there should be a greater supply of social housing wherever it can be delivered. That is what he is focused on. He was not happy with the actual scheme because it was not adequate. That is who I support. I support his position. That is our position as a party: to provide housing to our community. Not once in 12 years did those opposite meet the supply requirements for our State. So we are getting on with the job. It is obvious from what people hear in the media and what announcements we are making. We will deliver the supply that our society requires because those opposite let everyone down for 12 years.

**Mr Mark Speakman:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** Members of the Government will come to order.

**Mr Mark Speakman:** The question did not ask the Minister to provide a general rant about public and social housing. It was a specific question. There is a conflict between the housing Minister's approach and his chief of staff's approach. One wants a deferral; one does not. Which one does he support?

**The SPEAKER:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition. The Minister has concluded his answer so it is a moot point.

#### **FIRST HOME BUYERS**

**Ms KAREN McKEOWN (Penrith) (11:10):** My question is addressed to the Premier. Will he please update the House about the significant savings that first home buyers in New South Wales will be able to access from Saturday?

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:10):** It is a surprising question but a welcome one, and one we need to confront in New South Wales. I am proud to report to the House that, under the Labor Government's changes, five out of six first home buyers will receive a massive tax cut on their stamp duty when they purchase a property in New South Wales. To put this into perspective, those who purchase a property for up to \$800,000 as a first home will pay no stamp duty at all, and will pay a reduced amount for properties between \$800,000 and \$1 million. That is the equivalent of five out of six first home buyers in New South Wales. Some 27,000 first home buyers will benefit under the scheme this year. The scheme begins this Saturday. It is important to note that this system replaces the "land tax forever" scheme the previous Government was attempting to impose on young people in New South Wales—a scheme that would see them pay land tax to the New South Wales Government for forever and a day. As we all know, the value of that property—

**Mr Alister Henskens:** It was their choice.

**Mr CHRIS MINNS:** He says it was their choice.

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

**Mr CHRIS MINNS:** I would much rather people pay no stamp duty at all rather than a land tax forever, which was the previous Government's policy. It is important to note that, interestingly, under the previous Government's plan, houses between \$1 million and \$1.5 million were eligible for the tax benefit arrangements. Ours stop at \$1 million. But it is important to note that five out of six properties for first home buyers are under \$1 million. The previous scheme went up to \$1.5 million. Only 13 per cent of properties for first home buyers are in that pay range. Yet they were about to receive a full 50 per cent of the tax benefit as a result of the changes. So,

far from being a scheme that would allow first home buyers to enter the housing market in New South Wales, this benefited those who could purchase their first property for \$1.3 million, \$1.4 million or \$1.5 million. The people who would languish are first home buyers, particularly those who were purchasing a first home for below \$800,000.

Let me tell members the savings for first home buyers across New South Wales. For the median house price in Badgerys Creek, the amount saved for a first home buyer under Labor's scheme is \$17,000. In the electorate of Bega in New South Wales, the amount saved is \$22,000. In the electorate of Macquarie Fields, the average that will be saved for the median house price for a first home buyer— *[Extension of time]*

**The SPEAKER:** Members will come to order. That is too much audible conversation in the Chamber. The Premier will be heard in silence.

**Mr CHRIS MINNS:** In Macquarie Fields for the median house price, the saving for a first home buyer is \$26,000—beginning this Saturday. It goes to that principle. It is interesting to note that the vast majority of first home buyers for properties under \$800,000 are in regional New South Wales. But the biggest proponent of the land tax forever on first home buyers was the National Party. I think it is important to know that just 16 per cent of first home buyers using the Liberal's scheme live in regional New South Wales. It is curious as to why those opposite opposed Labor's scheme and attempted to keep the existing tax benefit arrangements in place for regional New South Wales—just 16 per cent. It tells you everything you need to know about the National Party's priorities in New South Wales.

This is a good initiative. It was passed by this House and then passed in the upper House, against the objections of the Liberals and The Nationals. It was the number one priority of the recently inaugurated Opposition. Yet it failed. That failure is a good thing for New South Wales. I encourage all members to bring their ideas to this Parliament. It is a hung Parliament, and we are keen to hear their initiatives to make this State great. We have heard from the member for Sydney about his proposals. We have heard from the Liberal Party about its proposals—mainly in the form of a podcast presented by the member for Wahroonga. But if you want to know what life is like as a backbencher in the Legislative Assembly, there is no finer podcast.

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** Point of order—

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

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** My point of order is about relevance. We are all getting fairly bored with the ramblings of the Premier. It is hard to hear him.

**The SPEAKER:** It is hard to hear him.

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** I refer to relevance—or lack of relevance.

**The SPEAKER:** I have heard the point of order, which is taken under Standing Order 129—relevance. There is no point of order. The Premier will complete his answer.

**Mr CHRIS MINNS:** There is one politician who is letting us all down, and it is Dugald Saunders.

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Clerk will stop the clock. The Premier will not bait the Opposition. Government members, particularly those on the front bench, will come to order. I am disappointed in the member for Summer Hill.

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** She is very excited. My point of order is taken under Standing Order 73. If the Premier wants to make imputations against me—

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Dubbo will resume his seat. The Premier will conclude his answer.

**Mr CHRIS MINNS:** When asked about what policies The Nationals would pursue, the member for Dubbo said they would come later. He said, "Policies aren't important right now." It is hard to believe the National Party could dumb it down, but it has managed to. *[Time expired.]*

**The SPEAKER:** The Premier will resume his seat. I call the member for Port Macquarie. Let us return some order to the Chamber.

#### DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (11:17):** My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. Given the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission's *Review of NSW Police Force responses to domestic and family violence incidents* shows that police officers attend about 500 domestic and

family violence incidents per day, what steps has the Minister taken to respond to the LECC recommendation to provide adequate and mandatory training in domestic and family violence procedures to all officers?

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism) (11:17):** I thank the member for Port Macquarie for her question. I know that she has always taken domestic violence very seriously. As I said yesterday, the LECC report regarding police handling of domestic and family violence matters in our community has been released. Again, I congratulate the LECC and thank it for the hard work it does in our community in New South Wales. It is a very important issue. We will, of course, consider the report in full. But, as I have mentioned in this place many times—as recently as yesterday—domestic and family violence is also the most under-reported crime in our community. It is also a crime that consumes—as we all know; I have said it repeatedly—a significant amount of policing hours. I will say it again: Every four minutes, police officers are responding to a call relating to domestic and family violence from people seeking assistance. This is a societal issue that we all take responsibility for. We must because, if we do not, we will not see any positive outcomes. This has to be a whole-of-government and a whole-of-Parliament—

**Mrs Leslie Williams:** Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129. I appreciate that this is a serious issue. Obviously, the Minister and I both realise that.

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

**Mrs Leslie Williams:** We understand the substantive issues that have been raised by the LECC. However, the question was specifically about what steps the Minister has taken in relation to the recommendation for all officers to receive mandatory training in domestic and family violence.

**The SPEAKER:** I have heard the member's point of order. I uphold the point of order. The Minister will be more directly relevant to the question.

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY:** As I have already said, the Government will consider the report in full. The New South Wales police continually train their force. They deal not only with domestic violence but also mental health. The number of mental health assistance calls the police deal with on a daily basis is incredibly significant as well. The New South Wales police do not walk away from their training commitments and are committed to helping ensure that our community is safe. They do that by going to the assistance of all those people who are in distress, whether for mental health reasons, domestic violence or child sexual abuse. They see things in their day-to-day work that none of us would ever want to see. I say to the member for Port Macquarie that I have come to admire the police deeply for the work they do. I can assure the member that the police commissioner and I take the training of the NSW Police Force very seriously.

**The SPEAKER:** Before I call the member for East Hills, I welcome to the gallery representatives of the Police Association of New South Wales, including president Kevin Morton and association official Tony Bear. I see them both in the gallery. As the Minister said, the association and the police are held in high regard. I thank them for being here today.

### SCHOOL VIOLENCE

**Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (11:21):** My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier, and Minister for Education and Early Learning. Given the recent reporting of violence in schools, will the Deputy Premier update the House on the Government's commitment to tackling violence in schools and ensuring that schools are safe learning environments for children?

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (11:21):** I thank the member for East Hills for that very important question. I think members on all sides of the Chamber acknowledge that keeping schools safe should be, and is, 100 per cent core government business. Let me be clear with the people of New South Wales. Schools are safe places for children, but the Government and I are concerned about the spread of violence in our schools, and in particular it being shown on social media. Violence in our schools is never acceptable. It will not be accepted in our schools. It is certainly a complex issue. It is an issue that we see in society more generally. Schools are microcosms of our communities and our society and so, unfortunately, we see this playing out in our schools.

However, as a government we believe that the State Government should not be doing anything to make things worse. We need to look at things we can do and ensure we are not doing anything to make it worse. Unfortunately, the previous Government's student behaviour policy was making it worse in schools, and making it more difficult for teachers and principals to deal with persistent misbehaviour. Some persistent misbehaviour results in some really unfortunate situations we see at times on school grounds, in classrooms and in playgrounds. Teachers and principals felt powerless under the previous regime to deal with persistent misbehaviour. No-one

wants to suspend students; I have not met one principal or teacher who wants to suspend students. But as the parents and many teachers in this place, and the two or three who might be listening, will acknowledge—

**Mr Ryan Park:** They are teaching.

**Ms PRUE CAR:** They are teaching; that is right. They will probably be working until 9.00 p.m. tonight doing admin work. Sometimes suspension is necessary. We all know that because we have to teach our children that there are consequences to actions. It is impossible to lift numeracy and literacy outcomes, let alone deal with behaviour in schools, without the tools that principals and teachers need to deal with that behaviour. We are revising and consulting with schools on a new behaviour policy to ensure that they have the tools to deal with that sort of misbehaviour. Another concern relates to the fact that we are seeing the proliferation of this unfortunate behaviour being put on social media—Facebook, TikTok, Instagram, or whatever it is. [*Extension of time*]

Facebook, Meta and all the social media companies need to lift their game to ensure that violent acts that are identified on social media platforms are taken down. We are talking about children at risk who are sometimes fighting with each other on social media, and it needs to be acted on very quickly. We know—and this is really crucial—that what kids are sometimes using to record these acts of violence are mobile phones in schools. One of the first acts of this Government was to start its plan to enact a ban on mobile phones in all high schools. From day one of term 4, which is 9 October, mobile phones will be banned in New South Wales. In term 3—and we are just about to get to the school holidays for term 2—we are going out to do the final round of consultation on its implementation with high schools, and we have been working with secondary school teachers and leaders on that. In term 4, mobile phones will be banned. Teachers were calling for it. Parents were calling for it. Everyone was calling for it. Only the previous Government failed to listen.

It reminded me of a time in May when the member for Hawkesbury as the Deputy Liberal assistant shadow—whatever it is—came into this House and tried to defend their opposition to the mobile phone plan. She said, "We are not living in a communist country. We should not be taking a Big Brother approach." But then she went on to say that the Government has "announced a policy that the New South Wales Liberal-Nationals Government had already implemented". So we stole their communist policy! My apologies to Comrade Preston. The truth is we are implementing a phone ban to keep our kids safe in our high schools. That is our priority.

#### ORANGE ELECTORATE FLOODS

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange) (11:27):** My question is directed to the Premier. Many of the flood-impacted communities of the Orange electorate last year suffered a similar degree of loss as those impacted in northern New South Wales. People still remain displaced, homes remain exposed to future flooding, and obtaining or affording flood insurance is cost prohibitive. Will the Government offer the flood-impacted home owners of my electorate the same buyback schemes that have been offered for home owners in northern New South Wales?

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (11:27):** I take seriously the question from the member for Orange, and we are examining the matter. The member's concern about devastated flood-affected communities in the Central West region of New South Wales is serious and ongoing, notwithstanding the fact that the immediate natural disaster took place several months ago. It is important to note that 460 homes were impacted and nearly 3,000 people sought assistance from the New South Wales Government recovery assistance program. In Eugowra, the hardest hit town, 700 people received access to grants and emotional support, which towns that have been hit by natural disasters like this absolutely need. Housing pods, caravans and temporary housing were provided to the communities—in fairness, and this is important to note—by the previous Government and the previous Premier, who had a particular interest in this issue and who visited the community of the Central West during those devastating flooding periods.

The construction authority has installed 57 temporary pods as part of the free Pods on Private Property Program in the Central West, and 42 have been handed over to community members or families. We are examining that program for the future, particularly for hard-hit communities devastated by flooding. I know the member for Lismore, the member for Clarence and the member for Ballina have been feeding into the New South Wales Government ways to ensure that, whatever money is distributed, it goes to the people that need it and that we continue to have support for those communities. One of the learnings from the Central West and from Lismore that we are examining in greater detail is whether we can get those pods onto private property quicker so that communities do not dissipate, dislocate and never come back together. We want towns and communities to come back together.

These are difficult things. The sad reality is that we can expect more natural disasters, not fewer, in the years ahead. Reconstruction authorities, as well as the pockets of the New South Wales taxpayer, need to be directed to those communities more quickly in the most efficient way, and to those members of the community

who have been hit hardest. I will be speaking to the member for Orange to ensure that those towns are not forgotten in the Government's flood and recovery response. That is the obligation of everyone in my Government and, of course, all members of this Parliament.

### HEAVY VEHICLE INDUSTRY

**Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (11:30):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Transport in her capacity representing the Minister for Roads. Will the Minister update the House on the measures the Government is taking to address the issue of overheight trucks?

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport) (11:30):** I thank the member for Riverstone for his question. I know this matter is very important to him and his community. Indeed, it is an important matter for residents, and for commuters in particular, across Sydney and our State because serious disruption and delay is caused by overheight trucks becoming stuck in tunnels. It is a very serious issue. It impacts on our economy and, just as importantly, it hits the hardworking family members and workers who are trying to get to work on time or who are trying to get home in the evening. We know this is extremely frustrating for commuters. We understand how irritating it is to be stuck in a traffic jam behind a truck that has tried to enter the Sydney Harbour Tunnel or the Lane Cove Tunnel because the driver did not know how tall their truck is. That is unacceptable and it needs to stop.

This year alone, at least 66 overheight incidents were reported across Greater Sydney. That is on the back of 124 incidents in 2021 and 161 in 2022. In fact, we have already had four this week—two in the Harbour Tunnel and two in the Lane Cove Tunnel. This Government is working hard on behalf of frustrated commuters to solve the overheight truck crisis. We are determined to reduce the number of breaches in tunnels, and that is why we are acting. We have tasked a new body to reduce the number of overheight truck incidents in Sydney across our road network.

The new body, led by Transport NSW, brings together the NSW Police Force, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, the Transport Workers' Union and the New South Wales freight councils. By working together, they will drive strategies to reduce incidents by educating drivers on load and route management. They will develop an improved operational response in terms of traffic when incidents occur. That is really important for commuters. They are also focused on looking at some of the digital solutions that will help drivers identify if their load is overheight. Just yesterday, that body met with the heavy vehicle industry, including drivers, to discuss possible solutions. They include digital systems to check how a truck's load might have shifted during a journey and to update the driver on the need to divert to a different route, and also improved height measurement systems.

**Mr Warren Kirby:** Mr Speaker, I do not feel that we are at the end of this. I seek an extension of time.

**The SPEAKER:** I thought the member for Riverstone said that he was hoping we were near the end of the answer. I misunderstood. I grant an extension of two minutes.

**Ms JO HAYLEN:** The member for Riverstone is right: We do need to see the end of it. We are undertaking more actions to make sure that we do end it, including, very importantly, enhancing the warning systems on the Sydney Harbour Tunnel to catch and divert overheight vehicles before they reach the tunnel entrance. That would be a good thing. Alongside those systems, we have struck an agreement with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to allow us to cancel the registrations of trucks that breach height restrictions in tunnels across the Sydney road network. New South Wales, thanks to the action of the Minns Labor Government, has been given greater powers. We will remove heavy vehicles from the road for up to six months if they breach the overheight rules. At our Government's request, the regulator has agreed to refer all of these breaches to Transport NSW for enforcement.

Under the existing road laws, Transport NSW can deregister trucks and take them off the road once the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator has referred an incident and if there are aggravated circumstances, but now we can actually look at suspending the licences of drivers for up to six months. We know that the majority of truck drivers take their responsibilities very seriously. They are professional and diligent workers, and they take pride in what they do. They keep Australia moving. They make sure that we have food in our supermarkets. They are relied on each and every day by the people of Sydney. We want to work effectively to make sure that our freight network moves goods and people where they need to go. We need that for the health of our economy and the sustainability and livability of our cities. We need to make sure our road network is up to the job for the people of New South Wales and the people of Sydney.

### REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (11:35):** My question is directed to the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads. Yesterday it was announced that Opal card fares will not increase at the start of the next

financial year, benefitting people in metropolitan areas. The Government already has suspended the regional seniors travel card and will not confirm whether it will be funded in the next year. Is that fair to the people of regional New South Wales?

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** Point of order: Under Standing Order 128 (3) (a), a member cannot ask a Minister for an expression of opinion. Asking a Minister whether something is fair is asking the Minister for an expression of opinion. The Leader of the National Party needs to reword his question.

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** To the point of order: Under Standing Order 126, it is asking for a comment on public affairs. It is a ridiculous assertion that the Minister cannot comment on a matter of public affairs.

**The SPEAKER:** I acknowledge the point of order taken by the Leader of the House. I do not dismiss it lightly, but I believe the Minister is capable of answering the question and giving an opinion.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (11:37):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I really appreciate your faith in me in this area because, quite frankly, over the past 12 years the question of fairness to regional communities has really been a problem. What we saw from those opposite, particularly members of The Nationals, was a system of government in which what you got depended on who you voted for. That is not something that we should be accepting in this day and age. The Minns Labor Government, which I am so proud to be part of, has said to that: No more. Since I became Minister for Regional Transport and Roads, members from both sides of this House—even members of the Coalition—have come to me and talked about the inequity of funding in their areas. For those opposite to lecture us on fairness is absolutely the height of hypocrisy. The Leader of The Nationals is denying that he is Barilaro 2.0. I have *The Daily Telegraph* here.

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister will resume her seat. The Clerk will stop the clock.

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** I take a couple of points of order. The first is relevance.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** A couple of points? Just take one at a time, Dugald; that's the fair way.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! The Minister will listen to the point of order.

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** My first point relates to Standing Order 129, and then there is abusing me personally.

[*Government members interjected.*]

The question is about regional people and whether this is fair for regional people.

**The SPEAKER:** This is a robust House.

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** It is a serious question.

**The SPEAKER:** I have heard the point of order. The member for Dubbo will resume his seat.

**Ms Yasmin Catley:** To the point of order: I wish to assist the Leader of The Nationals. He clearly needs to know the procedures of the House.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Swansea can relax; I've got this. There is no point of order. I appreciate the sensitivity of the member for Dubbo about being targeted by the Minister. However, the member's question opened up opportunities for the Minister to be more wideranging in her answer. The Minister will continue.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** The real problem is that, fundamentally, Opposition members do not understand fairness. I note the denials of the member opposite that he is Barilaro 2.0, but I think we have to ask what he said about this, in his own words. He said he is a leader of the modern Nats, not the Nats has-beens. That is not being very nice to Mr Toole.

**Mr Gurmesh Singh:** Point of order: The Minister was quite willing to answer the question initially. I ask—

**The SPEAKER:** Government members, particularly those on the front bench from the Premier down, will come to order. The Clerk will stop the clock.

**Mr Gurmesh Singh:** The question was quite simple. The Government has said that it is freezing the Opal card, but what is it doing for regional New South Wales? Is it fair? That is the question.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister will address the issue more directly. However, the question was barely in order in the first place. I have given concessions to both sides. The question was always going to receive a broad response.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** The nub of the question is this: Is it fair? To answer a question about fairness, you have to understand what fairness is. My position is that the members opposite do not understand it. We have someone who purports to be the Leader of The Nationals saying that the policies would be pursued later, but that the policies are not what is important right now. Do not lecture me on—

**Mr Gurmesh Singh:** Point of order—

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** I hope I get extra time; I do not want to miss a second. Stop the clock.

**Mr Gurmesh Singh:** Can we stop the clock? I would like to give the Minister a chance to answer the question.

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

**Mr Gurmesh Singh:** The question was specifically about the Government's policies, not the Opposition's. Does the Minister think her policies are fair to the people of regional New South Wales?

**The SPEAKER:** I have heard enough. The member for Coffs Harbour will resume his seat. The Minister will continue her answer. There is no point of order.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** I think we have a few issues here. We had a government that launched a travel card on a bus that did not accept the travel card. We heard the Leader of the Opposition—

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister's time has expired.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON:** I still want time.

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** All right.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister will resume her seat. If the member for Dubbo is seeking an extension of time, he needs to do it more quickly.

#### NSW POLICE FORCE

**Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (11:43):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism. Will the Minister please inform the House about the good work New South Wales police are doing in keeping the people of New South Wales safe?

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism) (11:43):** I thank the member for Fairfield for his question. I know he has a deep passion for policing in this country. In the short time that I have been the police Minister, I have learned a great deal about the work that police do every day, around the clock, on our behalf. They swear an oath to serve the public and to uphold the law. They are dedicated to protecting the general public. They protect our physical safety and our property. We know that a lot of crime occurs when we are asleep, safe in our beds.

Our police are working through the night, every single night. They do a job that very few of us would be able to face. They attend scenes of carnage that most of us could not bear to see. They go to scenes of violence, murder, accidents and, sadly, suicide. They go to road accidents where children may have perished—unbearable scenes—and yet they bear them because someone must. They perform astonishingly dangerous and heroic rescues of people lost or injured in the wilderness, swept away in floodwaters or lost at sea. As we have seen too often recently, they also perform heroic rescues of downright fools who have put themselves, and the rescuing police, in danger as a misguided and pointless form of protest.

I met many heroic police officers recently when the Premier and I went to Greta and met with emergency workers. We saw firsthand the extraordinary work that our police do. They dealt with some of the most horrific scenes; it is almost unimaginable. They routinely confront danger and assault. They are kicked, punched and occasionally shot. Tragically, over the years, a terrible number have met violent deaths whilst they have been on duty to serve us and keep the public safe. The NSW Police Force Wall of Remembrance in the Domain is a poignant and permanent tribute to officers who have lost their lives just doing their duty. It is the ultimate service it is possible to give. It bears the names of 275 NSW Police Force officers who, sadly, made that supreme sacrifice. And yet our New South Wales police still keep turning up for the next shift. [*Extension of time*]

The more I meet police and the more I find out about the extraordinary work they do, the more I admire them. I also acknowledge, as I know the Speaker has, their representatives from the NSW Police Association who are with us today in the public gallery. They do a tremendous job representing the interests of police in New South Wales. I thank them very much for that, and for the support that they give police in any unfair circumstance. Among 20,000 people there will be a few individuals who do not belong and who are, frankly, unfit for the job.

Any large organisation will experience something similar. But when incidents occur, it is the rest of the police who are badly let down.

If the incidents involve serious wrongdoing or criminality, the first thing that the NSW Police Force does is investigate and, if warranted, bring criminal charges. Rogue officers who commit crimes are certainly not wanted in the force by the vast majority of dedicated, duty-driven police officers. The smearing of the good name and the denigration of the good work of tens of thousands of courageous, committed and extremely hardworking New South Wales police based on the actions of those occasional rogues is simply disgraceful. Personally, I have had a gutful of the shameful and dishonest attacks on New South Wales police by the Liberals and The Nationals in this place over the past two weeks.

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

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister will resume her seat. The Manager of Opposition Business rises on a point of order. The Clerk will stop the clock.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** The Minister has misrepresented what has occurred in this House. All of our questions have gone to the conduct of the police Minister, not the police.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order.

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY:** It is insulting.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! All members will come to order.

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY:** I assure the House that the police— [*Time expired.*]

#### EMERGENCY RELIEF SUPPORT GRANTS

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (11:49):** My question is directed to the Minister for Multiculturalism. Funding for the Multicultural NSW Emergency Relief Support Grants that help vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers expires tomorrow, 30 June. What is the Minister doing to ensure resumed Federal funding or continued State funding in this area?

**Mr Chris Minns:** Why do they expire tomorrow? Why do they expire before the budget?

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

**Mr MARK COURE:** I will start again. What is the Minister doing to ensure resumed Federal funding or continued State funding in this area?

**Mr Chris Minns:** You've got a hide. You didn't fund it, and now you want to know why.

**Mr Mark Speakman:** Point of order: The question is directed to the Minister. The question is not to the Premier, but the Premier consistently coaches his Ministers and tries to—

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. There is no point of order.

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER (Rockdale—Minister for Small Business, Minister for Lands and Property, Minister for Multiculturalism, and Minister for Sport) (11:50):** It is really interesting, because yesterday I saw the shadow Minister for Multiculturalism going over there to be coached on how to ask a question—and he asked the wrong Minister. He was there on a number of occasions, asking these guys, "What do I do? How do I ask a question?" He has done it again today. This time—

**Mr Mark Coure:** Point of order: To begin with, he is the Minister—not me. But the second point is—

**The SPEAKER:** That is not a point of order. It is an observation.

**Mr Mark Coure:** My point of order is under Standing Order 129, relevance.

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister has the call.

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** I was merely congratulating the shadow Minister for asking a question of the right person today. The Leader of the Opposition asked a question of my chief of staff. What is going on in this place? But I thank the member for Oatley for his question. Supporting vulnerable refugees should always be a bipartisan objective—always. For the benefit of the House, let me explain how that support is provided. The Commonwealth Government is responsible for providing assistance to asylum seekers and other temporary visa holders. It does so through support services delivered by the Department of Home Affairs and the Status Resolution Support Services program, known as the SRSS. Funding and eligibility for the SRSS program was significantly reduced when Peter Dutton was the Minister for Home Affairs. It was unfortunate, but that is the truth. Some \$38 million has been allocated for the 2023—



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

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** Mr Speaker, I am trying to answer the question.

**The SPEAKER:** I understand that. The Minister will resume his seat. The Manager of Opposition Business rises on a point of order. The Clerk will stop the clock. What is the member's point of order?

**Mr Alister Henskens:** My point of order is taken under Standing Order 129, relevance. The Minister was asked what he is doing. He has not addressed the question. What is he doing to continue those grants?

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister is not being directly relevant to the question. I am sure that the Minister will be relevant in his answer.

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** I am trying very hard to give the full context so that Opposition members can understand it. As you would appreciate, Mr Speaker, I have seen the confusion—

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

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** I am trying to give some details so that members opposite can appreciate the issue. I am trying to provide a fulsome answer to the shadow Minister for Multiculturalism.

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

**Mr STEPHEN KAMPER:** Some \$38 million has been allocated for 2023-24, compared with \$300 million in 2015-16, because people seeking asylum who are ineligible— [*Time expired.*]

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

#### ASSET PRIVATISATION

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend) (11:54):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast, representing the Minister for Water. Will the Minister please update the House on the risks of privatising critical assets such as water utilities?

**Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (11:54):** That is a very good question. I thank the member for Wallsend for her long-term advocacy against privatisation. I am yet to meet a person in Wallsend who does not vote for the member. I am sure there is a family or two—one or two. One of the Government's first acts was to give an ironclad commitment to the people of New South Wales that it would protect Sydney Water and Hunter Water from privatisation by enshrining public ownership in the Constitution Act.

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

**Mr RYAN PARK:** People across New South Wales know the Government has already honoured that commitment. Earlier this month, landmark legislation passed the Parliament that will safeguard these crucially important assets—arguably some of the most important public utilities we have. With this legislation, the Government has effectively put a sphere of protection around both entities, preventing privatisation and preventing unreasonable price hikes. We acted decisively—

**Ms Robyn Preston:** Not Warragamba Dam.

**Mr RYAN PARK:** Sorry, but you thought Tasmania was overseas. I do not need a geography lesson from you. We acted because those opposite have a long history of selling off State assets.

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

**Mr RYAN PARK:** They sold electricity assets, they sold off our ports.

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

**Mr RYAN PARK:** Of course, they sold off our toll roads. They tried to sell off five hospitals—they tried to privatise five hospitals. We remember that.

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** Point of order—

**The SPEAKER:** The Minister will resume his seat. Will somebody tap the Minister on the shoulder? The Clerk will stop the clock. What is the member's point of order?

**Mr Michael Daley:** Bring back Toole!

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** That is unparliamentary behaviour, as usual. My point of order goes to relevance. We are talking about water assets. The Minister was talking about hospitals.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. The Minister will listen to the Speaker.

**Mr RYAN PARK:** Will do, Mr Speaker. Today we learnt that in the United Kingdom Thames Water, a company that provides drinking water to 10 million Britons, is at risk of financial collapse. It was privatised more than 30 years ago and now they are considering taking it back into public ownership.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** Point of order: I remind the Minister that the Thames is in the United Kingdom, not in New South Wales.

**The SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. The member for Wahroonga will resume his seat. I call the member for Wahroonga to order for the second time.

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** Point of order—

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

**Mr Ron Hoenig:** I draw your attention to Standing Order 131 (9), which was inserted at the request of my predecessor, the member for Wahroonga. It says:

Points of order taken during an answer to a question should not be vexatious, repetitive, interfering or used to make a statement in response to the answer.

Opposition members have now taken 10 points of order that have had no merit or substance. Mr Speaker, I ask you to put members on calls to order if they do it again.

**The SPEAKER:** I thank the Leader of the House. The member for Wahroonga was placed on a call to order for his overall behaviour when taking his point of order. There is no point of order. The Minister has the call.

**Ms Sonia Hornery:** I seek an extension of time.

**The SPEAKER:** An additional two minutes is granted.

**Mr RYAN PARK:** This shows you exactly why introducing this legislation was a priority for the Government. In like-minded jurisdictions overseas we are seeing that prices go up and the service goes down when water assets are privatised. This new Labor Government has had to bring forward landmark legislation to enshrine and protect Sydney Water and Hunter Water from the privatisation focus that the previous Government had. Members on this side of the House saw 12 years of rampant privatisation under the previous Government's watch. Our local buses were sold off. WestConnex was sold off. They did all of this—

**Mr Dugald Saunders:** Point of order: My point of order relates to relevance. We are talking about water. The one thing the Minister has not spoken about is regional water, which was left out of the debate. He is talking about buses and roads.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Dubbo will resume his seat. There is no point of order. The Minister has the call.

**Mr RYAN PARK:** It is incredible to hear a member of the National Party talk about relevance. Those opposite did this without going through the Parliament. It is clear from the election result what the community thinks about privatisation. The community has had enough. The community knows, as we know, that privatising public assets and public utilities time and time again leads to two things: a reduction in the service quality and an increase in price for the front line and consumers. No-one should ever want that.

#### RESILIENT HOMES PROGRAM FUNDING

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (12:01):** My question is directed to the Premier. Since being sworn in, what representations has the Premier made to the Prime Minister about a funding split for tranche 2 of the Resilient Homes Program?

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (12:01):** The Government is in conversation with the Commonwealth Government about tranche 2 and acknowledges that it is important. One of the leading reasons why this is necessary is that it was left unfunded. I have repeatedly made that clear in media inquiries and in joint appearances with the member for Lismore. It is not an immaterial point, because this natural disaster did not occur a couple of months ago; it occurred in the lifetime of the previous Government. If it is so important that tranche 2 is funded, as I think the member for Coffs Harbour is implying, why was there no provision made for it in the budget over the forward estimates? There was nothing at all. There was no budget update before the election, no

changes to spending, no submission to the Expenditure Review Committee and no money allocated by the previous New South Wales Government.

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

**Mr CHRIS MINNS:** As far as I can tell—

**The SPEAKER:** The Premier will resume his seat.

**Mr Alister Henskens:** My point of order relates to Standing Order 129. The question was what representations has the Premier made to the Prime Minister? That is the question.

**The SPEAKER:** The Manager of Opposition Business will resume his seat. There is no point of order. The Premier was immediately directly relevant. He met that threshold and is continuing to address the issues.

**Mr CHRIS MINNS:** That is an obnoxious intervention during question time. It is utterly irrelevant and repetitive. Every time those opposite have had their points of order rejected by the Speaker, they continue for one reason only: They do not like the answers. The reason that this question about tranche 2 is so important, and I think the member for Lismore would back me up, is because there has been no consultation between the previous Government and the Commonwealth Government in relation to that funding. Having assumed power on 25 March, this Government was left with the mess of the previous Government. Those promises were made to members of the Northern Rivers community by my predecessor and the Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience at the time. This Government now has to deal with those promises that communities are relying on but, at the same time, no money has been provided for it in the New South Wales budget.

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Dubbo will come to order or he will be placed on a call.

**Mr CHRIS MINNS:** I remind the House that, in addition to no funding being made available, \$187 billion of debt was gifted to the incoming Government at the same time. This Government is trying to deal with the unprecedented budget and economic disaster that it was handed. Of course, it will deal with the Commonwealth Government. [*Time expired.*]

#### ENERGY BILL RELIEF

**Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (12:04):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice in his capacity representing the Minister for Energy. Will the Minister update the House on how the Government is supporting vulnerable households and small businesses with energy bill relief?

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (12:05):** I thank the fantastic member for South Coast for her question. It is a beautiful part of the world, where people are dealing with this, as they are right across the State at the moment. The cost of living is front and centre for many families and households right now. Small businesses are struggling, and energy bills are compounding those pressures. That is why the Government is taking action to address this. The Government made an election commitment to provide \$485 million for targeted, temporary energy bill relief to eligible New South Wales households and small businesses. It also secured \$481 million in co-funding from the Commonwealth. As a result of that, the Government will deliver bill relief to 1.6 million eligible households and 320,000 eligible small businesses this financial year.

Eligible low-income households, pensioners, self-funded retirees, families and carers will receive \$500 towards their electricity bills. Eligible small businesses using less than 100 megawatt hours of electricity per year will receive \$650 towards their electricity bills. Despite the electricity price increases, the average New South Wales rebate customer will be no worse off. This Government's approach stands in stark contrast to that of the Coalition, which went to the election without any promises of support for energy relief to small businesses. Members on this side of the House are on the side of small businesses in New South Wales.

Most energy rebate recipients will receive their bill relief payment automatically from 31 July. I advise the House that customers who receive a New South Wales energy rebate will be provided with the payment automatically. There is no need to go onto a website, click on a URL, cross your fingers and hope for the best; it will be automatic. The Government wants to ensure that everyone who is eligible will receive support rather than hoping that one-third of people will not know about it, as the previous Government did. Customers who do not currently receive an energy rebate but are eligible can apply for the new rebate from August. They will then be provided with the new payment automatically. In addition to that, the Government will work with people who receive the Carer Allowance, low-income health care— [*Extension of time*]

As I was saying, people who do not receive an energy rebate but do receive the Carer Allowance or hold a Low Income Health Care Card or DVA Card will be contacted by Services Australia or the Department of

Veterans' Affairs with information about how to apply. The Government will be working across the State to ensure that everyone who is eligible receives support. Eligible small businesses do not need to do anything. We are doing the hard work here. We are making sure that energy retailers will automatically apply this energy bill relief to those electricity accounts. We know that some small businesses are part of an embedded network. We will make sure that this energy bill relief is applied automatically to those accounts.

This energy bill relief is on top of our existing six annual energy rebates and our crisis support scheme. We are also going to increase those payments to \$500 twice a year to support eligible recipients—talk about making sure that we support not only households but also small businesses! This shows what can happen when a State government can work with a Federal government. This Government will deliver for the people of New South Wales by ensuring co-funding is available to address the energy bill crisis through providing targeted, specific short-term relief to support households and small businesses. We know that families and small businesses are doing it tough, but we are doing something about it to ensure that we can help in every way possible.

#### **ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER VOICE TO NSW PARLIAMENT**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (12:10):** My question is directed to the Premier. Given the number of Closing the Gap targets directed at the New South Wales Government, and noting the South Australian Parliament established a Voice for its State's Aboriginal people, will the Premier rule in or rule out a Voice for First Nations people to the New South Wales Parliament?

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier) (12:11):** I am happy to take the question on notice.

*[An Opposition member interjected.]*

I am happy to acknowledge the interjection from the member for Hornsby, was it?

**The SPEAKER:** I did not hear an interjection. The Premier has finalised his answer.

#### **PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES TRIAL**

**Ms LYNDA VOLTZ (Auburn) (12:11):** My question is addressed to the Minister for Health, and Minister for Regional Health. Will the Minister update the House on what measures the New South Wales Government is taking to make common prescription medications more accessible to more women?

**Mr RYAN PARK (Keira—Minister for Health, Minister for Regional Health, and Minister for the Illawarra and the South Coast) (12:11):** I thank the member for Auburn for her long-term advocacy for health care. Just the other day, I met with the member for Auburn, the member for East Hills and the member for Bankstown to discuss some healthcare issues and challenges in those parts of Sydney. Over the next four years we are going to do the really important work of increasing the scope of practice for our healthcare professionals. Wherever possible, we need to make sure that healthcare professionals—whether they are allied healthcare workers, nurse practitioners or, in this case, pharmacists—are working at full scope. That means the delivery of healthcare services is done in an efficient, effective and accessible way to the community. It is also about retaining our very best within the profession.

In May we announced a trial across 100 pharmacies, to start with, throughout New South Wales, around dealing with uncomplicated urinary tract infections in women, to enable them to get medication and get themselves well without having to go to a GP or seek additional care. It works. More than 500 women have utilised the service in the one month that it has been operating. But we will do more. In July we will announce a commitment that this trial will go to over 1,000 pharmacies right across New South Wales. This is particularly important for those in rural and regional New South Wales, because their ability to access health care is not as easy as it is for those of us in large metropolitan cities. We will expand it yet again later on and make sure that women aged 18-39 will be able to access the contraceptive pill straight from their pharmacy. It is time governments started focusing on delivering health care to patients and communities when they need it, where they need it and how they need it.  
*[Extension of time]*

This is about making sure that we deliver health care in a way that is easy and accessible to people. I am extremely proud of this trial, which will be led and evaluated by researchers from a number of universities. We are getting support from the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners to make sure that the link between pharmacy and doctor remains strong and is at the core of the way in which health care is delivered. At a time when we have a critical shortage of healthcare workers—and, in particular, GPs—we make no apologies for looking at ways to expand the professional scope of our healthcare professionals to make sure that they are delivering health care in a way that is as convenient and easy for members of the community as possible.

We will continue to look at opportunities every step of the way, in this trial and in other professions, to ensure that as we expand scope we also improve access to health care. We will continue to focus on making sure

that health care is delivered to the highest levels in terms of quality assurance and safety. We will not put patient safety at risk. We will never, ever do that. We are deliberately starting out by taking small steps because it will be a long journey that needs to parallel with effective research to make sure that the results that we hope for are the results that we are getting. That research becomes more important as we get more and more people involved in the trial. I thank the pharmacies involved in the trial, and I thank the strong community advocates, particularly those in rural and regional New South Wales, who said how important this issue was.

#### *Judiciary*

### **CONDUCT DIVISION OF JUDICIAL COMMISSION OF NEW SOUTH WALES**

#### **Nomination**

**The SPEAKER:** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council that, having considered the Legislative Assembly's message of 22 June 2023, it has agreed to the following resolution:

That, according to clause 4 of Schedule 2A of the Judicial Officers Act 1986, this House agrees to the nominations of Professor Nalini Joshi, AO, and Professor Emeritus Margo Kearns as community representatives for appointment to a panel of the Conduct Division of the Judicial Commission of New South Wales.

#### *Ministerial Statements*

### **MINCHINBURY WORKPLACE ACCIDENT**

**Ms SOPHIE COTSIS (Canterbury—Minister for Industrial Relations, and Minister for Work Health and Safety) (12:17):** I speak today to address a very concerning issue. As members would be aware, on Tuesday afternoon there was a serious workplace incident at a distribution centre in Minchinbury. It resulted in three workers being taken to Westmead Hospital. Tragically, one of these workers, a man, has passed away and two of his colleagues have sustained serious injuries. I express my deepest sympathies and condolences to the family of the worker who passed away. I extend my heartfelt condolences to his friends, his work colleagues, his communities in Australia and abroad, and to the United Workers Union family. My thoughts are also with the two other injured workers and their families. I sincerely hope that they recover fully from their injuries and that, when they are ready and able, they can return to work.

As expected, SafeWork NSW is investigating this incident. Its enquiries are ongoing. Workplace deaths are still far too common. One work-related fatality is one too many. But, according to Safe Work Australia's published statistics as at 22 June 2023, a total of 69 Australian workers have been killed at work this year. That is one fatality in fewer than every three days. If including only working days, that is one death every 1.8 days. The toll on families whose loved ones have been killed or injured at work is horrific. The Parliament must use this moment to commit to doing much better.

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (12:20):** As the shadow work health and safety Minister and on behalf of the New South Wales Opposition, I too wish to address the tragic death of that individual and express our thoughts and condolences to their loved ones, friends and family, community and colleagues. It is a very sad event. We too await the findings of the work health and safety report. Everyone deserves to know what went on. Of course, the Parliament, on receipt of that report, should look at what else we can do to make workplaces safe. Once again, we express our sorrows, thoughts and sympathies to the individual's family. Every worker across our great State absolutely deserves to, and should be in a position to, return home to their families safe and sound. We will continue to work across Parliament towards that aim.

#### *Committees*

### **COMMITTEE ON THE HEALTH CARE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION**

#### **Government Response**

**Mr RYAN PARK:** I announce the electronic tabling of the Government response to Report No. 3/57 of the Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission entitled *Review of the Health Care Complaints Commission 2020-21 annual report*.

#### *Documents*

### **INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION**

#### **Reports**

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with section 74 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, I announce receipt of the report of the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled

*Investigation into the conduct of the then member of Parliament for Wagga Wagga and then Premier and others (Operation Keppel)*, dated June 2023, and received this day. I order that the report be printed.

*Committees*

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**

**Chair and Deputy Chair**

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise the House that on 28 June 2023 Mr Jason Li was elected Chair and Mr Clayton Barr was elected Deputy Chair of the Public Accounts Committee. I congratulate them. It is a wonderful pathway to the top.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Deputy Chair**

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with Standing Order 282 (2), I advise that on 29 June 2023 Mr Nathan Hagarty was elected Deputy Chair of the Committee on Transport and Infrastructure.

*Petitions*

**RESPONSES TO PETITIONS**

**The CLERK:** I announce that the following Minister has lodged a response to a paper petition signed by 500 or more persons:

The Hon. Paul Scully—South Eveleigh Precinct Development—lodged 31 May 2023 (Ms Jenny Leong)

*Bills*

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

**Referral**

**Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

**Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater) (12:25):** The fact that the very mover of the motion we are now debating is not even in the Chamber to speak to it speaks volumes about the chaotic process and debacle that played out in the Chamber this morning. It says to me that this motion is nothing but a sham, as members of the Labor Government have put up a member of the crossbench to do their bidding because they are too cowardly to do it themselves. It is quite disappointing that we are having a debate to gag an important issue, which members opposite and those on this side of the Chamber and on the crossbench have taken very seriously in recent years.

I am proud to support the Minerals Legislation Amendment (Offshore Drilling and Associated Infrastructure Prohibition) Bill on behalf of not only the New South Wales Coalition but also the people of Pittwater, coastal communities—represented in Parliament by those on this side of the Chamber and those opposite—and the people of New South Wales. In debating the referral motion, it is important to also reflect upon the virtues of the substantive bill. The bill makes amendments to the Petroleum (Offshore) Act 1982, the Offshore Minerals Act 1999 and the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

As I set out in my second reading speech, this bill prohibits any offshore petroleum or mineral exploration or recovery by way of a direct ban on not only mining exploration or recovery but also any infrastructure or approvals in New South Wales coastal waters that might facilitate mining or exploration in Commonwealth waters. What is Petroleum Exploration Permit 11, or PEP 11, and what is offshore gas exploration and mining? And what are the reasons we should stop it? The area that the PEP 11 licence covers was first surveyed in 1981. It covers 8,200 square kilometres between Newcastle and Wollongong. The licence itself, however, is for 4,574 square kilometres running from Newcastle to Manly.

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Point of order: My point of order is taken under Standing Order 76. The motion before the House is a referral of the bill to a Legislative Assembly committee. The member should speak to the motion; at the moment he is speaking to the substantive bill.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li):** I note that the member for Pittwater has only just started his 20-minute contribution to debate, but I encourage him to come to the substance of the motion.

**Mr RORY AMON:** I think it is important that members know exactly what it is that the motion is proposing to refer to a committee before we make a decision on it. Before we consider the motion properly, we need to know precisely what it seeks to send off to that committee. Firstly, offshore gas exploration of the type

contemplated by PEP 11 employs seismic blasts as part of seabed surveying. These blasts can kill plankton over a kilometre away; stress, harm and displace nearby fish and other sea life; and have been linked to mass strandings of turtles, dolphins and whales. The current licence, effectively legislation for the prevention of which this Government is seeking to refer to a committee, proposes to commence surveying activities, likely including seismic blasting, as close as a few kilometres off the coast of New South Wales. Members well know that this stretch of the coast is an area of abundant and diverse marine life, including whales, dolphins, seals, penguins, rays, sharks and more.

Secondly, the type of exploration and mining activities that would be banned by the bill, which this Government seeks to refer to a committee for further consideration, involves the construction of drilling platforms, pipelines and other infrastructure, which physically damage or destroy critical marine habitats such as coral reefs, seagrass and benthic ecosystems. Excavation and dredging during the drilling process can disturb the sea floor and disrupt sensitive habitats. Thirdly, offshore gas mining and exploration should be banned because 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 need not emphasise that our coastal communities are hubs of tourism to which people from not only our coastline but across the State and across the country come and that these adverse impacts posed by offshore gas exploration and mining would kill or significantly threaten the tourism industry.

If the bill becomes law, which should happen sooner rather than later, it will end decades of this issue being a political football between New South Wales and the Commonwealth, between Liberal and Labor, between The Greens and others, including coastal MPs like the member for Gosford, who is leaving the Chamber. The assent of this bill will see New South Wales having done everything we presently understand we can do to end PEP 11. This legislation will mean no more ports, no more pipes and no more politics over PEP 11. The bill was drafted and certified by the Parliamentary Counsel's Office [PCO]. The suggestion by the proposed referral—that the bill is constitutionally deficient or inadequate in any way—is an affront to the skill, care and professionalism of our PCO. Quite frankly, that is an insinuation I reject.

**Mr David Harris:** How many times did you refer bills to committees? You guys did it all the time.

**Mr RORY AMON:** I will get to the member shortly. This House should reject the insinuation implied by this proposed referral. Having been elected by the good people of Pittwater, I gave notice of this bill less than 22 hours after making my inaugural speech in this place. The mover of the motion we are now debating has been in this place for over a decade. The mover of this motion waved around a bill to stop offshore gas exploration in February. Where is that bill now? Some of the members opposite have been here for many years, and they sit here in support of the motion in circumstances where they had years to do something and did nothing. My community elected me to represent it, and within 22 hours after my inaugural speech I gave notice of the bill. Yet Labor members come to this Chamber, saying that for all these years they opposed PEP 11. They come here with their crocodile tears and disingenuous excuses, asserting, "We need more time. We need an inquiry."

*[Interruption]*

This is the party in government, the party with all the resources of the public service at its disposal to consider the terms of the bill.

**Mr Ray Williams:** Point of order: My point of order is taken under standing order 52 and it relates to the member for Wyong. I have been listening intently to this debate. The member for Pittwater should be heard without interruption.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li):** I note the point of order. I call the member for Pittwater.

**Mr RORY AMON:** This is the party that has put together legislation which did not really need to be put, but we will get to that. Every public servant of this State is at the disposal of those opposite to analyse and assess the terms of the bill and determine whether there are truly any issues. This Government can redirect the efforts of thousands of those public servants on a dime. If this Government took PEP 11 seriously, it would have investigated any legitimate concerns. It would have inquired into it and come up with any problems with the bill and brought them to this place so that we could have a debate today.

Instead, this Government has opted to have yet another inquiry, another committee, another task force. If holding an inquiry was an illicit drug, this Government would have been admitted to rehab or locked up for use, dealing and manufacture thereof. It is the kingpin dealer of inquiries, the godfather of task forces and the overlord of committees. We have had inquiries and task forces into buses, rental reforms and regional health—the list goes on. This Government is paralysed by indecision and by its inability to lead. It has a paralysed legislative agenda, which has been on such a weight loss journey it would make Jared from Subway blush. So paralysed is it that Labor is re-legislating what is already the law of this State.

This Government has passed legislation that already exists—legislating rental reforms and portable bonds that were already in law and in force; and legislating pay freezes that could have been done by regulation. It is more than happy to take up this Chamber's time on inane, unnecessary grandstanding, all to hide its own shortcomings and lack of legislative agenda and vision for this State. But, when my community decides to lead, this Government simply will not allow it. It would rather that this Parliament be an episode of *Seinfeld*, where we spend many days talking about nothing, than a meaningful place where serious policy reforms are debated.

So little does this Government have to debate, it is proposing that we spend 90 minutes to debate whether we should debate this bill at all. Such is the absurdity of this Government that it will not even allow us to have a conversation in this Chamber right now. My community says that it has had more than enough time. This motion will delay any action until 2024. The reality is that, if this referral goes to a committee to report in November 2023, it will be kicked over to when this Parliament next sits next year. We all know that in that time the PEP 11 licence could be approved by the joint authority, it could progress, seismic blasting could occur and our coastal communities could be at risk, all because those opposite quite simply refuse to have a sensible debate.

Let us be clear about the history of PEP 11. It is important that we are. Those opposite say that they oppose PEP 11 and offshore gas exploration, but the reality is that they are the architects of the very problem we are debating today. In 1991 the PEP 11 area was first surveyed. In October 2009 the current PEP 11 survey was approved by the Rudd Government. In November 2010 the PEP 11 exploration well proposal was approved by Industry and Investment NSW under the then State Government and Premier Kristina Keneally. In December 2010 the PEP 11 exploration well proposal was approved by the then Federal Labor Government under then Prime Minister Julia Gillard. In about 2018 the PEP 11 holder announced plans to pursue further exploration. Since about 2018 a blame game has ensued. The Morrison Government cancelled PEP 11 and the Albanese Government, by consent orders entered into in courts of this land, put it back on the table. The Albanese Government's decision has necessitated the bill.

Those opposite say that we had 12 years to do something on this issue. Quite frankly, we did not need to do anything, because we on this side do not legislate what does not need to be legislated, whereas those opposite seem to do nothing but legislate things that do not need to be legislated. The bill will end the blame game on PEP 11. PEP 11 has a history of great frustration to stakeholders across coastal communities and conservationists alike. In preparing the bill, my colleagues and I have consulted with our communities. I pay tribute to the member for Vacluse and the member for Manly. We have heard from our local residents, and they have told us they want the bill to pass. Over my time in Parliament, my colleagues and I have met or spoken with the Australian Marine Conservation Society, Surfers for Climate, Australian Parents for Climate Action, Environmental Leadership Australia, the Sydney Institute of Marine Science, Climate Solutions, Blueprint Institute, FrontRunners, World Wildlife Fund and more. Every single one of them supports the bill. Why will the Labor Government not support the bill?

Having said that, I have every hope and confidence that in due course we will end PEP 11, because members opposite in the Labor Party have long supported ending it. If they were sincere in their views, they would have taken the steps that the Opposition has taken, but they have not. They would have lobbied their Cabinet, but they have not. Or they may have, but no such bill is before us. Members do not need to take it from me. Let us do a roll call and see what Labor members have had to say about PEP 11.

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Point of order: My point of order is again taken under Standing Order 76. The motion before the House is about whether the bill should be referred to committee. It is not about the substance of the bill. The member opposite has been going back to 2010 to discuss what happened under the previous Liberal Government. He is going to the substance of the bill and not talking to the substantive issue before the House, which is whether the bill should be referred to committee for review.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li):** There is no point of order.

**Mr RORY AMON:** On 8 February 2021 the member for Gosford said, "I am beyond proud to stand with Labor and the Australian Labor leader, Anthony Albanese, in saying no to PEP 11 and no to gas exploration off our Central Coast." But today it is a yes. I am proud to have the support of the member for Wyong, who said on 20 February 2023, "Labor will continue to oppose any attempt to do offshore gas or mining." Yet here he is proposing to refer the bill to a committee—

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Point of order: Again, my point of order is taken under Standing Order 76. The member is constantly saying that Labor members are saying yes to the bill. We are not talking about the bill in this motion.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li):** I have ruled on the point of order.

**Mr RORY AMON:** Not satisfied with gagging debate on the bill, Government members now want to gag the debate on whether we should have the debate on the bill. I am proud to have the support of the member for



Swansea, who said on 25 February, "The rejection of pending and future offshore commercial exploration and mining permits will ensure the longevity of the Hunter and Central Coast's coastline." Yet, despite wanting to ensure the longevity of the Hunter and the Central Coast coastline, they are in no rush to do that. I am proud to have the support of the Hon. Penny Sharpe, the Minister for Climate Change, Minister for Energy, Minister for the Environment, and Minister for Heritage, and Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council—the third most senior person in the Labor Party. She has previously provided the Labor Party's unqualified support for the intention of the bill, advising in the other place in June 2021:

It is very clear there is strong opposition to the proposed extension of Advent Energy's Petroleum Exploration Permit known as PEP 11. This is a permit that allows offshore drilling for oil and gas in New South Wales. Labor has opposed this federally and our local members have opposed it locally. The member for Gosford, the member for Wyong and the member for The Entrance are strongly against this project and have been from day dot. Federally, Labor leader Anthony Albanese, Pat Conroy and Emma McBride have also been very public about their opposition. We are all in furious agreement ... This has been an established position across the Parliament.

In a time when agreement across this Chamber on key policy areas can be rare, I am bizarrely opposing a motion to delay saving our coastline. This is in circumstances where the Premier said on 4 February, "For over a decade, New South Wales has opposed PEP 11 and nothing has changed. We still oppose it." Yet they are happy to risk it going ahead over the next 12 months. I note that the Premier's position was supported by the member for Granville and the member for Newcastle, who endorsed that position through love reacts to the Premier's tweet. I am also pleased to have the support of the Prime Minister. He has said, "I am dead against PEP 11." Whilst the Federal Government has a process to go through in relation to a licence that it has entered into, we are not bound by a licence between the Federal Government and a private company. We are bound by a licence between us and our communities. Our communities have resoundingly told us that they do not support PEP 11. [*Extension of time*]

I am also pleased to have the support of many members of the crossbench. I note that the member for Sydney, who moved the motion, said on 3 February 2023, "We will do everything we can to stop this in New South Wales." But I am concerned about the position of the member for Sydney. There were many media conferences and there was much fanfare when he stood at a press conference with a bill that had been prepared to stop PEP 11. I have seen that bill, but the bill that we are proposing to refer to committee is a much better bill. That bill that was proposed would have only ended gas exploration in our waters and prevented infrastructure, but this bill goes a step further by making it clear that we will not aid and abet Federal gas exploration or mining.

I reiterate that the people in the Parliamentary Counsel's Office—who are incredibly professional and draft legislation for a living, and whose job it is to guide us to make sure we get things right—have prepared a bill that they are content is not deficient. The relevant Ministers have departments that employ thousands of public servants whose advice they could have sought. Clearly, they have not done so. I am advised that as late as yesterday the Government did not even know the bill was coming up, even though it has been on the *Business Paper* for over a week. The Government is in disarray, which is represented by the chaos we saw this morning and the fact that the mover of the motion was not even here to finish reading the motion. Government members did not even know. In their haste and in their hurry, they have decided to punt this off to a committee that will take six months to deliver its report.

It took me six weeks to put together a bill with the Parliamentary Counsel's Office, and it took me six days to get it from the first reading to the second reading. If it took me, a humble Opposition backbencher, that short a time then it surely would take the Government an even shorter period. Yet they want to delay this for another six months. Our communities do not have another six months. Our coastline does not have another six months. People are rightfully concerned about the impact of this proposal. I am pleased that the member for Wakehurst has taken up this issue as well, not only as the mayor of the Northern Beaches but also as a member of this Chamber. He raised this in his inaugural speech and in a private member's statement. I am proud to know that he supports ending PEP 11.

The list of those who support ending PEP 11 and offshore gas exploration goes on, and it is a long list. The bill has bipartisan support, not only across this Chamber and various parliaments in this country but across communities as well. I am hopeful that the bill will attract the support of the balance of the crossbench, and I am hopeful that they will support opposing this shameless attempt to gag debate. We are not elected to debate about whether we should have a debate; we are elected to debate substantive issues. If Government members are not prepared to put up meaningful policy reform and are more intent on legislating to put things in constitutions that really should not be there or legislating things that are already law, we have to wonder what they are doing here. We have to wonder why they are allocating so much time to have a debate about a debate. It is an absurdity. I will have to go back to my community and get out whiteboards, lab kits and chemistry sets to explain to them why something as clear as ending PEP 11 is not happening today in the lower House to then go upstairs to the other place.

**Ms Anna Watson:** Because it is the will of the House to refer it to a committee.

**Mr RORY AMON:** I note the member for Shellharbour has been silent publicly on ending PEP 11. I have not seen any public comments about her opposition. I can only assume that she supports PEP 11. She might not have an impacted community or a community within the remit of the licence area itself, but I would expect that our environment, whether outside someone's electorate or not, is worth protecting. Every tree and every single—

**Ms Lynda Voltz:** Like you looked after us in Sydney when you guys were in government.

**Mr RORY AMON:** I do enjoy that, member for Auburn. Every member in this place has an obligation not only to their communities but also to the State of New South Wales. I am yet to see from this Government any meaningful legislation to do with protecting our environment, any meaningful legislation in relation to energy policy, any meaningful legislation in relation to climate action. Instead, the Government is intent on relying upon Opposition policies, which I am very proud of. Our policies on climate, our policies on energy and our policies on coastal gas exploration led the way. Even though we are not in government, we will continue to lead because, while the Labor Party might be in government, it is not in power and it is not in control.

The chaos that we have seen today—and that we will no doubt continue to see in the weeks, months and three years ahead—is the evidence that our communities need to decide that the days of those on the Government benches are numbered. In March 2027 our communities will look at what this Government has not done and is not able to do and they will come knocking. I look forward to joining the member for Vaucluse on the other side of the Chamber very soon. I look forward to seeing her on the front bench as a Minister in the next Liberal Coalition Government, to seeing the member for Manly as a Minister in the next Liberal Coalition Government, and even to seeing the member for Terrigal as a Minister in the next Liberal Coalition Government. Maybe even the member for Kellyville will be on the front bench.

**Mr Ray Williams:** Not again.

**Mr RORY AMON:** If he goes around again, he could have a bit of the John Farnham about him—just one more time. Hopefully, the member for Kellyville will be on the front bench as well. I will be more than happy to sit on the back bench so long as we get PEP 11 cancelled. I know that a Liberal Coalition government will do that. I know also that the Liberal Coalition Opposition will work with the crossbench and the Government, and do everything we can to ensure that PEP 11 is dead and buried—just like this Labor Government will be in March 2027.

**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) (12:51):** We have to excuse the member for Pittwater. He has only been here for two minutes but we had to suffer 12 years in opposition, with the previous Government gagging us, talking down our private members' bills and doing a whole lot of other stuff to make sure that the issues that were very dear to our hearts never got proper exposure in the Parliament.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li):** The member for Pittwater has made his contribution to the debate. He will come to order.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS:** The member for Pittwater should not try to lecture us about right and wrong. He should talk to his colleagues and ask how they acted when they were in government. Then he might get a real lesson about how we were treated in opposition. I hope he enjoys his time on the other side of the Chamber. Since we have come to government we have made a commitment to follow proper process and do due diligence to ensure the legislation that goes through this Parliament is robust and workable. We will examine this bill in committee, which is a normal practice of the Parliament. It does it all the time to make sure that there are no unintended consequences. That is what our committee structure is about—reviewing legislation and making sure we get the best outcomes for the people of New South Wales. That is the normal process. It is not outrageous. It is not from left field. It is not a terrible thing to do. It is what the Parliament does.

That is why we have committees. It is what we do. The former Federal Government, maybe with good intentions, interfered with an independent process and ended up in court. The company involved challenged a decision because proper process was not followed. Now the Federal Labor Government is following proper process to make sure that its final determination cannot be challenged. It is pretty outrageous that members opposite are criticising the Federal Government for doing what it was elected to do. The former Federal leader, Scott Morrison, intervened in that process.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li):** The member for Pittwater was heard in relative silence during his contribution. He will cease interjecting.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS:** As a result, the issue had to go to court. It was clear the court would rule in the company's favour. Therefore, an agreement was reached to make sure it returned to the proper process of

assessment so the Government could make a decision that would stand up—a decision that could be justified, a decision that followed due process. Opposition members seek to criticise the New South Wales Parliament and particularly Independent member Alex Greenwich, which is a little outrageous given his record in this place of following proper process. How many very important bills has he got through Parliament because he worked cooperatively to get the best and most appropriate outcomes? The member for Pittwater criticises the member for Sydney for wanting to ensure that, if the legislation passes, it cannot be challenged or overturned. What a terrible concept that we have an Independent member of Parliament who wants to get things right! How outrageous! What a terrible thing to do!

**Mr Rory Amon:** You have had years.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS:** The member opposite keeps saying that we have had years. The former Government did not introduce any legislation on this issue in 12 years. From memory, I think Zali Steggall moved a motion in the Federal Parliament that lapsed because it did not have the support of the Federal Liberal Government.

**Mr Rory Amon:** Not legislation.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS:** It was legislation. The member for Pittwater can check. A bill was put before the Federal Parliament, so let's not be too precious about this. It is about due process. Government members have said that parts of the bill may be open to challenge and it is appropriate for the committee to consider the bill and come back to the Parliament with a determination so that we can make the right decisions. That is not an outrageous proposition; it is the right thing to do. The member for Pittwater took the opportunity to quote all Government members and Federal Labor members who have opposed this project. He is 100 per cent right—we have opposed it. The difference between us and them is that those opposite do not follow proper process. They want to intervene and have the legislation challenged in court and overturned because they choose a political solution, not a lawful solution.

In this country we have a funny thing called the High Court. When people do not follow proper process, it is open to the proponents to take legislation to the High Court and get a determination. If the High Court were to rule that our legislation was not lawful under Commonwealth law, then what would we do? We would have a court decision that we could not overturn. We must follow proper process to get this right. For the benefit of the new members in this place, the previous New South Wales Parliament voted unanimously in the Legislative Council to oppose Petroleum Export Permit 11, or PEP 11. We took a bipartisan approach. But suddenly members opposite want to make it a partisan issue. They seek to politicise it because during the election campaign it was all they had. The teals were coming for them, so they said, "Oh no! We need an issue. Let's suddenly jump on this." So a strategy was devised to introduce this legislation, which had never been seen before.

When Labor members were out protesting with communities and the current Prime Minister was paddling with surfers and showing his support, the Coalition came galloping in, very late to the party. They were not there at the start. Zali Steggall led the way on the northern beaches and Labor members up and down the coast fought this proposal. We understood one thing: We can only oppose these types of projects by using proper process. Labor governments follow the rules. We know, after 12 years in opposition, that the Coalition made up rules. Today we had an ICAC decision. Coalition members changed everything to suit themselves—grants and anything else under the sun. They just changed the rules.

**Mr Rory Amon:** Point of order: The Minister is suggesting that Opposition members bear some responsibility in relation to this morning's corruption findings.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS:** No. I did not imply that at all.

**Mr Rory Amon:** The Minister referred specifically to this morning's ICAC findings.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li):** There is no point of order.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS:** I am sorry if the member feels slighted by that—maybe there might be a little bit there. I was the victim of Operation Spicer when I lost my seat because people illegally acted with donations, so I know all about it. Eleven then Government MPs had to be stood aside because they did not do the right thing; they did not follow the rules. That is what I was talking about. Members on this side are bringing integrity back to government and making sure that when we make decisions, they are lawful and correct decisions. If members opposite want to criticise us for that, it says more about them than us.

We were elected to bring integrity back to government in this State and to bring a system of government that people could trust. Whether it was bushfire grants, flood recovery grants, sports grants, people getting jobs overseas or all of those sorts of things, we were elected because the people of New South Wales had had enough. To accuse of us trying to gag something because we want to follow proper process and have a cross-party

committee—and to criticise an Independent MP because he wants to follow proper process and do the right thing—is a pretty ordinary cheap shot.

It is important because this decision relates to Commonwealth waters. Ultimately, whilst we are part of a partnership, the final decision-making resides with the Federal Government, and it is going through a process. Members opposite are saying that if the Federal Government makes a decision they do not like then they will stop people using the ports of New South Wales in a normal, lawful way. Call me a cynic but I think that will probably be challenged. They are going to stop people from engaging in a lawful activity in Commonwealth waters and accessing New South Wales land to deliver their product. Call me strange but it is a bit of a stretch.

That is why it is so important that the committee looks at this, calls witnesses and comes back to the House with a determination and recommendations. That is normally what the Parliament does. I know it upsets the member, who is new. This is his bill. He is proud of it and wants to go with it to his community but we want to make sure we get it right. We had very good legislation introduced through private members' bills. I remember one brought forward by the member for Prospect, which was about people doing illegal U-turns in front of schools. It was talked out. It was never voted on, because members of the former Government said, "We don't want them to have a good idea; we don't want them to get anything up," and they talked it out. That is still not law in New South Wales. When it came to protecting kids, for the former Government it was all about politics, not good decision-making.

We will not be lectured by members opposite because we have presented a coherent argument that this has to be looked at in a proper way through a committee process. The previous Government did not refer our bill to a committee; it did not even give us a chance. It said, "No, not going to happen." I can probably go through five, 10 or 15 things that we moved in opposition then the Government cut us off, gagged us, stopped speakers and used a whole lot of tactics. The member has to understand that if we do something, we are doing it for the right reasons, not political reasons. I know it upsets the member, but it is a good time to learn a lesson. There is a new Government that is committed to work in the right way.

**Mr James Griffin:** Point of order: The member for Wyong knows that I have a great deal of respect for him, but he is veering well off course in patronising the member for Pittwater. He should stick to the substantive issue.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li):** I have heard the point of order. I gave a broad interpretation of relevancy to the member for Pittwater's speech, and I will grant the same to the member for Wyong.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS:** I am talking about why we referred it to the committee, which is the substantive conversation we are having. I am saying that we are sending it to a committee because it is the right thing to do, and I am explaining in a historical context that we were never given the opportunity to send our things to committee because we did not have the numbers. The former Government used its numbers to block all the legislation we put forward. It was only through the actions of the member for Sydney, who brought both sides together on important issues, that things got through this House, including on some really difficult issues. To criticise him for moving this motion is a bit disingenuous, because it is not the way he operates. He thinks through these issues carefully, and I am sure that if he did not come back to the Chamber there was a really good reason. Taking little cheap shots at him, saying that he could not be bothered and making those sorts of comments, is way out of line. It disrespects—

**Mr Rory Amon:** Point of order: The member for Wyong has misrepresented what I said, and I wish to be heard on that. The member for Wyong said that I said that he could not be bothered. That is not my recollection of what I said. I said that it was symptomatic of the Government's chaos that he was not here. That is my recollection. I put that on record.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li):** I do not uphold the point of order.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS:** We discussed it amongst ourselves. It is not actually the Government's motion; it is the member for Sydney's motion. To say it is the Government doing it—we are supporting the member for Sydney's motion because it is the right thing to do—is very disingenuous. The member for Sydney is doing something he thinks is the right thing to do. He thinks it is the right process to examine this bill to make sure that it will stand up through a cross-party parliamentary committee that will give people the opportunity to talk about all of the issues, to get expert advice and to return to the Parliament with a report and with recommendations. Then we can move forward from there. It is not an outrageous proposition; it is the right thing to do. I agree with the member for Terrigal on a whole range of issues. He was pretty late coming to the party after all the years of protesting we did.

This is a political argument. We are not having a process argument, which is what this motion is about. That is why members on this side took points of order. The motion is about referral. It is not about the wider issue; it is about referral to a committee to make sure we get it right. That is what we are substantively talking about. I know other people will go back through the issue again and again, but they will get that chance after the committee hands down its report, and then we can move forward with it. Then we will have a report to make sure that, if amendments are needed, if we need a different direction or if parts have to be taken out, we will have that information.

Who would have thought that a government and members of a crossbench would be supporting a process that got better outcomes? I know it was not standard practice for those opposite before, but that is why we are doing it. I am dealing with the member for Sydney on a range of issues. He is not a pushover. The Government does not say, "Here you are, member for Sydney. Will you move this for us?" People do not know the member for Sydney if they think that is the way he operates. He has thought this through. He has talked to his colleagues to make sure most of them are onside as well, as he did when we voted earlier to go through this process. He had support.

**Mr Adam Crouch:** When you gagged us.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS:** We haven't. The member got 20 minutes instead of 10 minutes, so we have actually given you more time. You were not gagged at all; it was just pushed a little bit later. That is what this debate is about. Let us stick to it being referred to a committee to make sure that the Parliament and the members of the Legislative Assembly make an educated decision about a piece of legislation that is being proposed so that we get it right. That is the argument today. It is not the substantive argument about PEP 11, which we probably agree all across the Chamber should not progress. That is not what this is about. This is about making sure, when a decision is made to pass legislation through this place, that the legislation is not contestable.

I finish by making this point: Parliamentary Counsel staff, who are excellent and outstanding, have written the legislation. We refer bills to committees all the time. It is standard practice. And guess what? Sometimes we have to move amendments. The Government sometimes moves amendments to its own legislation because it is found, after consultation, that some parts need to be changed. That is not unusual either. There is a 12-year history of the former Government moving amendments to its own bills because there was discussion—particularly in the Legislative Council, which became very good at running committees—and the feedback was then incorporated in the bill. This is not outrageous; this is not a gag. This is about getting it right.

**Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (13:10):** I am genuinely conflicted about this referral motion, and I will speak both for and against the motion to explain why I am genuinely annoyed and conflicted. I note that the students from St Augustine's and Killarney Heights had to leave, for which I apologise. They will enjoy Government House, which is their next stop. The important bill in question seeks to prohibit offshore petroleum exploration and mining activity off the New South Wales coast. This is very much a goal I share and will take every opportunity to advocate for.

I thank the Opposition for introducing the bill and focusing the Parliament's attention on this important issue. In particular I thank the member for Manly, the member for Vacluse and the member for Pittwater, who have been champions of the bill. Of course, as MPs representing coastal electorates, we have a common interest in stopping offshore petroleum mining off the New South Wales coastline. However, I must make the point that the New South Wales Coalition had 12 years to bring the legislation while in government, and it did not. During the election campaign, when Coalition members committed to legislating a ban on offshore mining in New South Wales waters, I stood in front of the cameras with Layne Beachley and the Surfrider Foundation and suggested they recall Parliament, if they were serious, to get it done. They had plenty of opportunity to legislate when they were in power. They are bringing this bill now that they are in opposition, and that is extremely disappointing to me.

The context of the bill is the PEP 11 exploration licence and the years of uncertainty that communities have endured about the threat of drilling for gas off the coastline from Newcastle to Manly. I have long opposed offshore exploration and mining and, in particular, progression of the PEP 11 exploration licence. As mayor of Northern Beaches Council, I was opposed to this project from the outset. In March 2019, I think, the council passed a motion as a matter of urgency to write to our local Federal members outlining our opposition, and also to write to the joint authority responsible for making the decision approving the PEP 11 exploration licence. On this and many other occasions, the Northern Beaches Council and I, as mayor, made our opposition to the project crystal clear.

It will come as no surprise to anybody on the northern beaches that we are passionate about the health of our coastline and ocean. The coast from Newcastle to Manly contains many of the most iconic beaches in the country, if not the world. When we learned about the threat of proposed offshore gas drilling off our beaches, the

community rallied in opposition. In February 2022, wanting to secure the support of the northern beaches in the lead-up to the Federal election, Prime Minister Scott Morrison secretly—now infamously—assumed the powers of his Cabinet colleague and resource Minister Keith Pitt, to supposedly cancel the PEP 11 exploration licence. That ill-fated attempt was then challenged in court by Asset Energy and the decision was overturned in February this year. That very unfortunate series of events has led us to where we are today, with no certainty about the PEP 11 exploration licence.

The exploration licence is now back with the joint authority for determination. Minister Houssos sits on that authority, but Federal Minister Madeleine King has the final say. We eagerly await the outcome. With the February decision again raising the prospect of exploration progressing, PEP 11 became a feature of the 2023 New South Wales election campaign, with Independents and the Coalition committing to legislation to stop offshore exploration and mining. I welcomed that race to the top in what turned into a competition of who can oppose PEP 11 the most. I acknowledge the advocacy of Jacqui Scruby, who ran as an Independent for the electorate of Pittwater, and the determination of Alex Greenwich and other Independents to use every available lever to decisively act to stop PEP 11 and draw attention to the urgent need to switch to renewable energy sources, not new coal and gas mining. I also acknowledge the work that Zali Steggall and Dr Sophie Scamps are doing in the Commonwealth Parliament with the Stop PEP 11 bill.

The risks to our coastline and marine environment from offshore petroleum exploration and mining are simply too high. We know that seismic testing, which is a key step in exploratory activities, is damaging to wildlife, as the member for Pittwater pointed out. For example, it harms whales' hearing and keeps them from their feeding and breeding grounds. I am sure I am not the only one who has been watching on, in awe, as whales have been travelling up our coast in recent months, but we have all seen examples from around the world when things go wrong and oil washes up on vast stretches of coastline. The risks are simply too high.

The broader impact of drilling for petroleum off our coastline is, of course, the greenhouse gas emissions caused by burning the fossil fuels mined. The International Energy Agency is clear: No new gas fields should be opened if the world is to meet internationally agreed climate goals. We need to reduce gas demand, not lock in new gas from PEP 11. The same applies to gas exploration on land, including protecting prime agricultural land from coal seam gas mining on the Liverpool Plains. We need to electrify our homes, our transport, our industry and our exports at scale, powered by renewable energy. This transition offers massive opportunities for households and businesses to save money and slash emissions. Gas is expensive, it is polluting, and it is not compatible with our net zero goals.

Just the other week, I was in Canberra at a local government conference and heard an impressive presentation from Saul Griffith about Rewiring Australia. He painted a compelling vision about opportunities for electrification at scale across our society and economy. We must take every opportunity, every avenue, to oppose offshore drilling. The science is clear. The community's wishes are clear. Today I again add my voice to the urgent calls to take strong and decisive action, wherever possible, as soon as possible, to stop offshore petroleum exploration.

Speaking to the referral, I acknowledge the concerns raised by the Government about the potential unintended consequences of the bill, particularly while a Federal decision is pending on the PEP 11 licence. I understand some legal ambiguity remains in relation to the bill's constitutional validity. I absolutely support the intent of the bill. It must be the best possible bill. After the uncertainty and setback created by the administrative bungle at the Federal level over the PEP 11 exploration licence, the last thing we want to do is pass legislation that is vulnerable to legal challenge; hence why I say that I am annoyed by and conflicted on this referral.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (13:16):** In speaking to this referral motion, I will address a number of issues that were raised by previous speakers. The fact is that it was a longstanding policy of the previous Government to ban offshore mineral exploration and mining. During the lead-up to the last election it was a bipartisan view that legislation be brought to this House to legislate against offshore mining and mineral exploration.

Some of the concerns that have been raised—and rightly so—are around the complexity between Commonwealth waters and State waters, and how the previous piece of legislation that the Coalition proposed during the election campaign did not go far enough in ensuring that any exploration that took place in Commonwealth waters would not make its way through to the New South Wales coastline. What we have done, and what the member for Pittwater has done in producing this piece of legislation with the Parliamentary Counsel's Office, is ensure that we put forward a piece of legislation that comprehensively and unequivocally deals with the particular concerns that were raised.

The member who spoke previously conflated Federal issues with the opportunity before us in this Parliament to resolve this longstanding issue that has been raised time and again over many years. Specifically,

schedule 1 to the bill amends the Petroleum (Offshore) Act 1982 to include a 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, importantly, 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. That is the key point, which evidently the member had not read. It is clear as day in the bill that the concerns raised by the member have been adequately and comprehensively dealt with.

Surfers for Climate has organised a panel of experts to give a presentation to all members in the Jubilee Room this afternoon on the importance of this legislation. Unfortunately I now have to go and tell them that there has been a delay—an unneeded delay—to this important piece of legislation. The members on that panel include Dr Gabrielle Kuiper, an energy and climate policy expert; Bruce Robertson, an energy and finance analyst; Zoe Whitton, managing director of Pollination; and Laura Wells, a scientist and science communicator. At 2.30 p.m. those panellists will be making it very clear that the legislation that we have proposed—and that we are looking forward to receiving bipartisan support on—would have dealt with an issue that has troubled coastal communities. Indeed, it has troubled people right across New South Wales. No matter where people live, they love enjoying our coastline. Members of the panel have been concerned for many years now, as have people in coastal communities, that the exploration licence—

**Ms Anna Watson:** Point of order: While I do this reluctantly, the member for Manly knows it is the will of the House to refer the bill to a committee. It is proper process, it is appropriate, and that is the will of the House. To stand there and say that we are delaying this bill is disingenuous. I ask that the member retract that statement.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li):** There is no point of order.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN:** Reluctantly, I will not retract that statement because we do have the opportunity today, if we were to proceed with this legislation, to bring it into effect far quicker than would have been the case—or seemingly will be the case, as the committee will only need to report by 21 November. As I was just saying, a lot of the questions are raised in the referral motion. For example, paragraph (1) (d) calls for looking at the "environmental impacts of offshore drilling". We all know that. That is very clear. That has been understood over years of academic and scientific research. We do not need to send the legislation to committee to determine the environmental impacts of offshore drilling or for paragraph 1 (e), "any other related matter".

This afternoon at 2.30 p.m. there is an opportunity for members in this place to come together to hear from an expert panel—a professional outfit and group of people led by Surfers for Climate. They are here today in hope, after months of ferocious campaigning in which members of all parties came together with Independents, to say, "We do not support PEP 11." Today, members had an opportunity to put that into effect. I am greatly surprised. The member for Pittwater brought the bill before the House a number of weeks ago. Members have had an opportunity to speak with the member for Pittwater and raise some of the concerns that have been aired today.

**Mr Rory Amon:** Not one. No-one. Nothing.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN:** As I am hearing from the interjection, no-one chose to come and raise those particular concerns with the member, which is sad. It goes to the other comment made earlier about the politicisation of this issue. This is not a political attempt; it is a genuine attempt to come good on an election commitment, from not only the previous Government but also members who have stood here, like the member for Pittwater—

**Ms Anna Watson:** What about due diligence, not just rushing things through? If you are against due diligence, then you are in the wrong place.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN:** I note the interjection. A comprehensive bill that has been worked on for some time is in no way an attempt not to be diligent about the legislation that we were going to pass. It is concerning that the previous speaker conflated Federal issues with the legislation and the opportunity we have in front of us. I have to go to the panel this afternoon with a heavy heart and explain to them what has happened. Of course, it is the hope of the Opposition that this is a genuine attempt by the member for Sydney and others to ultimately arrive at a piece of legislation that can be supported by all members of this House.

If we do get to that point, I hope that coastal members have a damn good reason as to why they would not choose to support a piece of legislation put forward to deal with Petroleum Exploration Permit 11. We have put up a terrific opportunity to do that. People in coastal communities right up and down New South Wales are watching very closely to see how that proceeds. They understand the position of the member for Pittwater, the member for Vacluse, the member for Wakehurst and a number of other members in this place. For that reason, it is difficult to support the referral of this bill to the committee.

**Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (13:24):** One of the advantages of having been in this Parliament for some time is that one has a sense of the history of both Chambers and the processes that we have been through. By my count, in the first 100 days we have already sent at least two other bills—Government bills—to committees for consideration. That is a very normal process in this Parliament to get the best possible outcomes from legislation. The reality is that the Parliamentary Counsel's Office drafts bills based on instructions. Those instructions do not always take into consideration the most complex issues that may arise in a bill. For example, I sat on the other side of this Chamber when the former Liberal Government decided that it would rip the guts out of the workers compensation system. Instead of doing what everybody had asked for, particularly those workers involved in workplaces with the biggest accidents, and referring the bill for consultation, the former Government pushed it through.

I sat on the other side of this Chamber and watched the sun come up because they were so determined to get that piece of legislation through without any consultation with anyone else. This is what came out of that legislation—it is a lesson for members opposite who are new to the Chamber. A worker who had lost their leg from below the knee down would not even be entitled to prosthetics after just five years. Under legislation that the former Government introduced into this Parliament, a worker was not entitled to a prosthetic limb five years after losing the limb in an accident at work, but would be required to go onto the public health waiting list. That was the legislation that the former Government pushed through, and then had to rush back to Parliament to quickly change. I do not know how many times that piece of legislation has been changed because of the outrageous way it was rushed through the Parliament.

The other House has the Selection of Bills Committee. If members go back over the proceedings of the Fifty-Seventh Parliament, they will see how many bills have been referred to committees for inquiry. It is not unusual; it is common. I am particularly surprised that the member for Manly, who was a member of the previous Parliament and is well aware of the number of bills that went to committee, has given us a sob story about how he had invited people here who were expecting the bill to go through, while knowing full well the processes of this House. In fact, he has let those people down. This has been a very long debate, but we have to get the legislation right. That does not mean that members should come here with a piece of legislation that has not been worked out across all the parties, looking to all the considerations, and say, "Just accept my bill without any consideration in detail." The process for consideration in order to get this bill right and make sure it works is taking it to a committee. It is a very normal process.

It is shocking that members come here without looking at the history of this Parliament and the previous Government. It was not just the workers compensation legislation. Numerous pieces of law and order legislation were brought back. Gambling bills were brought back—there was a raft of bills. I think the tattooing bill has come back three or four times, even though the problematic issues were raised every single time in the lead-up to the debate. That is why we have a review process and a committee process. Once a bill has passed through Parliament and the wrong decisions have been made, the implications can be impactful and very long term. It is very hard to undo something that has been done wrongly. It is better to get it right in the first place.

From day one, under Premier Chris Minns, members of this Government have said that they want to work together with everybody in the Parliament to make sure that we get the best outcome. That is because we accept that sometimes members will not necessarily understand all the implications of a bill. That is why, when members have asked to send the housing contribution bill and other pieces of legislation to committee in order to understand it better, the Government has agreed.

**The ASSISTANT SPEAKER (Mr Jason Li):** I shall now leave the chair. The House will resume at 2.30 p.m.

**Ms KELLIE SLOANE (Vaucluse) (14:31):** Today should have been a day that all members in this place could come together on something that is too important for politics to interfere with. It is unusual and quite special when all members are enthusiastically united on something. Labor, the Liberals, The Nationals, The Greens and the crossbench are all united on banning the offshore exploration of gas, minerals and petroleum products from the waters of New South Wales. But Labor, via the member for Sydney as proxy, has taken the disappointing decision to push the Minerals Legislation Amendment (Offshore Drilling and Associated Infrastructure Prohibition) Bill 2023 to a committee at the end of the year.

**Mr Adam Crouch:** Shame!

**Ms KELLIE SLOANE:** It is shameful that Labor is pushing the bill to a committee. It is not about good governance; it is about Labor once again kicking the can down the road and using excuses because it was not Labor's idea. The bill does not need a committee or further delay; it needs action. In the Chamber today, the Premier called for action on matters important to our great State. He said:



I encourage all members to bring their ideas to this Parliament. It is a hung Parliament, and we are keen to hear their initiatives to make this State great.

It seems that is not the case when it comes to this bill. The Government may be short on ideas and have an embarrassingly poor legislative agenda, but when there is an idea that unites all parties, it wants to kick it off to a committee. I note that The Greens—Federally, at least—have called on New South Wales Labor to debate and pass the bill, with Senator Peter Whish-Wilson saying in the Senate on 20 June:

What is state Labor going to do? Are they going to bring this bill on for debate? I urge them to do so—to pass this bill, ban petroleum exploration permit 11 in New South Wales once and for all and reflect the wishes of the community.

Today we are seeing that the Minns Labor Government is too weak to support a good idea. It is a Labor government that, in less than 100 days on the job, is paralysed by indecision. It is a Labor government that is addicted to reviews and committees. The delay is not about good governance or strengthening the bill, which Labor seemed to know nothing about yesterday. It is about a pattern of behaviour, a stagnation and an inability to govern. This is a government that is hooked on committees and reviews. To support my argument, I will read a list of reviews. They include the Rail Infrastructure and Systems Review; the Sydney Metro Review; the Toll Review; the NSW Bus Industry Taskforce; the review into Sydney Ferries; the housing land review; the review into penalties for violence in sport; the review into the education department's discipline policy; the review of Sydney Opera House illumination guidelines; the review of the apprentice travel pass; and the Future Directions for Social Housing in NSW review.

**Mr Rory Amon:** A lot of reviews.

**Ms KELLIE SLOANE:** The list goes on. There is also the review into industrial relations; the review into Menindee fish deaths; the workplace safety review; the review of renewable energy zones; and the review of public sector wages. Labor now wants to review this bill and send it to a committee rather than take action. It is an extraordinary and disappointing pattern of behaviour. It is a waste of taxpayers' money and the time of the members on the environment committee that Labor proposes to send this to, including my time. I am the only Opposition member on the committee. It is a Labor-controlled committee. The people of New South Wales thought they were electing a fresh government—a government that, after 12 years in the wilderness, should have been champing at the bit to get things done and ready to deliver on promises. Instead, the people have been delivered a government that does not know how to govern.

This is a Labor government whose only plan is to hold a review. It was not even a tough decision; it was a no-brainer. It is a solid bill that was professionally drafted by the Parliamentary Counsel's Office and that included broad stakeholder engagement informed by the benefit of decades of environmental ping-pong. Labor and the member for Sydney are now suddenly worried about the possibility of the Federal Government overturning the legislation. What do they know that we don't? Last time I checked, Federal Labor was also against drilling in New South Wales waters. Are they now planning to do that drilling? I hope they tell us.

The bill does not need to go to a committee; New South Wales must take its destiny into its own hands. That is what the community expects and that is what we should be doing. That is what the Coalition committed to during and well before the election campaign. The community overwhelmingly backs stopping Petroleum Exploration Permit 11 [PEP 11], environmental groups overwhelmingly back stopping PEP 11 and Labor MPs back stopping PEP 11. Yet they are effectively blocking it by delay. I feel sorry for the coastal Labor MPs who have been vocal on this issue and who essentially have egg on their face today, including the member for The Entrance, the member for Newcastle, the member for Wyong, the member for Coogee, the member for Gosford, the member for Swansea and the member for Maroubra. They have to go back to their communities tonight and tell them that they have let them down—that they chose delay over action.

Those members have to look at the grassroots environmental organisations in their communities and say, "We are all talk and no action." All of their bluster about how bad PEP 11 is has come to nothing; Labor has fallen at the final hurdle. The communities they represent should be angry today that the voices of their local coastal Labor members have not been heard. They should be angry that our coastlines do not matter to Labor, that election promises do not matter to Labor and that this Labor Government is too weak to take a stand on anything. It is a shame.

This matter must be dealt with swiftly. We have waited too long already. The bill has been informed by decades of inaction around PEP 11. Just two weeks ago *The Australian Financial Review* reported on the public relations efforts of Asset Energy, which has been releasing public opinion polling and talking to the media about why the project should go ahead. They say, "This is a safe and highly regulated industry." Why are they saying this? It is because they want to drill off our shore. We do not want to see oil rigs off our coastline. We do not have more time to waste; delaying could have serious consequences.

New South Wales' marine estate is one of our State's most significant natural resources and it must be protected. It includes around one million hectares of estuary and ocean, with more than 1,750 kilometres of ocean coastline, 6,500 kilometres of estuarine and coastal lake foreshores, 826 beaches, 44 offshore islands, and 185 estuaries and coastal lakes. The importance of our marine environment estate cannot be overstated. As the Independent Scientific Audit of Marine Parks in NSW, commissioned by the former Government, succinctly stated, "The New South Wales marine estate is owned by all people and has to be managed for all people."

From grassroots to government, every single one of us has a role to play in protecting our marine estate. That is why I am standing up today to argue against referring the bill to a committee, not just for the benefit of people today but also for the benefit of generations to come. The bill will mean that there will be no offshore petroleum or mineral exploration mining in New South Wales waters. In practice, that will mean even if the Commonwealth approves petroleum or mineral exploration, recovery or mining in its waters, no approval can be granted in New South Wales coastal waters or in New South Wales relating to that development for the maintenance, repair, provision or refuelling of vessels, aircraft or equipment related to that development; for the handling, refining or processing of petroleum or minerals obtained from that development; or for unloading or transportation, including by pipeline. It is pretty clear that the bill relates to matters in our waters and on our beaches. Why would we not take those matters into our own hands?

The bill makes it clear that anyone looking to drill for gas or oil in New South Wales waters, or just off them, can forget about it. Our coastal communities deserve that certainty and they deserve it now. We cannot keep kicking this down the road. The current PEP 11 licence could involve offshore drilling as close as a few kilometres off the coast of Australia, between Sydney and Newcastle. Offshore drilling would affect coastal ecosystems, intersect with whale migration patterns and devastate the environment if something went wrong. We do not have to look too far afield to see what it looks like when something does go wrong. In 2021 an oil pipeline located just six kilometres off the coast of Southern California spilled around 131,000 gallons of oil into the Pacific Ocean. I had a chat with Aussie pro surfer Belinda Baggs, a supporter of the bill and someone who has helped to inform it. She recounted to me what it was like to surf the waters off California. In a magazine interview she said:

No offshore drilling comes without risk. I've spent many years surfing in California with oil rigs shadowed on the horizon—no one really thought twice about it, saying they're safe and regulated well.

The energy company seeking to explore off our coast said similar things in *The Australian Financial Review* a few weeks ago. But Belinda went on to say:

It's been pretty common for small leaks to deposit blobs of tar on the beaches, running in unaware after a surf I usually have it squishing through my toes or smudged on my heel—it's hard to get off with cheap mayonnaise doing the trick! Funny scene scraping tar off your feet with a jar of mayonnaise.

This is happening on beaches that look just like ours. We do not want that to happen. It is not even due to a disaster occurring; it is just from common leaks. Closer to home, we have seen the devastation caused by the 2009 Montara blowout, which caused a large oil spill off the coast of Western Australia. The Federal Court of Australia found that the spill spewed over 2,500 barrels of oil into the Timor Sea every day for 74 days. The leak killed seaweed crops, destroyed fishing grounds and polluted waters over more than 90,000 square kilometres—an area larger than Tasmania. A 2016 review entitled *Environmental Impacts of the Deep-Water Oil and Gas Industry: A Review to Guide Management Strategies* found:

Oil and gas operations have the potential to result in accidental releases of hydrocarbons, with the likelihood of an accidental spill or blowout increasing with the depth of the operations.

The review estimated that an event the size of Montara or Deepwater Horizon can be predicted to occur, on average, roughly every 17 years. That is a risk we cannot afford to take. We know that even early exploration activities such as marine seismic airgun blasts, which reach more than 250 decibels—much louder than a Taylor Swift concert, I can guarantee you that—can be heard for kilometres and can have devastating impacts on marine wildlife. The blasts can cause hearing loss among mammals, disturb essential behaviours like feeding and breeding, and mask communication between whales. You can see whales off my local beaches in Bondi. Their migration patterns are disturbed by this exploration. This bill is too important to delay. The time for action is now. Josh Kirkman, CEO of Surfers for Climate Change, supports the bill and is at a function right now explaining to people why it is so pressing and urgent. He recently said:

Opposition to new offshore oil and gas projects, including PEP11, is overwhelming. This Bill ... should be supported by every beachgoer and politician in New South Wales who wants to protect our coastline and our way of life.

Dr Barry Traill from Solutions for Climate Australia has said:

I strongly congratulate the NSW Coalition for stepping up their efforts to ban offshore coal, gas, mineral and petroleum mining and exploration in NSW waters. This move should encourage governments right across Australia to ban these types of activities across our coastline to protect the environment and to drive down emissions.

And, prior to his election, the Premier said:

For over a decade NSW Labor has opposed PEP-11, and nothing has changed. We still oppose it.

Before the election, the now environment Minister said of PEP 11:

Labor has opposed this federally and our local members have opposed it locally. The member for Gosford, the member for Wyong and the member for The Entrance are strongly against this project and have been from day dot.

So what is happening right now? This bill is before Parliament and it could be the final nail in the coffin for PEP 11. It is long overdue. Where is the Premier? Where is the environment Minister? Where is the man who moved this motion today? They are all missing in action. The people of New South Wales are finding that what the Premier said before the election and what he does when in government are two very different matters. A bill to stop PEP 11 is before this House. It is an issue that the majority of us are agreed on. For too long the issue has been used as a political football. That needs to stop today, not at the end of the year or at the end of another year on the recommendation of a committee. We need to stop it now, to provide certainty for our coastal communities and to protect our marine estate. It was the vision of the former Government, as outlined in the *NSW Marine Estate Management Strategy 2018-2028*, to have:

... a healthy coast and sea, managed for the greatest wellbeing of the community, now and into the future.

This bill aligns with that vision. Let us not delay it. I ask members to do the right thing: Stop PEP 11 and protect our beaches. I encourage members to support the bill and to oppose the motion for referral to a committee.

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (14:48):** I regret having to speak on this particular motion. I commend the member for Vaucluse for her brilliant speech a few minutes ago. Earlier this morning I was gagged by the Government. I was unable to speak on behalf of the Opposition to this motion to kick the Minerals Legislation Amendment (Offshore Drilling and Associated Infrastructure Prohibition) Bill 2023 off to a committee. That is a disgrace. At a time when we should be having open discussions about the parliamentary process, to be denied the chance to speak for five minutes on behalf of the Opposition was an absolute disgrace. I will be telling all of the people on the Central Coast that Government members were prepared to gag debate about the disgraceful motion to kick the bill off to a committee. It is really sad. It is an indictment on the new Labor Government that it had to get the member for Sydney to do its dirty work because Government members did not have the courage to move this motion themselves. They did not want their hands anywhere near it because they know how our community feels about Petroleum Exploration Permit, or PEP 11.

The member for Vaucluse listed all the Labor members—the member for The Entrance, the member for Wyong, the member for Gosford and the member for Swansea—who now have to slink back to their electorates and somehow explain to 360,000 people on the Central Coast why a piece of good legislation was not debated and is going to be kicked down the road for months. The Government is already in disarray. It did not even know yesterday that the debate was coming on. As we saw this morning, its response was to deny Opposition members the chance to speak to the motion to refer the bill to a committee. In addition, Government members got somebody else to do their dirty work so they could say, "It wasn't us; it was the member for Sydney." That is a disgrace, quite frankly, and an appalling abuse of parliamentary privilege.

If it is a bad bill, Government members should speak up and vote against it. They should not hide behind a committee. If they do not like it, they should either amend it or vote against it. But it is completely gutless and cowardly to kick it down the road and say, "Let's put this off to the committee, which is controlled by the Government, until November this year," rather than admit, "It's a good bill and we'll vote in support of it." That is the right thing to do and what thousands of people in New South Wales expected the Government to do. But because those opposite did not invent or introduce the bill, they have said, "Let's kick it down the road. Let's put it off and hope that no-one will notice." But everyone is going to notice. Thousands of people were aware of today's debate on the bill, which has now been deferred basically indefinitely because it has been kicked off to a committee for some navel gazing. The committee will probably come back with recommendations that are already in this incredibly well-drafted bill introduced by the member for Pittwater.

Parliamentary Counsel drafted the bill after a lot of consultation with many stakeholders—unlike what we saw from the Government. It had been in office for fewer than 100 days when it had to kick one of its own bills to a committee because it was wrong. We will not be lectured to by those opposite about how to deliver good legislation, because this bill is the epitome of good legislation. It is what the people of New South Wales expect good government to do. Those opposite are falling at the first hurdle when they have the chance to tell energy companies from anywhere around the world, "Don't bother coming to New South Wales if you think you are going to get away with this, because you will not be able to pump your stuff through our waters."

Even more concerning is the message it sends to the proponents of PEP 11. It shows that the Government is completely divided on the issue and that it cannot be strong, say no and stand up for the people of New South

Wales. It gives those proponents more energy to pursue the issue. I remember clearly that in 2021 the then leader of the Federal Opposition, now Prime Minister, toddled up to Terrigal Beach with his sycophants and said, "I will commit to not renewing PEP 11." That was on 5 February 2021. Fast-forward to 5 November 2021, he returned to the Central Coast to Avoca and said, "We will not approve PEP 11, no ifs or buts." Here we are years later and the Federal Government is paralysed by the same indecision we are seeing from the New South Wales Government. The people of New South Wales have every right to be concerned when they see a complete failure of leadership at Federal and State levels.

We are doing Government members' work for them. We have delivered a great piece of legislation to them. All they have to do is say thank you and support it or, if they do not like it, move amendments to it or vote against it. That is the parliamentary process that the people of New South Wales expect from a good government, not kicking the bill off to a committee and hoping it will return in November just in time for the Christmas recess, when we break until next year. This referral pushes the bill's consideration into 2024, which is an absolute disgrace. If those opposite do not like it, vote against it. If they think it needs fixing, move amendments. They have 400,000 State government employees to give them advice about what to do with legislation. Surely if the Government was concerned about the bill it could have found one of them to draft an amendment. But it either could not be bothered or was too lazy, incompetent or disorganised to realise it should have done that.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell):** The member for Blue Mountains will come to order.

**Mr ADAM CROUCH:** Until yesterday, those opposite did not even know that the bill would be debated today. That is how organised the Government is. When we were in government, we wrote to the then Federal Government and opposed PEP 11 under the joint authority. I was pleased to stand with my community and the thousands of people who supported the former State Government's petition to oppose PEP 11 as part of the joint authority. Former Deputy Premier Toole reaffirmed our rejection of PEP 11 to the Federal Government. We could not have made it any clearer that New South Wales said no. But we now have a dithering Federal Government that is years into its tenure and has done absolutely nothing on PEP 11 and a State Government that has been in office for almost 100 days but has the same weakness and lack of delivery.

The Government should accept that the bill is a well-researched and detailed piece of legislation. I thank Parliamentary Counsel for the great work it has done on it. Yes, it is complicated legislation. The devil is in the detail and the detail has been worked out by the member for Pittwater. Members who read the bill will see that all the contingencies are taken care of, including concerns about offshore sand mining. An unintended consequence of the bill could have been that we could not mine sand offshore. The member for Pittwater has made sure the bill permits sand mining that is necessary for beach nourishment. The bill contains an incredible amount of detail. Sadly, those opposite did nothing on this issue. The Government is 100 days in, and it has been caught on the hop. This should have been the first piece of legislation the Government brought to this place.

**Ms Trish Doyle:** Why didn't you legislate when you were in government?

**Mr ADAM CROUCH:** Because we did not need to; we rejected it. Those opposite did nothing. The next time the member for Blue Mountains wants to go to the beach she should pop down to Terrigal and explain to my constituents why her Government did not have the guts to support good legislation and why it kicked it off to a committee. It is an absolute disgrace. But the member should not worry because we will tell everybody that Government members have deferred the bill indefinitely and allowed PEP 11 to live. This bill could have put a bullet in the head of PEP 11 but those opposite have fallen at the gates. Seriously, it is a disgrace.

Moreover, the Government did not have the guts to let the House debate the suspension motion this morning. That shows how cowardly, incompetent and totally out of touch it is. It is a minority government, so the majority of people do not know where they stand with that lot. Government members have sent a clear message to thousands and thousands of coastal residents, who are going to say, "You had your chance to protect us and you completely let us down." Those opposite can talk about all the protests they may or may not have attended. I have been to those same meetings. I say to every one of our coastal communities, hand on heart, that in 2017 when we opposed seismic testing and offshore drilling, from day one, we did everything we could through the existing regulations.

But the bill provides protection, no matter what a Federal government of any colour does in the future. It sends a very clear message to the Federal Government, "Don't even bother thinking about approving a piece of infrastructure off our coastline because you won't be able to pump your pollution through our waterways." The New South Wales east coast is an area of great natural beauty, but members opposite allow it to continue to be put at risk. Thousands of people are watching what the Government is doing. They can see how Government members have failed them. The Government has breathed life into the debate around PEP 11 again when it had the chance to do the right thing today and support the bill or amend it. But those opposite failed to do that. That is what they will be judged on after today.

We will explain to people in all the Government electorates how their members have kicked the bill down the road because it is all too hard. The Government would be better off to put legislation in place that sends a clear message to any proponent of offshore drilling, "Don't even bother looking at New South Wales because it's not going to happen. Go somewhere else. It is not going to happen at our back door." The Government has failed that test today emphatically, to the point where it did not even have the courage to debate the referral this morning. Those opposite hid and gagged me. That is how terrified they are of this good legislation. They did not even want to have that discussion. They had every opportunity today to have a 90-minute debate on the bill, but they could not even get someone to filibuster for 90 minutes.

**Ms Jenny Aitchison:** Do you want me to start?

**Mr ADAM CROUCH:** It is too late. The member for Maitland had her chance. She could have been in the Chamber this morning, but she could not even manage that. Those opposite are so ill prepared and so underwhelming that they could not filibuster on the bill for 90 minutes. That is an indictment on them because it shows they are not across the detail. Labor does not deserve to govern. The people of New South Wales will judge the Government harshly on this—and they have every right to do so. I commend the member for Pittwater. This is a brilliant piece of legislation. I commend the member for—

**Mrs Helen Dalton:** Murray.

**Mr ADAM CROUCH:** —Vaucluse. I acknowledge the interjection by the member for Murray, who is just as passionate about onshore drilling. I do not doubt they will gag her bills as well because obviously that is the status quo under this Government. And the member for Manly has been a passionate advocate for stopping PEP 11, as we all have. Today we have seen this Government's abject failure to defend the people who live on the New South Wales coastline. As I said, those opposite can look back on this in November, when they finally bring the bill back from a committee, and explain to everybody why they have come back with the same results or, worse, will kick it even further down the road, just to come up with their own piece of cobbled-together legislation, when they had the great opportunity to just accept good legislation that was presented to them. But they are arrogant—

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell):** Order! It being 3.00 p.m., in accordance with the earlier resolution of the House, the question on the referral motion will now be put. The question is that the motion be agreed to.

**The House divided.**

Ayes .....51  
Noes .....34  
Majority.....17

#### AYES

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

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

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

#### NOES

Amon, R  
Ayyad, T  
Clancy, J

James, T  
Kean, M  
Lane, J

Singh, G (teller)  
Sloane, K  
Speakman, M

## NOES

Cooke, S  
Coure, M  
Cross, M  
Crouch, A (teller)  
Davies, T  
Di Pasqua, S  
Griffin, J  
Henskens, A  
Hodges, M

Layzell, D  
Marshall, A  
Petinos, E  
Preston, R  
Provest, G  
Regan, M  
Roberts, A  
Saunders, D

Taylor, M  
Thompson, T  
Tuckerman, W  
Ward, G  
Williams, L  
Williams, R  
Williamson, R  
Wilson, F

## PAIRS

Hoenig, R  
O'Neill, M

Toole, P  
Anderson, K

**Motion agreed to.**

*Documents***INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION****Reports**

**The SPEAKER:** In accordance with section 74 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, I announce receipt of the erratum to the report of the Independent Commission Against Corruption entitled *Investigation into the conduct of the then Member of Parliament for Wagga Wagga and then Premier and others (Operation Keppel)*, dated June 2023 and received this day. I order that the erratum be printed.

*Bills***WATER MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT (TRANSFER OF WATER) BILL 2023****First Reading**

**Bill introduced on motion by Mrs Helen Dalton, read a first time and printed.**

**Second Reading Speech**

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray) (15:11):** I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

The Water Management Amendment (Transfer of Water) Bill 2023 may be one of the most important pieces of legislation MPs will be asked to consider in this place. If passed, the bill can save rural New South Wales from the devastation that will be caused by the Federal Government's disastrous and ill-conceived plan to try to buy 450 gegalitres of water from the Murray-Darling Basin. The Federal water Minister, Tanya Plibersek, has been adamant that her Government will try to buy 450 gegalitres of water from New South Wales entitlement holders for what she describes as environmental reasons. It is hard to know where to start when describing what is wrong with this plan. For a start, the proposed buyback would be unlawful, because under the Water Act 2007 buybacks like this cannot occur if they will be detrimental to affected regional areas. And make no mistake, these buybacks will not just be detrimental; they will be devastating and disastrous. They cannot be allowed to happen.

Another obvious problem with the Federal buyback plan is the fact that metering along the Murray-Darling Basin is so inconsistent and unworkable that the Murray-Darling Basin Authority cannot tell us with any degree of certainty how much water is in the system and who is taking it. Where did the magical 450 gegalitres come from? Guess which accounting firm has helped the Murray-Darling Basin Authority do the numbers? Believe it or not, the accounting for the authority was done by none other than those trustworthy number-crunchers at PricewaterhouseCoopers. That is the same PricewaterhouseCoopers who recently stole Government tax secrets and sold them to their tax-dodging clients. If anyone trusts those numbers, they should not.

Under the bill the New South Wales water Minister would not be allowed to transfer water access licences to the Commonwealth or the State unless an assessment is undertaken. A report on the assessment will need to be published on a publicly available website that demonstrates that there will be no negative socio-economic impacts. If that is the case then the transfer will not go ahead, or it should not go ahead. Protection is needed to ensure that the incompetent Murray-Darling Basin Authority and the equally clueless Federal Government do not proceed

with this foolhardy buyback plan. A Federal buyback would be detrimental to regional New South Wales. It would harm production and therefore reduce food security in Australia. It would have a seriously detrimental effect on the entire New South Wales economy. It would also be an assault on our national security because food security and national security go hand in hand.

This kind of illogical buyback would also have a devastating impact on the psychological wellbeing of the people in my electorate as well as people right throughout regional New South Wales. The bill will create a moratorium on water buybacks, which is not a radical idea. In fact, Victoria has already declared a similar moratorium, with the Victorian water Minister warning the Federal water Minister not to even attempt buying water from Victorian licence holders. If the Victorian Government can protect regional Victorians, why can the New South Wales Government not protect the people of regional New South Wales? Surely we all deserve the same sensible protections that the Victorians enjoy.

Under the bill, the New South Wales water Minister would be required to consider production output levels; employment levels and diversity; individual and business incomes; costs of carrying on businesses; changes to working conditions, including hours worked and health and safety conditions; psychological wellbeing levels, including stress levels, happiness, security, family harmony and ability to undertake leisure activities of people in the regions; and access to, and the level of provision of, social services. If any of those measures went backwards, the water transfer would not be allowed, and the Feds would need to get their water from somewhere else. Make no mistake, the Federal water Minister will press on with this disastrous buyback plan, if we let her. We cannot let this happen. The bill will provide the kind of protections New South Wales regions desperately need. Put simply, the New South Wales Government cannot allow precious water from New South Wales to be transferred to the Federal Government. The bill will ensure damaging, destructive water transfers never take place. I call on all MPs to support the bill.

**Debate adjourned.**

#### *Motions*

### **REMOTE, RURAL AND REGIONAL HEALTH**

**Debate resumed from 22 June 2023.**

**Mr STEVE WHAN (Monaro) (15:18):** I spoke in this debate a week ago. In the interim period, the Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health had another meeting. I am looking forward to its work because we have a positive agenda that may not solve all the problems, but it will help to work through some of the issues that were raised in the report of the upper House as well as introduce some practical ways in which this Parliament can perhaps help to overcome some of those problems. I am very pleased that it looks like the committee will operate in a bipartisan way.

Some members of the committee have a much greater understanding of rural health than I do, but I am an enthusiastic advocate as well. It is an important committee. We have a number of difficult issues to tackle in rural New South Wales. A number of things have been underway since the upper House committee report was released. The Government has indicated that it is committed to expanding the single-employer model for rural generalist trainees across New South Wales. That, as I understand it, has been a positive move, allowing health districts to employ rural generalist trainees to work in local hospitals and GP practices while completing their rural generalist training.

The previous Government initiated some health worker accommodation projects around rural New South Wales, and I am very pleased that one of those is occurring in Cooma. Key worker accommodation is a difficult issue to address in country and regional New South Wales. Many of our communities are feeling the pressure of housing shortages, which have expanded from the bigger cities and now affect many of our rural and regional communities as well—none more so than Monaro. The Snowy Mountains area is under intense pressure from the demand for accommodation caused by Snowy 2.0. That demand has made it hard for us to get health professionals to move to our area and find accommodation, so it is definitely something to look at.

Some practical progress has been made with programs such as the Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme [IPTAAS], where subsidies have been increased and eligibility expanded. I remember, when I was last a member of this place, the IPTAAS amounts were considered by many people to be inadequate, so it is good to see that they have been increased. This is a really important area, and I look forward to working with the rest of the committee on some of these issues.

There are many things that we need to focus on, but none more so than ensuring that health administration has a real and separate focus on rural New South Wales, which is different from the city in its needs and in the need to deliver things. That has always been the case, but it is often—although many of us live in regional

New South Wales—forgotten, with the focus on big city services. Of course, access to those city services is critical, and we will always need to bring people in to those services. That is why some of the things that the Government has announced already, like increasing the number of helicopter retrieval services and increasing the number of paramedics in regional and rural New South Wales, are vitally important. At the end of the day, a lot of the issues are not so much with the buildings that we have—although, obviously, we need great buildings and equipment—but with the people in them. I am looking forward to the committee, whose work is about to begin in that area.

**Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes) (15:22):** I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for bringing forward this very important issue and for his advocacy for better health outcomes. I acknowledge the work of the former Minister for Regional Health, the Hon. Bronnie Taylor, in this space. Minister Taylor was the first ever Minister for Regional Health in the great State of New South Wales. I look forward to working with the member for Wagga Wagga in my capacity as a member of the newly established Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health.

I say at the outset that we do have a great health system in New South Wales, staffed by incredibly dedicated and hardworking people. It is important to recognise those frontline workers, who have looked after us all through some incredibly tough times. I thank those people who participated in the inquiry and told their stories. We have always said that we would welcome an inquiry. It is an opportunity to identify and fix embedded issues in our regional health system. The main themes arising from submissions to the inquiry included the availability of general practitioners and access to specialist care, workforce, clinical service provision, and challenges with transport and travel to access appropriate care.

The inquiry's report was released on 5 May 2022. The former Government tabled its response two months early on 1 September 2022, reaffirming its commitment to improve health outcomes for all people living in rural, regional and remote New South Wales. Coalition members recognise from the report that there are problems in regional health that must be fixed. We have never shied away from that and we sought to take meaningful action to fix those issues. As part of the 2022-23 State budget the former New South Wales Government allocated \$883 million over the following four years to attract and retain staff in rural and regional New South Wales by transforming the way health clinicians are incentivised in the bush. In the Myall Lakes electorate, as part of this program, a new midwife and 11 new nurses started in January at the Manning Base Hospital. Five new nurses started in March and another four are confirmed to commence in July.

As part of the budget, we were investing an additional \$149.5 million over four years to expand the Isolated Patients Travel and Accommodation Assistance Scheme, or IPTAAS. I know from conversations I have had with my constituency that the scheme is an absolute godsend when having to travel long distances for specialised health services. There was a record \$743 million funding boost for palliative care and specialist health services over five years, which was on top of the \$300 million that the New South Wales Government invests every year in palliative care right across the State. This funding would have delivered an additional 600 health staff right across New South Wales, once the program was fully rolled out, to support people in their final stage of life.

It is important to mention the Rural Ambulance Infrastructure Reconfiguration program. The RAIR program was the single largest investment in regional NSW Ambulance's 126-year history, with 24 new or upgraded ambulance stations already delivered as part of stage one. Stage two delivered 30 upgraded, rebuilt or entirely new NSW Ambulance stations. It was a pleasure for me recently to be present at the official opening of the new ambulance station in Forster and to turn the first sod at the new ambulance station under construction in Old Bar. We welcome 24 new paramedics in our area because of these new stations. I am confident that Coalition members will continue to build on our record in government to improve rural and regional health outcomes in New South Wales. As a local member representing a regional electorate, I know just how important those better outcomes are. I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for continuing to be an advocate, and I look forward to working with him and the new Government in this endeavour.

**Mr CLAYTON BARR (Cessnock) (15:27):** I support, with pleasure, the motion that has been moved by the member for Wagga Wagga. I recognise his position as a health practitioner, but also as the chair of the select committee that has been set up to monitor the implementation of the recommendations from the upper House inquiry. I acknowledge at the start that the New South Wales Government is committed to ensuring that all people living in regional, rural and remote New South Wales can access health care as close to home as possible. It is not possible to have every service available close to every home, but we want to go as far as we can in that regard.

Our medical facilities are indeed staffed by brilliant, hardworking, passionate, empathetic, caring staff who go above and beyond every day. They sort out the needs of patients with enormous care. They put their heart and soul into their work. They would love to have more resources to do more every day—and we can all, I hope, agree on that. Our healthcare facilities are often part of the lifeblood of our communities because, in essence, without health care, people would need to move away from their local area. That is what makes all of our regional



healthcare facilities so very important, whether they are large or small, whether they are staffed 24/7 or only occasionally. It is important that we have access to healthcare services.

One of the toughest challenges is supporting and growing the regional health workforce. There has been an increasing trend of health workers wanting to stay closer to the coast or to major metropolitan cities. Quite frankly, getting health staff to go into regional, rural and remote areas has been a challenge. I certainly know that. Even though the electorate of Cessnock, which I have the great privilege to represent, is only 50 kilometres from Newcastle and the coast, we have difficulty in getting staff to come and work at our facilities. So the further west you go—the further inland you go—that challenge is only going to get harder.

The electorate of Cessnock falls into the Hunter New England Local Health District, which covers an enormous area. Geographically, it is the largest local health district in New South Wales, covering 130,000 kilometres squared and having 38 public hospitals. It has three major referral hospitals, 38 inpatient facilities, including 25 multipurpose services, and 50 community health centres with a range of multidisciplinary primary and community health services. That is a lot to look after. It is a lot to equip, resource and staff. But we have to do that so that our regional communities thrive and realise their potential. One of those potentials is life expectancy. That is part of the motion that has been moved by the good member for Wagga Wagga.

Unfortunately, things have not been going so well. Bureau of Health Information data for Cessnock Hospital shows that 30 per cent of the people who attended the emergency department over the past 12 months were not seen or did not have their treatments started on time. Cessnock emergency department is the busiest ED in New South Wales that does not have permanent doctors appointed. That is a legacy we inherited with the change of government. There is work to do. I applaud and support the position of the Government to implement all recommendations of the upper House inquiry and get on with that work straightaway. I take great pleasure in being part of the committee with the good member for Wagga Wagga.

**Ms LIZA BUTLER (South Coast) (15:31):** Like many others this afternoon, I thank the member for Wagga Wagga for bringing this motion to our attention. The New South Wales health system is built on the strength of its people, the dedicated staff who have continued to rise to the challenges before them in the most trying of times. Every day in health facilities across regional, rural and remote New South Wales, our healthcare workers are making a difference as they deliver world-class care to the people living in their communities. But those communities face a real challenge in the future to get the stuff they need. One of those big challenges is housing in regional areas. I am proud to say that this Government will address housing issues in our regional areas.

There is no doubt the provision of health services to a population that is dispersed over a large geographical area is challenging, which is why the *NSW Regional Health Strategic Plan 2022-2032* is targeted on regional, rural and remote communities. It will guide NSW Health strategic focus for these communities over the next 10 years. The plan is a road map for the future provision of health services that understands and celebrates the diverse and unique nature of regional communities. A key priority of the plan is to enable better access to safe, high-quality and timely health services. Importantly, the health strategic plan will address issues raised in the rural health inquiry. This Government is wholly committed to implementing the recommendations of the inquiry and work is already underway to do so.

We have a parliamentary committee to monitor the implementation of the recommendations, and we have heard that the member for Wagga Wagga will be the chair. I am pleased to report that I will also be a member of that committee. We will oversee the implementation of the supported recommendations of the upper House inquiry and will also be able to examine financial expenditure and performance of relevant government agencies and inspect healthcare settings in New South Wales and other jurisdictions. Many of our regional hospitals have lost maternity services, and women must now travel many kilometres to give birth. For women in remote communities, birthing on country is no longer an option. It is a key area that the committee would like to look at.

While I acknowledge that not all services are able to be viably run in all locations across the State, more must be done to ensure that, regardless of postcode, residents can seek, access and receive treatment in a timely and cost-effective manner. To achieve this, we must work together to secure the future of our regional health workforce. We need strategies to ensure healthcare workers have the support needed to stay in regional, rural and remote communities. This is why the Government is committed to the provision of onsite health staff accommodation for any new hospitals built in New South Wales as part of a campus model that provides amenities such as child care to health staff and their families. There is no doubt that investment in regional health projects will deliver better facilities for patients and their families, create more jobs and improve working environments for doctors, nurses and support staff. I am proud to be part of a Minns Labor government that recognises the importance of first-class health services and is committed to improving the health system for all residents of New South Wales.

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads) (15:35):**

I congratulate the member for Wagga Wagga on bringing the motion to the House. I mention paragraph (3) regarding the establishment of a Legislative Assembly select committee to monitor the implementation of the upper House inquiry. When the Opposition was in government, we saw degradation in our health system. I have seen with my own eyes in a half-a-billion-dollar hospital people having to wait weeks, or even close to a month, to get life-saving surgery or surgery they needed to get back on their feet. I think particularly of a young apprentice in my area who had to wait three weeks for surgery on a catastrophic break to his ankle. It took so many interventions.

I put on record that I worked closely with the former health Minister, the Hon. Brad Hazzard. He was always available to our community if we needed to escalate cases that had slipped through the cracks. But when the former Minister for Regional Health came on the scene, as one of those Nationals, she shut the door in our faces. We have people in our communities who have suffered now lifelong consequences from the lack of her intervention and her lack of good management of the health system in our communities. I was at a briefing with country mayors before the election, and she went completely ballistic because we were talking about the retention of the Minister for Regional Health if a new government should be elected.

We have a Minister for Regional Health, who is also the Minister for Health, and that is the member for Keira. He is an excellent person to have in that role. He was involved in setting up the inquiry. He has done that work. He has been to our communities. When he came to my community before the election, we found out it was taking four months to recruit a nurse into NSW Health. Four months! It took two weeks to find someone to go over the road and work at the private hospital. That was a disgrace. It took seven months to get a cook in a hospital. It was ridiculous.

We have seen real degradation of our health services. In the latest Bureau of Health Information data the emergency department at Maitland Hospital had the highest walk-out rate. One in four people were giving up and leaving the emergency department before they were seen. In fact, the most recent statistics show they are going anywhere else but Maitland Hospital because they were trained under the former Government that they would not be able to be seen in a timely manner. It is really important that we have this select committee. I congratulate the Minister on that and also the member for Wagga Wagga on bringing this to the attention of the House.

We cannot continue the situation where people in the electorate of Mr Temporary Speaker Layzell are giving birth in cars on the side of the road. We did not have staffing of our regional hospitals at the level that they needed to be. Talk about birthing on country; you cannot birth anywhere other than your car because you cannot get into a hospital in some places. It is outrageous. We have the regional paramedics promise that the Minister made, plus the helicopters and four-wheel drives. These are really important things for our communities. I have lived in regional New South Wales for over 25 years now, and I gave birth in a country hospital. It should be better, but under those opposite it was not made better. I am looking forward to the changes that the Minns Labor Government will make and the fact that our Government will be held to account in a way that the former Minister for Regional Health was not. She never held herself to account either.

**Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (15:39):** By leave: I speak on the motion moved by the member for Wagga Wagga. I acknowledge the member for Wagga Wagga as a great local representative and an advocate for rural, regional and remote health services across New South Wales. He is a good MP; he is also a good doctor and a good man. I will give a short anecdote about the member for Wagga Wagga. Before entering politics and while still working clinically, I visited Wagga Wagga and caught up with the member. We met at Southcity Shopping Centre. There he was, engaging with his constituents, standing outside the local butcher with his fold-up table and clipboard. I thought, that is an archetypal Independent member.

I can think of no-one better—politically, personally or clinically—to chair the Select Committee on Remote, Rural and Regional Health established by my great colleague the Minister for Regional Health. The Minister has established a well-balanced committee consisting of the member for Wagga Wagga and my colleagues the member for Lismore and the member for Cessnock, as well as my neighbours, the member for South Coast and the member for Monaro. They are joined by the member for Myall Lakes and the member for Port Macquarie. All these members represent electorates that experience the inequities of health in our rural and regional areas. I am sure they will perform their duty effectively, efficiently and in a bipartisan manner.

The motion notes that there is a crisis in rural, regional and remote health care. Nothing could be truer. The motion acknowledges the Labor Government's commitment to implementing all of the recommendations of the upper House inquiry into health and hospital services in rural, regional and remote New South Wales. It further congratulates the Labor Government on the establishment of a Legislative Assembly select committee, which I referred to earlier, that will monitor the implementation of the upper House inquiry. Members are aware of the many times I have spoken on rural health issues as they apply to my electorate of Bega and New South Wales

generally. In my former role as a rural obstetrician and gynaecologist, I visited many other rural and regional hospitals.

As Leo Tolstoy's great opening line in the Russian tragic romance *Anna Karenina* says, "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way." Applying that to rural, regional and remote health, the happy families are the ones with adequate resources. They have adequate infrastructure. They have adequate funding. They have adequate services. They have adequate staffing. However, there are not too many of those left in rural New South Wales. The unhappy ones are unhappy in their own ways, and their path to happiness, sustainability and resilience will be different. The approach will need to be an individualised approach with overarching common principles.

Like my colleague the member for Wagga Wagga, I despair at the state of health services in rural, regional and remote areas. The reduced life expectancy is a crisis. The suicide rate is a crisis. The gap in the provision of Indigenous health care is a crisis. I sincerely hope that the newly established select committee will lead to improvements in rural, regional and remote health care from before birth to the end of life. This starts with the provision of high-quality continuous antenatal, intrapartum and postnatal care for the women of rural New South Wales. It requires equitable provision of children's health care as close to home as possible. Women in particular experience inequity of healthcare services in rural, regional and remote areas, including their reproductive choices and women's medical and surgical services. Our ageing population has special needs across all medical and surgical fields and, at the end of life, they need the best local resources for palliative care. Finally, and no less important, is the provision of equitable mental health services and the urgent need to close the gap of health care for our First Nations peoples. I support the motion.

**Ms TRISH DOYLE (Blue Mountains) (15:43):** By leave: I contribute to debate on this very important motion. I commend my friend and colleague Dr Joe McGirr, who is from my home town of Wagga Wagga. I note some of the comments about the crisis across all sorts of areas in the health system just noted by my colleague the member for Bega. This is my ninth year in this place, and I cannot recall how many times I have stood here and spoken about the Blue Mountains District ANZAC Memorial Hospital, which will soon be 100 years old. I implored the previous Government to look at the needs of my community. The tertiary hospital, Nepean Hospital, sits down on the plains, and the Blue Mountains hospital is about 70 kilometres from that hospital.

We need to actually address the needs of a growing population. Various clinicians and various community members over those 8½ years have been coming to talk to me about the need for the Government to urgently address a range of issues. I am pleased that the Minns Labor Government has decided that it, together with members across the political spectrum representing a range of regional and rural areas, will look at and inquire into recommendations that address these issues in areas we know are in crisis.

Just for the record, I asked the previous Government in 2018 whether it could conduct a full review and refresh of the clinical services plan for the Blue Mountains hospital and Springwood Hospital, and whether it would allocate funds to allow planning for redevelopment of those services. I asked for planning and funding money for geriatric services. I asked for a major upgrade of X-ray and CT equipment to ensure that Blue Mountains residents had access to new-generation, low-dosing imaging and did not have to travel to Bathurst or to Nepean. I talked about how 73 per cent of Blue Mountains residents have to travel out of area in order to access the services they need. A staggering 90 per cent of residents requiring surgery currently travel out of area for their procedures.

The Blue Mountains has a growing population, with more than 85,000 people. It is an ageing population. When 45 per cent to 50 per cent of Blue Mountains babies are born down the road and we cannot offer those services in our local area, it has to be a priority of this Government to address the needs of rural and regional communities around this significant issue of health. I have banged on for 8½ years about no funding, no progress, no plans and all of the inadequacies. Today I commend the member for Wagga Wagga for bringing this important motion to the House. I have had arguments with governments of all persuasions about the need to reclassify the Blue Mountains hospital so that it is not considered part of Greater Sydney but recognised as being located in its own region. I know that it will require lots of funds, commitment and planning, but I note the health needs of my Blue Mountains community.

**Dr JOE MCGIRR (Wagga Wagga) (15:47):** In reply: I begin by thanking and congratulating the health workers of our health system on what they have done, along with many of the members who have spoken to this motion. I also recognise the importance of the work health workers do. I thank all the members who have spoken, being the members representing the electorates of Monaro, Myall Lakes, Cessnock, South Coast, Maitland, Bega and Blue Mountains. My intention in asking the Government to form the committee was to make sure we did not lose focus on rural health as an issue. When you have an inquiry it is easy to produce a set of recommendations, flick them to the department and say, "Job done." Well, the job resurrecting rural health is far from done. We need

to stay focused on that. With the support of the members who have spoken and their positive attitude, we will get this job done. I thank them very much.

The member for Monaro gave his speech last week, and I note that the committee has actually met since that time. It was a second meeting, and it was a comprehensive briefing from the department. The committee has wasted no time in getting to work. As the member for Monaro pointed out, amongst many other good points that he made, the health administration needs a real and separate focus on rural and regional health. I want to return to that, because I think it is a key theme.

The member for Myall Lakes highlighted what the previous Government achieved and outlined the positive response from former Minister Taylor. The former Minister was positive during my dealings with her, and she put some energy into this initiative. But we need to continue that work. The member for Cessnock highlighted the importance of health facilities for the viability of regional and rural communities—something that is often overlooked. It is not just health; it is also economic viability. He highlighted the problems of his own emergency department in Cessnock and problems with the workforce. The member for South Coast highlighted a range of issues but in particular highlighted the importance of housing for workers, as well as the importance of birthing on country and trying to re-establish that in our communities. I thank the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads for her contribution and her support. I appreciate it very much. Her comments about recruitment delays raised an issue that we really must get to the bottom of. Why does recruitment take three to four months when other services can do it in two to three weeks? It is beyond me, and we need to look into it.

I thank the member for Bega for his contribution. I must think of an anecdote about the member for Bega. I know he was an outstanding clinician when he worked on the South Coast, and he is a great member now. He made an interesting point by quoting Tolstoy. I wondered where he was going with it, but it was a great quote. What he was really saying was that there will be unique rural and regional health problems in each community. We need to remember that. This returns to the point of having a focus on regional and rural issues separate from the metropolitan regions. The metropolitan approach is that one solution will work for everyone—the cookie-cutter approach; we can design it in Sydney and it will work everywhere. I think the point of the member for Bega was that actually that is not good enough. We need to address unique problems in each community. The member mentioned despair; I guess that is another feature of Tolstoy. I hope the committee will bring hope and that our work will bring hope. I look forward to working with the member.

If there was ever a facility in New South Wales that needed support and renovation, it is the Blue Mountains hospital. My parents-in-law have used that facility. The staff there are great. I remember having interactions with that facility in my role at the University of Notre Dame. The advocacy of the member for Blue Mountains on that is outstanding. I thank her very much for that. I conclude by informing the House that the committee has begun its work. It has important work to cover in workforce, culture, maternity, mental health, Aboriginal health, Commonwealth-State relations, primary care, funding models, community engagement, palliative care and many other areas. I am confident the committee will assist. It will keep a laser-sharp focus on the implementation of the recommendations of the upper House inquiry, and by doing so it will achieve great outcomes for regional and rural health. I thank members for their contributions to debate, and I commend the motion to the House.

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

**Motion agreed to.**

#### *Bills*

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT (POWERS AND RESPONSIBILITIES) AMENDMENT (DIGITAL EVIDENCE ACCESS ORDERS) BILL 2023**

#### **Returned**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr David Layzell):** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill without amendment.

#### *Motions*

### **RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Mr GREG WARREN (Campbelltown) (15:53):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges the previous Government's long-term neglect of the Sydney trains network, including in the electorate of Campbelltown.
- (2) Recognises this Government's immediate steps to establish a comprehensive and independent rail infrastructure and systems review to address and repair the significant issues that have plagued the rail network and how it has affected commuters.

I am delighted to have the opportunity to move this motion. It is only appropriate that I begin my contribution by reflecting on the experiences of rail commuters in my electorate of Campbelltown, as well as others in south-west Sydney, Western Sydney and across the entire network. I will elaborate on some specific matters going forward. Many commuters in Campbelltown and in the south-west—using my local region as an example—will remember when rail networks broke down during the heatwaves. It was the outcome of a long-term lack of repairs and the low priority given to those repairs.

For many people who use the rail network, the commuter experience is at times opaque at best. It is inappropriate that a modern city—and the west and south-west of Sydney as a region in its own right—does not have adequate train services and an adequate network to provide those services so that people can get to and from work or school or whatever else they may be doing. I commute from Campbelltown to the Parliament quite frequently, as well as to other meetings in the city, along with many other residents. My sons commute for work or university or for other social matters. We see the network breaking down repeatedly.

Services break down in every major weather event, which is totally unacceptable. I referred previously to the heatwaves affecting the network. We have also had extreme weather conditions with rain, electrical storms and all the other climate-related situations that tend to confront us at certain times. I know that commuters feel the need to check the weather app before deciding whether to drive the car or get on the train. That is totally unacceptable. We must understand that the rail network is provided for the use of taxpayers, who have already paid for that service. Of course, passengers also pay to travel, but the outlay and the initial contribution is from taxpayers.

The neglect of the network has resulted in many shutdowns. The maintenance backlogs go back many years, and there has been a shortfall in funding for the maintenance of the network over many years as well. It adds to commuter frustration when projects in and around the metropolitan area, such as the light rail and other major pieces of infrastructure, blow out into the billions of dollars. While sitting on a crowded train on a broken network, they think that that money could have gone to fix the network so that their train travel each day is not in that situation. That is the reality for the people of Campbelltown and the regions right across west and south-west Sydney.

Every day, commuters find themselves travelling to a train station with an inadequate commuter car park to catch a late, cancelled or overcrowded train. The reason for that is that the rail network has not received the attention that it needs and deserves in the past. That affects the reliability of train services and the network as a whole. Further to my motion, I am delighted that the Government has made a commitment. I commend the Minister for Transport, who has been a frequent visitor to Campbelltown and across the west and south-west to set the systems review in place.

We know that the timetable is not fit for purpose. It does not suit the needs of commuters, particularly around timings and allocations. I draw the attention of members to the previous Government's decision to cancel express trains from Campbelltown and the south-west, as well as the vital direct link from Campbelltown to Parramatta. Commuters now have to change trains up to three times if they want to travel to Parramatta. That is inconsistent with the former Government's plan, and what is sensible, which was to connect the western suburb cities. As part of that systems review and the initial rail review, I am delighted that this Government, through the transport Minister, has committed to adopting all 12 recommendations. It is a symbolic representation of this Government's, and our Minister's, commitment to fixing this problem that has gone on for way too long—whether it is the rail repair plan, the standard working timetable or safety of rail workers. I take this opportunity to thank our rail workers. They often bear the brunt of the frustration of rail commuters and they simply do not deserve it. The decisions made by the previous Government and, indeed, governments of all persuasions have a direct effect on the services throughout our network, which is what rail commuters are experiencing.

Incident and disruption management is important, as are the new roles that will be created in the electric intercity fleet. The major rail asset procurement and projects engagement is another part of ensuring that the system is fit for purpose so that rail commuters get the services they need. In conclusion, I thank colleagues for contributing to the debate. I note that business will be interrupted for other matters, but there will be more said from other colleagues later. I look forward to further contributions.

**The SPEAKER:** It being 4.00 p.m., debate is interrupted for the petitions take-note debate. I order that the resumption of the debate stand an order of the day for a later hour.

#### *Petitions*

### **NORTHERN BEACHES BUSHLAND CONSERVATION**

**The SPEAKER:** The House will now consider the paper petition signed by 10,000 or more persons requesting that the Legislative Assembly repeal the amendments to the State Environment Planning Policy

(Planning Systems) so that 227 hectares of land in the northern beaches is no longer subject to the development delivery plan. I acknowledge the guests in the public gallery.

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

**Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (16:02):** Firstly, I thank the more than 12,000 residents who signed the petition. They want this Chamber to hear a clear message. Precious bushland on the northern beaches should be protected for future generations and, in fact, everywhere—let us be honest. The petition before the House calls on the New South Wales Government to repeal the development delivery plan for the northern beaches that was developed in the previous term of government. The plan puts over 200 hectares of local bushland on a trajectory towards being cleared for housing and industrial use. The two largest sites proposed for development are the 135-hectare site at Ralston Avenue in Belrose and the 71-hectare site at Morgan Road in Belrose, which is affectionately known by locals as Lizard Rock because of the large rock that looks like a lizard's head. Lizard Rock is the first cab off the rank slated for development.

In recent weeks a planning proposal to rezone the Lizard Rock site for a subdivision of at least 450 dwellings passed through the gateway stage at the Department of Planning and Environment. The next stage is a more detailed assessment and a public exhibition period. That consultation has not yet started, but I can tell you now that the development of the site does not have the support of the local community or its local council—and for good reason. The proposal for a massive housing subdivision, clearing over 45 football fields worth of native vegetation in this location, is completely inappropriate. I briefly outline some of the reasons.

The first reason is the biodiversity value of the site. The Lizard Rock site adjoins the Garigal National Park and Narrabeen Lagoon State Park, and forms part of a wildlife corridor across private and public land. It provides habitat for iconic species of Australian wildlife—from powerful owls and red-crowned toadlets to spotted-tailed quolls and bandicoots. It is a place where observant locals have spotted a male lyrebird dancing his mating dance and a mother wallaby unloading joeys from her pouch for their first bounces. It is home to black cockatoos, which I spotted with Dr Sophie Scamps when we were there one morning.

Australia has committed to reversing biodiversity loss and conserving 30 per cent of Australia's land areas by 2030. How can we achieve those goals if we continue to clear bushland at this scale as though it were worthless? The second reason is the bushfire risk of developing the site. The land is surrounded by bushland and has constrained evacuation routes. The Northern Beaches Council states, "In its current form, the proposed development presents an unacceptable and, in some cases, a catastrophic risk to future residents." Have we learnt nothing from the 2019 bushfires and the subsequent inquiry and royal commission? We must stop building homes where we know lives will be exposed to danger and where the lives of RFS and SES volunteers will be put in danger protecting them.

The third reason is the inconsistency with strategic planning. The Lizard Rock proposal and development delivery plan are disconnected from the agreed strategic planning currently being undertaken to deliver more housing in Frenchs Forest and Brookvale. The Lizard Rock proposal would create a car-centric enclave that is not serviced by public transport. The cities and towns we need to create must be connected to social infrastructure and public transport and make effective use of our urban land rather than sprawling into new greenfield areas. That is entirely consistent with the Government's own messaging in recent weeks about moving away from low-density greenfield housing development.

A member of the Sydney North Planning Panel, Annelise Tuor, recognised the compelling reasons that rezoning should not proceed. When she opposed the planning proposal, she cited her concerns that it did not demonstrate site-specific merit about the extent and nature of the proposed R2 zoning area and that the proposal did not adequately respond to environmental and other constraints on the site. I want to be clear that I support the intent of the Aboriginal Land Rights Act 1983 and appreciate the importance of enabling First Nations people to achieve economic self-determination through developing land, but we should consider all proposals on their merits, regardless of the landowner. This proposal does not stack up.

The community recognises that the land was granted by the State Government to the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council in recognition of past wrongs committed against First Nations people by governments of the past. The community does not criticise the desire of the land council to want to improve the economic circumstances of its members, given the structural disadvantage faced by Indigenous people as a consequence of colonisation. However, the community is concerned that we are now committing wrongs against wrongs and trying to fix past wrongs against First Nations people by committing new wrongs against nature. We must work harder and smarter to find solutions that are a win-win for both nature and society. This petition calls for that balance to be struck.

The community has ideas for finding a win-win solution that both delivers the land council a fair and timely income from its land holdings and retains the bushland. The State Government could lease the landowners a new national park, could compensate the land council for the loss of development potential or offer a land swap for a development site elsewhere. The petition does not dictate a particular solution, as we recognise that the land council has to be part of any new decision-making through this petition. The community is asking the State Government to be an active partner in finding the solution. I thank the Northern Beaches Bushland Guardians, who have spent months collecting signatures and informing the community. Finally, the bushland guardians are Dr Conny Harris, Councillor Kristyn Glanville, Rachael Leah Jackson, Sarah Baker, Pamela Dawes, Deb Harris, Marion Kiss and Sue Denton. I thank the many groups and individuals in our community that have worked hard to build momentum to conserve the local bushland. I love your work.

*[Interruption from gallery]*

**The SPEAKER:** It is not technically in order for people in the public gallery to applaud, but I will let it go this time. If it happens again I will have the member for Wakehurst removed from the Chamber.

**Mr RORY AMON (Pittwater) (16:07):** I thank the bushland guardians and all petitioners for bringing this important matter to the attention of the Parliament. For me, Morgan and Oxford Falls roads have always been known as Lizard Rock Road, and that is the case for all long-term northern beaches locals. For some years when I was on council, I did not know what was going on when people talked about Morgan Road and Oxford Falls Road because I had always known them by another name. Lizard Rock is an historic landmark that is representative of tens of thousands of years of Indigenous history, but it is also part of the memory and lives of many in our community today, including those in the public gallery. If Lizard Rock itself is the jewel, then the surrounding bushland and wildlife is surely the crown.

What brings us here today is a proposal to develop the sites around Lizard Rock. If approved, 450 dwellings would be approved in that area. I turn to some, but not all, of the issues posed by the development and thank the member for Wakehurst for his contribution about some of those issues. The first issue is the loss of pristine bushland and wildlife habitat. The development would see 45 football fields worth of vegetation demolished and native habitat destroyed, with many species potentially put at risk. The community of Pittwater values the protection of the local environment. To wantonly destroy such precious nature is inconsistent with the will of my community, and I will always represent Pittwater's interests. We must fight this proposal.

The second issue is bushfire risk. Bounded by the Garigal National Park, Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park and the Narrabeen Lagoon State Park, Pittwater is especially vulnerable to bushfires. Having borne witness to the horrors of the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires on the front line as a volunteer firefighter, it would be an abrogation of my duty as a representative and volunteer to allow the proposal to be contemplated without reference to my lived experience of the risks of bushfire. Having considered the bushfire expert reports prepared by the developer and by council, I am convinced that this development will put people, wildlife and property at catastrophic risk of death and destruction. We must fight this proposal.

The third issue is infrastructure. There must be adequate infrastructure and services before any development. Whilst the proposal seeks approval for 450 dwellings, as a former councillor I have seen this movie before and the ending is horrible. We know that developers will receive approval for 450 lots and, once that approval is granted, we will see attempts to use State environmental planning policies to densify development. Those 450 lots could become 900 to 1,800 senior-living units, or they could become boarding houses with thousands of residents. The gateway determination tries to prevent this. Does anyone sitting in the gallery, having seen this all before, really believe this cannot and will not be worked around? All in all, we could see thousands more cars on our roads and thousands of new residents for whom there is insufficient school space, open space, sports fields, bus services, health services, roads and more. I note that from mid-July our bus timetable on the northern beaches is to be reduced.

The development simply does not generate the revenue needed to build and invest in the infrastructure and services required to accommodate the proposed growth. We must fight this proposal. Impacts on the environment, bushfire risk and lack of infrastructure are only some of the issues posed. We agree that we need more housing stock and that the only sensible place for such a development is around heavy transport nodes—train lines, light rail and metro stations. We agree that landowners ought to be able to deal with their land in accordance with law and that the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council is entitled to seek to use its land. We agree that government should find a way to protect the land and to protect the land council's interest as owner. We agree that residents can advocate against developments that they do not support. We also agree that this development can be stopped by the Government.

As much as we seek to work in good faith and with goodwill, it would be naive of us to think that the Lizard Rock development is not a political issue, because it is. It is shameful, in my view, that this Government

and its Minister approved the progress of the proposal. The Minister had the authority to refuse to progress the proposal to a gateway determination, but he did not. Do not be misled. The progress of Lizard Rock was not a decision of unelected bureaucrats. The Minister chose to delegate his authority to those bureaucrats. In March 2023, the Liberal Party committed to ending the Lizard Rock development and would have ended it. Only a party in government and the Ministers in office have the power to make decisions to protect our communities. Sadly, under the current Government, we are now at greater risk. This proposal will progress, but we must continue to fight. I thank every single person for being here today to show the Minister, who is listening, that you will make your voice heard. It is my hope that we can defeat this proposal.

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (16:12):** To the 12,262 people who signed this petition, thank you for getting involved in democracy. Petitions, particularly in this place, are a really important part of our democracy. It is a great initiative, brought in by the O'Farrell Government in 2011, that a petition signed by over 10,000 people must be debated in this House. I congratulate the Northern Beaches Bushland Guardians for collecting well over 10,000 signatures to the petition. In particular, I acknowledge Conny, Kristyn, Pam, Sarah, Rachael, Deb, Marion and Sue. It is against the standing orders to applaud, but I will not interject.

[Interruption]

It was appropriate that the member for Wakehurst tabled this petition. Lizard Rock and the surrounding area was once part of the Davidson electorate. The redistribution that took place at the last election moved that area into the Wakehurst electorate. So for those who were wondering why the member for Wakehurst tabled the petition, I assure you that it was absolutely appropriate for him to do so. I have met with the Northern Beaches Bushland Guardians on several occasions. My favourite event was Rock for Lizard Rock. That was a wonderful event that took place before the election. It was a great opportunity for the community to come together and to agree that we do not support this proposal.

All of us support property rights. As an advocate of liberalism, I support property rights. I said that in my inaugural speech. But, of course, in our society we have proper planning processes, and it is really important that there is no risk of corruption in those processes. But having said all of that, planning always needs to have proper community consultation. All of us deserve to have our say. A former colleague of mine, Peta Seaton, AM, who was a member of this place, said to me, "There will come a time when you fall in love with your electorate." I have fallen in love with the Davidson electorate because of its natural beauty. All of you in the gallery know that we in the Davidson electorate live in a wonderful part of Sydney. I acknowledge my colleagues here today, in particular the member for Wakehurst, the member for Manly and the member for Pittwater. I also acknowledge that the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces is in the Chamber. It is important that he is here for this debate. I pay tribute to my predecessor, the former member for Davidson, Jonathan O'Dea. He advocated against this proposal, made several submissions, and spoke out in opposition to it in this place. He said of the development:

Many constituents have contacted my electorate office with concerns that the land in the current SEPP amendment being considered for potential development is not at all suitable for proposed residential or industrial services and development.

He listed this concern:

The serious and persistent threat of bushfire at the sites proposed for possible residential and industrial service development.

He further observed:

The plateau is unique with a number of threatened and endangered species.

As the member for Pittwater was getting to, the former Government went to the last election with a firm and solid commitment to protect Lizard Rock. The then Minister for Planning, the Hon. Anthony Roberts, said:

... concerns raised by the community in relation to bushfires, critical infrastructure and density mean that a re-elected Perrottet Government will not allow the rezoning application to proceed.

I am very proud that I and my fellow candidates—I acknowledge, of course, the member for Pittwater and the member for Manly but also Toby Williams, the Liberal candidate for Wakehurst, who was not successful—were able to advocate to the then Premier, Dominic Perrottet, for this. We took that promise to the election, and I hope that the Minister, who is here today, takes note of that.

**Mr JAMES GRIFFIN (Manly) (16:18):** I begin by taking this opportunity to thank the member for Wakehurst for bringing forward this petition. I also thank the Northern Beaches Bushland Guardians, in particular Conny Harris. Conny, thank you for not recruiting Mum too aggressively to your cause. She has only chewed my ear off a little bit about this particular issue. I acknowledge the member for Davidson and thank him for his contribution. I also acknowledge the member for Pittwater, who has been an advocate for this issue. Importantly, I also want to thank the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces for sitting in the Chamber and for listening to the concerns that those members have raised on behalf of their communities and the some 12,000 people who back this petition. The petition articulates and airs a number of complex issues: First Nation rights, biodiversity and



conservation, environmental preservation, density and—the topic of the month and for ongoing months, I am sure—housing affordability, which is something that we are acutely aware of on the northern beaches.

How do we effectively navigate such an issue that combines all of those complexities? A petition such as this highlights the significant community concern, because it is no small feat to get 12,000 signatures. Conny, Kristyn and others collected those petition signatures from people along the Manly beachfront and right up the peninsula with the support of members from those areas. It is true that members of Parliament really live or die in reflecting and representing the wishes of their communities. It was good to hear from members—particularly the member for Wakehurst and the member for Pittwater, who have stood strong on this issue for so long—to share the concerns of their communities with the House.

The member for Wakehurst and the member for Pittwater have also articulated what seems to be a reasonable pathway forward, whether it is a land swap or rental income or other. It is clear that there is a consistent and shared view that our communities and also the members who represent them are willing to work with all stakeholders and the Minister in the hope of ultimately finding a pathway that respects the rights of First Nations peoples and the role and responsibility of metro land council while also recognising the complexity and preciousness of the ecosystem and environment around Lizard Rock, and dealing with the other issues around housing affordability and density. I thank the member for Wakehurst, the member for Pittwater and the member for Davidson. Equally, I thank the Minister for coming into the Chamber and hearing the concerns of the community today.

**Mr PAUL SCULLY (Wollongong—Minister for Planning and Public Spaces) (16:21):** In response: I thank the member for Wakehurst for bringing this petition to the House. I thank those in the gallery for coming along today and everyone who signed the petition, as well as the member for Pittwater, the member for Davidson and the member for Manly for their contributions. There is no doubt that people have strong views about this proposal. I appreciate the depth of feeling of members of the community. It has become apparent that they were deliberately misled during the election campaign by the previous Government about what had not happened for local political gain.

For the record, as shadow Minister for Planning and Public Spaces, I and the then Opposition believed the previous Government had stepped in, only to find out on taking the reins of the portfolio that nothing like that had happened. It was a statement from a media adviser in a paper—nothing more. The planning proposal that this debate refers to is a proposal from the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council to rezone land for residential development. It has a long history. From October 2022 to now, proponents were informed on a number of occasions that their proposal could proceed to the next stage if certain conditions were met. Understandably, they are as frustrated about how we got here today as others are.

To clarify exactly where this planning proposal is up to, the Department of Planning and Environment issued a gateway determination with a number of conditions on 9 June this year. A period of three months has been set for those conditions to be incorporated into the proposal with a minimum 30-day public exhibition. A further 40 working days must be provided for 15 authorities to consider the proposal. They include Transport for NSW, NSW SES, the Rural Fire Service, the Environment Protection Authority, the New South Wales and Commonwealth departments for the environment, and Sydney Water. Progression of the proposal now lies with the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council. I note that any objections from the NSW Rural Fire Service would mean that the proposal will not progress, which will be of interest to those in the gallery.

Following a public exhibition, the independent northern beaches strategic planning panel will hold a public meeting to hear from submission makers before making a recommendation for how the proposal should be finalised. The member for Manly succinctly summed up all the issues that land-use planning must take into account. The final authority to determine if and how the land is rezoned will sit with me or my delegate, and the final determination will be based on the advice received following the conclusion of the assessment. The member for Wakehurst has spoken to me directly about the issue on several occasions. I have also spoken to the Federal member for Mackellar about it. I understand there may be a desire to enter into some other arrangement. The proponent must agree to that, but it also should not come at a cost to government that it cannot meet in the current fiscal environment. Given the interest in this matter, I encourage all community members to become involved and engaged in the process. That is the way planning proposals in this State should be assessed and considered.

**Mr MICHAEL REGAN (Wakehurst) (16:25):** In reply: Petitioning is an age-old tactic, with an impressive history across many important social movements, that remains powerful today. Petitioning is an important accountability and democratic feature of the workings of this Chamber. It provides an avenue for the community to organise and demonstrate public sentiment. If they meet the threshold of 10,000 signatures, they can hear a dedicated debate in Parliament and a direct response from the relevant Minister. The Minister had no choice but to speak today; however, we are grateful for his time and engagement with the issue. We have met several times, as he mentioned. We will look for a way forward that does not involve housing on the site.

I appreciate that the Minister can only work with the situation he has inherited, but let us work together to find a smart solution.

I thank the member for Pittwater, the member for Davidson and the member for Manly for their contributions to debate today. Northern beaches residents were rightly dismayed by how the former Government handled the issue. However, members have represented their constituents well today in speaking to the petition. I note the announcement from the Coalition during the election campaign that it would stop the rezoning proposal. It is testament to the effective public pressure, but it was too little too late. Regardless, the advocacy from the member for Pittwater, the member for Davidson and the member for Manly on this issue is, and continues to be, much appreciated.

I again give a huge thanks to the Northern Beaches Bushland Guardians, who are all in the gallery today, and everyone who signed that petition. I thank the northern beaches councillors and their staff because at every opportunity, including in its excellent submission to the rezoning proposal, the Northern Beaches Council has provided expert evidence and analysis explaining why it is the wrong development in the wrong place. It is very unfortunate it has been ignored. In closing, I simply say that we must find a long-term solution to protect Lizard Rock and surrounding bushland in perpetuity. It is a top priority for me, the people of Wakehurst and the northern beaches, and it should be for this State.

**Petition noted.**

**The SPEAKER:** The petition discussion having concluded, I thank the guests in the gallery. I did not hear a peep out of them as they listened to their local representatives and the Minister. I thank them very much for joining in this important part of the political discourse.

*Motions*

**RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Debate resumed from an earlier hour.**

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (16:28):** The Opposition opposes the motion moved by the member for Campbelltown. I find it interesting that, after spending 12 years in opposition, Government members have moved a motion which is aimed at giving themselves a huge pat on the back by recognising that they are doing a review. Looking at all the motions from members opposite, congratulating themselves after being in opposition for 12 years, one would think that they would involve some policy or solutions. We all know that leadership is about solving problems. I note the member for Swansea is congratulating the Government on setting up a task force; the member for Granville, a review; the member for Heathcote, another review; and the member for Coogee, a task force. We come all the way back to the member for Campbelltown, talking about another task force. I note that the Government is giving itself huge pats on the back for all the reviews it is undertaking. An interesting article, "Once upon a review in the name of a clear picture for NSW Labor", by James O'Doherty from *The Daily Telegraph*, states:

With more than 15 reviews launched since the March election, the Minns government has kicked a lot of hard decision-making down the road.

My grave concern is that the Government makes no decisions and all it does is reviews. Some of the reviews being undertaken are the comprehensive expenditure review, a strategic infrastructure review, a toll review, a review into the entire Sydney metro project, a bus task force review and the Sydney Trains review, which the member's motion refers to. An interesting further comment by Mr O'Doherty is:

... you can bet none of these inquiries will be cheap.

That's ironic, given Labor went to the election promising to cut costs of consultants.

Labor says all of its reviews are needed, in part because it has been so long since they were last in office.

It was such a long time that the Government does not have the ability to make decisions. Regarding the transport part of the motion, I note that on 16 February 2023 the then shadow Minister for Transport was visiting the member for Campbelltown. I suspect the member for Campbelltown was waiting with bated breath, thinking, "What is the shadow Minister going to come out and talk about? What are we going to promise the good people of Campbelltown?" I suspect that the member for Campbelltown was disappointed because the then shadow Minister came out and said that if Labor won government it would undertake a review of the train timetable, not that it would actually make any concrete decisions around the electorate of the member for Campbelltown about transport. The shadow Minister is quoted as saying:

That's why Labor will review the train timetable to deliver better train connections so it's easier for people to get to and from work, and get their kids to and from school every day.

I highlight Labor's policy announcement—a review. I note that the member for Campbelltown went to Facebook to promote that the shadow Minister visited and that there would be a review. I found it quite interesting. It is quite a nice Facebook post. The member for Campbelltown is pointing in a direction. All the photos of the member for Campbelltown are very good. There were a couple of comments to the post, one of which might be slightly unparliamentary, but I will read it. It says:

It was a pleasure talking to Mr Warren this morning, what is proud and lovely man, not to mention young and good looking.

That is a credit to the member for Campbelltown.

**Mr Greg Warren:** That's my mum.

**Mr MATT CROSS:** That is the member's mum. I am glad. There is another comment, saying:

Good Morning!

Have a beautiful day.

That was a nice comment. But there was another comment, which was quite interesting. It is from someone who may be one of the member's constituents, Mr Trevor Mitchell, who said:

I have no complaints. The change over at Glenfield is usually good, just walk across the platform and train is normally there or only a small wait.

So there are some happy customers under the previous Government on the Facebook page of the member for Campbelltown. I note that an initial report of the review was published on 12 May 2023. It was all interesting reading. Page 10 talks about the recent challenges for the train network and says:

Sydney Trains' performance has been significantly impacted by external challenges ("black swan" events) over which Sydney Trains has had little or no control.

This morning I was on a train and was delayed when getting to this place because a beautiful little caramel spoodle dog called Heidi went onto the tracks. I am happy to report that Heidi is fine. That is an example of an external, black swan event that happened on the train network. Other black swan events outlined in the report are weather events and the COVID-19 pandemic. I read point (iv) with great interest. It says:

Protected Industrial Actions (PIA) – PIA by rail unions in support of Enterprise Bargaining claims impacted the ability of Sydney Trains to provide services and carry out maintenance programs. Over 500 individual examples of PIA were in place at various times during the bargaining period.

It should be noted on the record. An interesting article, "Will There Be More NSW Train Strikes in 2023?", by Joel Burrows from *The Latch* states:

2022: The Year of the NSW Train Strikes

In 2022, the RTBU went hard-mode. In August, this union conducted 21 pieces of industrial action. In November, they conducted another 18.

This industrial action included:

- Leaving all of the Opal gates open.
- Taking 70% of Sydney's trains out of action.
- Wearing of union gear at work.
- Not removing any works of graffiti.

What's more, on December 2, there was going to be a network-wide stoppage.

This was the year of the strike and should be on the public record. I do not support this motion.

**Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (16:35):** I support the motion brought to the House by my friend and colleague the member for Campbelltown, who is a long-time advocate for public transport and understands how vital a reliable and resilient rail network is for south-western Sydney. The member for Davidson pooh-poohed, if I can call it that, the importance of reviews. Had the previous Government had transparency, accountability or any form of decency in engaging with various stakeholders, the need for various reviews to understand the scale of the problem would not be so necessary. But unfortunately public confidence in our rail network has reached an all-time low. The member for Davidson stalked our various social media accounts to identify comments. These are some of the comments made by people from my community who have had a gutful. Firstly, Matthew said:

I certainly won't miss the seemingly daily dramas on Sydney Trains. ... Now they are telling everyone to travel to Lidcombe to get to Liverpool that way. Goodness knows what time I will get to work. They really must do something about this antiquated system. They seem to have trackwork every weekend, but it doesn't seem to make any difference.

Alyssa said, "The New South Wales Government is too busy building tolled roads and not enough on the rail network."

These are just some of the responses about the state of the rail network over the past few years from people in my community. Restoring public confidence and trust in our rail network will require effort, resources and an understanding of the scale of the problem. The Sydney Trains rail infrastructure and systems review interim report is sobering in its identification of the many areas that must be addressed to improve the functioning of our rail network. There are 12 recommendations, and I will pick up on just a couple of them. I am very pleased because the Government has begun the first step to restoring public confidence by accepting all of the recommendations of the interim report.

Firstly, on recommendation 1, the accelerated maintenance program has commenced. This is the biggest coordinated program of rail maintenance ever undertaken in Sydney and ensures that we minimise impacts to services and deliver changes in a way that supports and respects our people. The member for Davidson raised the issue of industrial action, and that goes to the heart of recommendations 2, 3 and 4, which relate to consultation across parties for major changes. Over the past few years there have been issues that indicate potential failures in effectively engaging with key stakeholders in the delivery of transport assets and a whole range of other parts of our transport network. Consultation and communication with the various commuters across our rail network will go some way to addressing these issues. It is something the previous Government never had the hide to do.

Finally, recommendation 7 is about expediting technology to manage train-crewing responses during periods of degraded operations. This would go some way towards ensuring that a more effective response to black swan events is mounted by Sydney Trains. All of these and many other recommendations are covered in the review. These are what the Government has accepted. They will go towards ensuring that we have improved confidence and trust in our rail network so that we do not see comments like the ones I read out being levelled at our rail network, and we ensure that people are able to get to work, get to important events and other things via our public transport system.

**Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (16:39):** I thank the member for Campbelltown for moving this important motion for debate. After 12 years of sitting on their hands, those opposite have left us with a massive backlog of work and repair. The Government has been quick to act and, with the fantastic Minister for Transport—who, I think we can all agree, is a vast improvement on her predecessor—has announced the Sydney Rail Repair Plan, which will repair over 1,900 high-priority defects and 450 kilometres of track. I am happy to report that as of last Friday they are already about 25 per cent of the way through there. When the member for Davidson speaks of reviews and task forces and that we are not getting on with the job, here is clear evidence that that is not true.

We commend the workers, who are doing a fantastic job of getting through that amount of work in a short time. I know they are pulling long hours and weekends. I thank them and I am sure the people of New South Wales thank them for the fantastic work that they are doing. One of the major catalysts for the state of the rail network is the 2017 timetable changes. They had an incredible impact on my part of the world and on the electorates of the member for Liverpool and the member for Campbelltown because they essentially slashed services, which meant that there were few express services to the city anymore. I remember it at the time because it caused a fair bit of outrage. At the time I was a Liverpool councillor. We did a video about the impact it would have on the people in Liverpool and it was the most viewed video on the council's Facebook page for many years—I would like to think that was because of my photogenic ability.

**Mr Edmond Atalla:** It's the hairstyle.

**Mr NATHAN HAGARTY:** The hairstyle, yes. It was because this issue affects almost every single one of us. It affects our families. It affects our friends and it is a major issue of interest in our part of the world. The member for Davidson quoted *The Daily Telegraph*—that august journal of record. I also have a quote from *The Daily Telegraph*. In April, Lachlan Leeming found that our "train network is riddled with 40-year-old technology" and that the election-day delays were due to the failure of "a 1980s-era power supply unit". On the day of the election the entire train network had issues, as it had been having for many years. At the election the people of New South Wales and the people of Leppington in particular had a clear choice: They could continue to go with a government that had this 40-something-year-old technology or they could replace it with a new piece of 40-year-old technology, and they did. The member for Leppington, me—I am that 40-year-old new piece of technology.

**Ms Charishma Kaliyanda:** Very good. Congratulations!

**Mr NATHAN HAGARTY:** Yes. During the campaign I heard many stories of how people were impacted, and I will call out one in particular. There is a family who live in Carnes Hill in my electorate—a husband, wife and two kids. One of the kids has had chronic illness since he was born. They had a lot of

appointments, a lot of visits to hospital, and they happened to tell me just what it was like to try to manage that. There have been multiple times when both mum and dad were stranded at the station because they were unable to get home. I am pleased that people like them will be able to start getting home at a reasonable time to look after their family. I commend the member for Campbelltown for moving the motion.

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (16:43):** I thank the member for Davidson for bringing the motion to my attention. I acknowledge the packed public gallery today. As all members of this House know, there will be \$76.7 billion in investment over the next four years—thanks to who? A Liberal-Nationals Government. There are many projects and upgrades that we did in our term of government.

**Mr Matt Cross:** Name them.

**Mr MARK COURE:** I have just been told to name them. Who wants to hear them? There are so many station upgrades. Mr Temporary Speaker, I know it is a burning issue for you in Cessnock and I know deep down you want me to go through every one of these station upgrades. The Armidale station upgrade—who delivered that? It was the Liberal-Nationals Government. Arncliffe station—who upgraded that? It was the Liberal-Nationals Government. Ashfield commuter car park, Banksia station upgrade, Beecroft station, Berala station, Bexley North station and Birrong station were all upgraded by a Liberal-Nationals Government. Canley Vale and Casula had station upgrades. Then of course we have Como station, Cootamundra station, Edgecliff, Fairy Meadow, just to name a few. Of course, we have the Harris Park station upgrade completed by the Liberal-Nationals Government. We have Heathcote, Homebush, Jannali, Junee, Kingswood, Lapstone, Leppington, Lindfield—

**Mr Nathan Hagarty:** They have been everywhere.

**Mr MARK COURE:** It is a bit like that. I take that interjection because we have been everywhere upgrading stations and building commuter car parks. There is the Narwee station upgrade, and where is that? It is in the Oatley electorate. There is North Strathfield, and the next station is—wait for it—the Oatley railway station, upgraded by who? It was upgraded by the Liberal-Nationals Government. Then there are Panania and Parkes.

**Ms Liesl Tesch:** Classic pork-barrelling.

**Mr MARK COURE:** The member for Gosford thinks that is pork-barrelling but, no, it is not. It is getting on with the job of delivering upgrades for our local community that was neglected by those opposite under 16 years of Labor. Then there is Petersham, Point Claire and Rooty Hill, which had a station upgrade and commuter car park.

**Mr Edmond Atalla:** And had a good member then.

**Mr MARK COURE:** I invited you to the announcement, so you be good and just sit there and cop it.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** The member for Oatley will direct his comments through the Chair.

**Mr MARK COURE:** Then there is the Waratah station. Only a few weeks ago I was pleased to officially open the upgrade to Riverwood station, which has a brand-new, 142-capacity car park. Of course, this is amazing infrastructure that our community had wanted for many years. There will be \$76.7 billion over the next four years, delivered by who? The Liberal-Nationals Government.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I thank the member for Oatley for his contribution and energy. Before I give the call to the member for Granville, on behalf of the member for Davidson I welcome to the gallery David Griesz and his parents. Welcome to the New South Wales Parliament. I am pleased you managed to find a seat. It was the member for Oatley who entertained us for the past couple of minutes.

**Ms JULIA FINN (Granville) (16:48):** I thank the member for Campbelltown for moving this important motion about the railway infrastructure and systems review because my community, particularly the residents of Granville, have suffered needlessly over the past 12 years from the appalling timetabling decisions made by the previous Government and its appalling neglect of maintenance of the train network. While the member for Davidson might complain that we are doing a review rather than making changes immediately, to review the train timetable you need to look at the train timetable across the entire Sydney Trains network to make sure you get it right—or, in the case of those opposite, to make sure you stuff it up completely. We are not waiting for the outcome of the review to get on with maintenance. We are commencing a very necessary accelerated maintenance program because those opposite neglected maintenance. And while there are black swan events, like the dog Heidi event earlier today, on three occasions in March we had an absolute meltdown of the Sydney Trains network, largely caused by the neglect of maintenance.

Granville was an important railway interchange for 160 years, up until the 2017 timetable change. Granville was originally established as Parramatta Junction. It was the terminus for the main western line before a bridge was built across Beckett's Creek and it went on to Parramatta and further west. In 2013 we lost our express services. In 2017 Granville was taken off the western line altogether on weekdays between 6 a.m. and 10.00 p.m. That coincided with those opposite putting 5,000 units next to the train station. It has been absolutely diabolical. As much as we all know that it is important to build density next to infrastructure, if you take the trains away from the train station it is of no use whatsoever. This meant that people in Granville could not go by public transport to the local hospital at Westmead; they had to change trains at Parramatta. It meant that people coming from the Blue Mountains to work at Granville—at Granville TAFE or schools—had to change trains to get to work instead of getting off at Granville, as they had for years.

During COVID, when the weekend timetable was run on weekdays, I was inundated with compliments from local residents about how much better the train timetable was because our train services are actually better on the weekend. It is ridiculous. Those opposite would have had us believe in 2019 that they had restored the train timetable. They put up corflutes across every single polling booth in Granville, and at the train station itself, saying that express trains had been delivered for Granville, but they never came back. I am really hoping that the railway infrastructure and systems review will restore decent train services to Granville, but we will wait and see the outcome. It is a holistic system-wide review, and it needs to be done that way. I know that those opposite have benefited a lot from the previous timetables, while train services in my area were made slower. Everyone in south-west Sydney on the T2 line—funnily enough, all Labor seats—has suffered needlessly for years with really slow trains, while people opposite, who used to be on all-stations lines, got express services.

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (16:52):** By leave: I make a brief contribution to this debate. I acknowledge the contributions of the member for Oatley and the member for Davidson. The Central Coast region has had a multimillion-dollar investment in train stations. Interestingly, there had been no investment in accessibility upgrades to any of the stations on the Central Coast prior to the Liberal-Nationals Government being elected in 2011. It is incredibly frustrating to hear those opposite talk about the lack of investment when, on the Central Coast, ironically, every single Labor seat—I do not have train stations in my electorate—received multimillion-dollar upgrades to train stations through the Transport Accessibility Program.

I acknowledge the great work done by Transport for NSW in delivering those upgrades to multiple stations across the Central Coast—the biggest investment being more than \$30 million at Tuggerah. That funding was provided by the former Government to deliver infrastructure for the thousands of commuters who use our train stations every day. For example, the Gosford Park&Ride car park, which I know the member for Gosford is aware of, is incredibly successful. The usage of that car park has started to rise since COVID. We saw multimillion-dollar investment in multiple train stations across the Central Coast under the former Liberal-Nationals Government—whether it be Lisarow, Ourimbah, Narara or the more than multimillion-dollar upgrade to Tuggerah delivered by the former Liberal-Nationals Government through the Transport Accessibility Program.

I point out to those opposite that not one dollar—not one dollar—was spent upgrading any of those stations over the 16 years that they were in Government. When we came to office in 2011 we went through the planning process and we delivered. Most of those train station upgrades were in the vicinity of \$4 million to \$9 million each, with the exception of Tuggerah which was in excess of \$30 million. Tuggerah is a major station and anyone who has been to the Central Coast would realise how big it is. There was also a multimillion-dollar investment in car park expansions. Sadly, the Federal Labor Government has now removed all funding for upgrades to car parks around Gosford and the Central Coast. No additional car parking will be provided by the Federal Labor Government. That is very disappointing for thousands of potential commuters, especially as things get back to normal post-COVID.

Point Clare also received a multimillion-dollar station upgrade. That is in addition to Ourimbah, Lisarow, Narara and Tuggerah stations. Every single station on the Central Coast received multimillion-dollar upgrades under the outstanding Transport Accessibility Program, which delivered great outcomes for commuters on the Central Coast. As I said, we saw not one dollar of investment over 16 long years of Labor for any of the hundreds of thousands of commuters who utilise those trains every single day on the Central Coast. The member for Gosford was very vocal about how the Point Clare station upgrade was not correct. Sadly, when it was out for public consultation she never took the opportunity to make a submission. She could have made a submission if she believed there were deficiencies. In fact, it was not until after the event that she complained about its delivery. Interestingly, there have been no complaints about the station since then. It is functioning exceptionally well. I commend the former Government for delivering multimillion-dollar upgrades to Point Clare, Lisarow, and Narara stations, and \$30-plus million for Tuggerah. The former Government invested in accessibility to train stations for all people across the Central Coast—people of all ages and abilities, mums and dads, mums with prams et cetera.

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (16:56):** By leave: The investment in our station upgrades is really important, but we have seen absolute pork-barrelling of railway station upgrades. The Hawkesbury River station upgrade occurred because they thought that the Premier at the time, who was the member for Hawkesbury, lived where the Hawkesbury River station was. It wasn't; it was located in the Hornsby electorate. It is a tiny little station that is hardly used. The failure of staff to consult with people with disabilities during the delivery of the Point Clare station upgrade was very disappointing. The consultation went out but its delivery was completely different to that consultation. What had been a ramp from one side of the train station to the other became four layers of steps, completely taking away the step-free access between one side of Point Clare train station and the other. I am very confident that Transport for NSW will be listening more carefully to communities about real needs and making sure that this is delivered, not in a pork-barrelling manner, but fairly and equitably based on the number of users across our stations.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** It being 4.58 p.m., in accordance with the earlier resolution of the House, debate is interrupted for community recognition statements.

*Bills*

**CRIMES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (ASSAULTS ON RETAIL WORKERS) BILL 2023**

**Returned**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council returning the bill without amendment.

*Community Recognition Statements*

**ARROW DONUTS**

**Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (16:59):** As members are no doubt aware, Friday 2 June marked National Donut Day. As it is one of the most important days of the year, I celebrated the occasion by visiting Arrow Donuts in my electorate. Arrow Donuts is run by Mitch Ford out of a food truck in the suburb of Leppington. The name Arrow is derived from a mix of his son's names, Archer and Owen, and holds sentimental value for Mitch and the family. He started the business in the aftermath of COVID and it has quickly gone from strength to strength. Not just limited to delicious fresh donuts, Arrow also serves coffee, milkshakes and other delicious desserts—or, as Mitch says, "everything good." The speciality is the cheesecake donut. After sampling a range of flavours, I am happy to report to the House that there was much deliciousness on offer. My electorate agreed. I am happy to report that Arrow had sold out of donuts after Donut Day. Mitch is a symbol of my electorate's resilient and innovative spirit, and I wish him every success.

**DAVID GRIESZ**

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson) (17:00):** In the first week of June 2023 the Davidson electorate office hosted David Griesz from Masada College, St Ives, for year 10 work experience. It was an honour to host David, who has a keen interest in and passion for public policy and service. I asked David to write a brief on a topic that he was passionate about and that he believed was of the utmost importance. The topic he chose was recycling. He eloquently said that, as a society, "We should be recycling the trash that is in landfill so that we can turn it into products we can use." To do this, David outlined two solutions. The first is to invest in facilities to turn landfill into products that are reusable. The second is to invest in education campaigns to promote recycling so fewer products end up in landfill. David found that Germany has the highest global recycling rate, at 66.1 per cent. In Australia, New South Wales should look to South Australia, which recovers 80 per cent of waste in landfill. I am proud to place David's work on record. I thank him for his public policy contribution and work in the Davidson electorate office. It is also wonderful to see David and his parents in the gallery today.

**PADSTOW ROTARY CLUB**

**Ms KYLIE WILKINSON (East Hills) (17:01):** Since it was chartered in 1957, Padstow Rotary and its members have dedicated themselves to providing service to others by actively supporting the community. I recognise two such members: Kevin Bouffler and Ken McMillan. Kevin joined the club in 1961 and is the longest serving member of Padstow Rotary, with over 62 years of active service in various roles. Kevin was recently awarded an honorary membership. Although he has decided to step back, he will remain a valued member of the club. Ken grew up in country New South Wales and joined Walcha Rotary in 1973. I acknowledge his 50 years of service. Ken joined Padstow Rotary in 1979 and has served as president, secretary and director of youth over the years. Ken enjoys helping people, whether through selling Christmas trees, organising BBQs, or other community projects such as knitting jumpers for lambs. We are grateful to Kevin and Ken for their service. I thank them for their contribution to Padstow Rotary and the local community.

## 5 LANDS WALK

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (17:02):** I recognise the 5 Lands Walk, a wonderful annual cultural community event in the electorate of Terrigal. This year's event was held on Saturday 26 June. We had a wonderful turnout, with locals and visitors to the region enjoying the day-long festival along the 10 kilometres of coastline linking five villages from MacMasters Beach to Terrigal. The walk is the region's largest participation event, designed in collaboration between Aboriginal peoples and the broader communities along the coast, and connecting people to people and people to place. Earlier in the week, I was proud to attend a smoking ceremony that was held at Kincumba Mountain, where this year's message stick was entrusted to Lachlan Masters, a young local Aboriginal man. The official opening night at Avoca Beach also included Aboriginal dance and local music and entertainment. This event is very special. It has the ability to connect the community through walking together and experiencing Aboriginal culture, live music, art sculptures and exhibitions. The many whale sightings were an added bonus. I thank the 700 volunteers, including the State Emergency Service.

## LINK-UP (NSW) ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

**Ms PRUE CAR (Londonderry—Deputy Premier, Minister for Education and Early Learning, and Minister for Western Sydney) (17:03):** I congratulate Link-Up (NSW) Aboriginal Corporation, which took home the ZEST award for Outstanding First Nations Community Initiative at the 2023 ZEST Awards. Based in Ropes Crossing in my electorate, Link-Up does incredible work assisting Indigenous Australians directly affected by past government policies such as being separated from their families and culture through forced removal and being fostered, adopted or raised in institutions. Link-Up is an instrumental part of supporting the healing journeys of those removed by delivering professional, culturally sensitive and confidential research, reunions and social, emotional and wellbeing services to those over the age of 18. I was honoured to present Link-Up with the award and recognise the hard work of the Link-Up (NSW) board, led by CEO Jamie Sampson. I thank Link-Up for the profoundly important work it does supporting the stolen generations.

## JENNIE HANNA

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (17:04):** I acknowledge Jennie Hanna, who was announced as a Paul Harris Fellow at the Rotary Club of Gerringong's Changeover luncheon at the weekend. Since joining the Gerringong Rotary in 2018, Jennie has been an active and engaged member of her community. Jennie has contributed with tireless enthusiasm to club activities, including as a leader on the social committee, at trivia nights at the local bowling club, and at fundraising events. Jennie has coordinated several fundraisers, including the massive community kite festival—an awesome and often thankless job. She has decorated and catered for many events over her years as a Rotarian, such as the rock'n'roll nights and Changeover functions. Jennie is also the Gerringong Rotary Club's community service director, overseeing community projects. She is involved with Rotary's Alchemy Chorus, as well as many other events. I thank her for her contribution to her community and her tireless efforts. I also congratulate Jennie on her recognition as a Paul Harris fellow.

## EID AL-ADHA

**Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone) (17:05):** I extend my warmest regards to all our Muslim brothers and sisters on the joyous occasion of Eid al-Adha, also known as the Feast of Sacrifice. It is significant and symbolic because it commemorates the willingness of the Prophet Ibrahim, peace be upon him, to sacrifice his son as an act of faith in God. It serves as a reminder of the values of service, selflessness and submission that lie at the core of Islam. Muslims around the world celebrate this auspicious occasion by performing the Hajj pilgrimage. Hajj is a profound spiritual journey that brings together millions of Muslims from diverse backgrounds, fostering a sense of unity and equality. During this blessed time, families and communities come together in prayer, reflection and acts of charity. It also reminds us to reaffirm our commitment to serve humanity and work towards a more inclusive and harmonious society. I am proud to have a large, thriving Islamic community in the electorate of Riverstone. The number of Muslims has almost doubled since the last census, and they give back to the broader community in countless ways. Eid Mubarak.

## SAMANTHA JENSEN

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (17:06):** Today Samantha Jensen hosted a morning tea for World Scleroderma Day in memory of her mother, Kim, who tragically passed away from the disease in May 2021. Unfortunately, I could not join Sam and other Boorowa locals, so I take this opportunity to highlight Sam's efforts in raising awareness about scleroderma and her fundraising efforts. Scleroderma is a rare skin and autoimmune disease affecting the connective tissues of the body, for which there is presently no cure. For two years, Sam has been raising awareness for those suffering from scleroderma, including extensive fundraising efforts in support of affected families. Last year Sam hosted three events in Boorowa and raised \$5,000 for the Scleroderma Foundation Australia. Sam's goal this year is to double that figure, and she has arranged four events between June



and July, including lawn bowls, a charity golf day, a morning tea and an auction. I thank Sam for her incredible fundraising efforts and for her commitment to raising awareness of scleroderma. I look forward to hearing about the success of the events.

#### **BRIGHT MOON TEMPLE**

**Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (17:07):** In February 2023, a devastating fire burnt down the Bright Moon Temple in Springvale, Melbourne. In a great display of community unity, the Australian Chinese Buddhist Society organised a fundraising dinner to support the rebuild of the Bright Moon Temple. On 11 June, I had the privilege of attending this event, which featured raffles and an auction. The grand total raised amounted to an incredible \$238,888. I would like to commend Mr James Chan, OAM, chairman of the Australian Chinese Buddhist Society; Mr Vincent Kong, OAM, president of the Australian Chinese Buddhist Society; and the organising committee, volunteers and donors involved in such an outstanding event. I would also like to wish Mr Vinh Ly, president of Bright Moon Temple, all the best in his efforts to reinstate an important landmark in his community.

#### **ARMENIAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE**

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby) (17:07):** The Willoughby electorate is home to a proud and strong Armenian-Australian community, and I would like to recognise the Armenian National Committee [ANC] for its outstanding advocacy and community work. Based in the heart of Willoughby, the ANC is the largest and most influential Armenian-Australian grassroots organisation. As a voice for the Armenian-Australian community, the ANC seeks to raise community awareness of Armenian affairs and is dedicated to deepening Australian-Armenian ties. With both a historical and contemporary focus, the ANC has lobbied Australian governments to recognise the Armenian genocide of 1915 and is actively calling on our governments to stand in solidarity with Armenia today. This is particularly pressing given the recent blockade of Artsakh by Azerbaijan. Artsakh is an ethnically and culturally Armenian community, with 99 per cent of its population identifying as Armenian. Since Azerbaijan forces blocked vital roads and supply routes into Artsakh in December 2022, the country has suffered acutely with severe rationing and mass unemployment. The ANC has rightly condemned this action by Azerbaijan, and I join wholeheartedly with the ANC in standing up for Artsakh and the Armenian community here in Australia.

#### **WESTFIELDS SPORTS HIGH SCHOOL**

**Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (17:09):** I proudly inform the House that Westfields Sports High School has recently been categorised as an Australian Olympic Pathway School by the Australian Olympic Committee. I am not surprised by the categorisation, given Westfields Sports High School's longstanding international reputation of producing some of the best athletes in the world. The new status gives students access to high-quality sport training environments, sports academies, accredited coaches, support services and formal pathways to high-performance sporting teams. We all know that athletes are a product of their wider environment, so I commend not only the school's student athletes but also their teachers, parents, coaches, trainers, volunteers and school support staff.

#### **UPPER HUNTER VINNIES COMMUNITY SLEEPOUT 2023**

**Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (17:09):** I acknowledge and thank everyone who participated in and supported the Upper Hunter Vinnies Community Sleepout at Muswellbrook Showground. The St Vincent de Paul Society, Upper Hunter Homelessness Service and Hope City Church hosted the event at the Upper Hunter Youth Service last Thursday night. The Upper Hunter Vinnies Community Sleepout raised \$16,000 to help the local homeless and to pay rents and mortgages to stop people from becoming homeless. The Australian Red Cross provided soup and dessert, and local businesses provided 40 items for auction. Power FM's Anny and Lachie conducted trivia, stayed over and then presented the breakfast show in the morning. I also say a special thanks to the Mt Arthur Coal workers for their involvement. An out-of-uniform day at St Catherine's Catholic College, Singleton, last week raised \$1,138.90 for the Vinnies appeal. Principal Niamh Marzol then took part in her tenth Vinnies Community Sleepout, which was almost her best fundraiser, with almost \$7,500 donated. In closing, I give a shout-out to the St Joseph's High School, Aberdeen, year 12 students who will do their Vinnies School Sleepout in the school hall next month.

#### **ZEST AWARDS**

**Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (17:11):** The annual ZEST Awards is a project of the Western Sydney Community Forum that celebrates exceptional individuals and organisations across Western Sydney. It was a pleasure to attend the awards on 23 June at Accor Stadium in the Parramatta electorate. ZEST provides a platform to acknowledge those who are helping to build and support our region. I thank the ZEST team, including Georgie Stayches, Joshua Bird, Blake Morris, Catherine Madziva, Nadiana Albistur, Sivani Yaddanapudi, Tania Fernandes, Tim Cahill and Vikram Murthy. Among the many worthy nominees was the Parramatta-based WestWords, an organisation with a mission to "facilitate and magnify the cultural, social and educational impact

of creating, sharing and reading the stories of Western Sydney". The WestWords initiative Living Stories Western Sydney Writing Prize was nominated and won the Outstanding Project Community Arts and Culture category. I congratulate Ally Burnham, Michael Campbell and all involved with WestWords for helping the people of Western Sydney to tell their stories.

#### **BOMADERY HIGH SCHOOL**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama) (17:12):** Today the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges the students from Bomaderry High School who were recently recognised at the annual vocational education and training awards. Among them was Sophie Orford of Bomaderry High School. The ambitious young woman has taken on two qualifications while finishing school—one in primary industries and another in manufacturing and engineering. That effort earned her the title of Outstanding VET Student of the Year. Sophie also won the VET Student of the Year for both primary industries and manufacturing and engineering. These outstanding young students at Bomaderry High School are the next generation of our workforce, and they have a bright future ahead. Also recognised was Lachlyn-Jye Wilkinson from Bomaderry High School, who won the VET Student of the Year award for additional needs. Other Bomaderry High School students recognised with certificates were Jayden Stewart, Jack Klimcke, Violet Venn, Helayna Harris, Dino Dicembre, Lewis Baddeley, Marley Preswick, Daniel Morrison, Codee Webber and Archie Marston.

#### **NIKKI AYERS**

**Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (17:13):** I am thrilled to extend my warmest congratulations to Nikki Ayers for her outstanding achievement in breaking the world record in Paralympic rowing at the 2023 World Rowing Cup in Italy. The momentous feat is not only a testament to Nikki's remarkable talent and relentless dedication but also a source of immense pride and inspiration for our entire community. By surpassing the limits of physical barriers, Nikki has redefined what is possible and has become a shining example of resilience and perseverance. Her unwavering commitment to the sport and her determination has allowed her to soar to unprecedented heights, leaving an indelible mark on the world of rowing. This exceptional accomplishment not only brings recognition to Nikki but also serves as a beacon of hope for aspiring athletes, highlighting the importance of embracing one's abilities and never surrendering to adversity. We are humbled to witness her journey and grateful for the inspiration that she has provided to our community. On behalf of the community, I express my deepest admiration and heartfelt congratulations to Nikki.

#### **CRAIG SHANAHAN**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (17:14):** Tonight I express my deep sadness that Craig Shanahan has decided to close his famous The Blind Chef Cafe in Penrith. It is with a heavy heart that I acknowledge the challenges that he has faced, particularly with his health. Craig is a giant in the Western Sydney community, playing host to Premiers and Prime Ministers, as well as garnering attention for his exceptional leadership in hospitality. My thoughts and prayers are with Craig during this difficult time. I understand that the decision was not easy for him to make, but his health must always take priority. I sincerely hope that his upcoming major surgery is successful and that it will lead him on the path to a full recovery. Craig's wellbeing is of utmost importance, and I wish him strength, resilience and a speedy recovery. I wish Craig all the best for his upcoming surgery and the future ahead—may it be filled with good health, happiness and new opportunities. Our community stands with Craig. God bless.

#### **CATHERINE MACREADIE**

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice) (17:15):** It is my pleasure to acknowledge Ms Catherine Macreadie, a fellow educator for 41 years. I had the pleasure of knowing Catherine during her time as the deputy principal of Greenacre Public School. My working relationship with Catherine started when we worked together on community outreach projects when I was the principal of Punchbowl Boys' High School. Catherine's journey started at Greenacre Public School in 1990. She was promoted to assistant principal and then deputy principal. Her leadership has been instrumental in shaping the school into the thriving community that it is today. She brought a wealth of experience, knowledge and passion to her role in the school community. Respect comes from earning trust, being sincere, giving one's best and putting the best interests of students, staff and parents first. Her personal touch and warmth have been so appreciated by the students, their parents and all staff. Though this chapter in her life has ended, I know that Catherine will continue to serve the community and the causes that inspire her and us. I extend my warmest thanks to Catherine for her service and for making a difference to the lives of so many people in our community.

### **GRAFTON GREYHOUND RACING CLUB**

**Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence) (17:16):** I congratulate Mr John Corrigan and the Grafton Greyhound Racing Club on the running of the Thunderbolt last Saturday night at the newly upgraded and opened Grafton track. What a crowd it was; some estimate that over 3,000 people turned out for the race. Brooke McClymont and Adam Eckersley wowed the crowd and were supported by Eli Fahey and band. Vamoose won the race on track, but Grafton was the big winner. I thank Mr Rob Macauley from Greyhound Racing NSW for having the confidence to bring the race back to Grafton. I know the club is looking forward to the race coming back to Grafton next year. We are all looking forward to a huge July of racing in Grafton for both the greyhounds and thoroughbreds. I am sure Clarence River Jockey Club CEO Michael Beattie, chairman Graeme Green and the board will have the track and festivities ready for the number one racing carnival in regional New South Wales—the Grafton Cup.

### **SLOANEBUILT TRAILERS**

**Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (17:17):** It is with great joy and admiration that I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the entire team at Sloanebuilt Trailers for winning the prestigious Australian Owned Business of the Year Award. Although, regretfully, I could not join them to celebrate their accomplishments in person, I knew that the people of New South Wales needed to hear about the amazing work they do. Their unwavering dedication, hard work and commitment to excellence has rightly earned them their well-deserved recognition. Beyond the remarkable achievements in their industry, I acknowledge and express my deepest gratitude for their significant contributions to the Camden community. Their ongoing support and involvement has made a substantial difference in the lives of many, fostering growth, opportunities and positive change. Camden is proud to have such exceptional businesses within its boundaries, and the importance of local businesses to the Camden economy cannot be understated. It takes grit and determination to see the success that Sloanebuilt Trailers has experienced, and I commend the team for that. Once again, I congratulate them on their exceptional achievement.

### **DUBBO RHINOS RUGBY CLUB**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (17:18):** I congratulate the Dubbo Rhinos Rugby Club on its commitment to fundraising each year with a special charity round. This year was no different. On Saturday 17 June Rhinos players took the field at Apex Oval for the New Holland Cup in very bold, one-off tie-dyed jerseys for their clash against Mudgee to raise both awareness and money for The Tie Dye Project. Having a strong connection to Dubbo local Molly Croft, the Rhinos were keen to get behind the project and proudly donned the jerseys in memory of the younger teens and kids who have lost their lives to sarcoma and those still fighting. In 2019 The Tie Dye Project raised \$25,000 and has continued to grow ever since. The game day itself was fantastic. There was great weather and a huge crowd. Following the clash, the Rhinos jerseys were auctioned off, and proceeds for the day tipped just over \$17,000 to go towards The Tie Dye Project. Events like these make me proud to be part of such a great and generous community. I again congratulate all of those involved in the wonderful event.

### **FESTIVAL OF CHARIOTS**

**Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool) (17:19):** On Saturday 24 June I attended the sixteenth annual Festival of Chariots in Liverpool. The Festival of Chariots is one of the largest and longest running festivals in human history. It is a worldwide celebration that prides itself on the worthwhile promotion of peace, love and communal harmony. It was extraordinary to see such a wide range of cultures and peoples coming together to share the spiritual journey from dark to light. I saw reflected in the faces of the attendees a genuine understanding and appreciation of the rich cultural history, language and tradition within the Indian diaspora. I thank Arvind Baldeo and the Vedic society for coordinating this festival. I also wish to say a special thanks to the attendees and volunteers who were instrumental in the unprecedented success of the Festival of Chariots. The most remarkable thing about the Festival of Chariots is that it is not held inside a temple but represents the interaction between God and all people, regardless of who or where they are.

### **SCOTLAND-AUSTRALIA CAIRN**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore) (17:20):** Mosman plays a special role as home to the Scotland-Australia Cairn, which was established for the bicentenary with stones from every parish across Scotland, symbolising our nations' shared connection. On Tuesday morning Mosman was graced with the heartwarming sound of bagpipes marking the annual inspection of the Scotland-Australia Cairn. This year we were fortunate enough to have the inspection carried out by the Hon. Simon Abney Hastings, 15th Earl of Loudoun, who interestingly also carried one of the gold spurs at the recent coronation of His Majesty King Charles III. I recognise Mosman Council for its 35 years of custodianship of the cairn, and all the representatives of the

various clans who attended to oversee the inspection of the cairn. I proudly channelled my Elliott and Kennedy bloodlines, and I even had a go swinging the impressive Mosman Council claymore, which was dutifully carried by deputy mayor and warden Roy Bendall. The inspection of the cairn is just one of a number of events that mark Scottish Week in Australia. I acknowledge the Scottish Australian Heritage Council for keeping the Scottish spirit alive and well in Australia.

#### BISHOP VINCENT LONG

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (17:21):** I congratulate Bishop Vincent Long, OFM, the bishop of the Diocese of Parramatta, who was recently featured in ABC TV's religion and ethics show, *Compass*, in an episode entitled *Sacred Space—The Franciscan of Parramatta*. Bishop Long was interviewed by journalist Geraldine Doogue. During the interview he takes viewers to his own personal sacred space, his mother's garden, which he explains is a space of "great spiritual therapy". Bishop Long also welcomes viewers to the Mary MacKillop chapel in the Bethany Centre, where he shares stories about his escape from Vietnam in an overcrowded boat and in dangerous conditions, and his important initiatives that build the relationship between the local Muslim community and the Catholic community in Western Sydney. He also spoke about Catholic life in the Diocese of Parramatta, including discussion of Holy Spirit Seminary in Harris Park, the Holy Thursday mass at St Patrick's Cathedral, World Youth Day pilgrims and Diocesan Synod. We are blessed to have Bishop Long lead our vibrant and flourishing diocese and carry out the work of leading the church.

#### COFFS HARBOUR CALLIGRAPHERS

**Mr GURMESH SINGH (Coffs Harbour) (17:22):** Coffs Harbour Calligraphers have honoured one of their own with a prestigious life membership. Recently Nerise Windsor was presented with her award by Kevin Schofield from the Coffs Harbour Calligraphers at Coffs Harbour Showground Gallery. Nerise's husband, Les, was also at this special presentation. Nerise has been a member of Coffs Harbour Calligraphers for 32 years, holding positions of vice-president, club librarian and class tutor, as well as president for the past five years. Her interest was sparked by admiring a display by Coffs Harbour Calligraphers at South Grafton High School in 1990. Her husband, Les, arranged a membership of Coffs Harbour Calligraphers and a kit of calligraphy supplies. Nerise's stunning life membership certificate now adorns the living room wall at her Red Rock home. I congratulate Nerise on all the hard work that she and all her colleagues undertake at Coffs Harbour Calligraphers.

#### AUSVIET CHARITY FOUNDATION

**Mr TRI VO (Cabramatta) (17:23):** On 2 June I had the honour of attending a fundraising dinner for the AusViet Charity Foundation mission. This outstanding event raised crucial funds for the mission, which plans to conduct medical treatment, dental care and eye surgeries for disadvantaged individuals in the Ben Tre province in Vietnam. A dedicated team of Australian doctors, dentists, pharmacists and allied health professionals will collaborate with volunteers to conduct over 2,000 medical assessments and treatments in September of this year. In addition, the AusViet Charity Foundation has pledged to donate 300 food parcels to families and provide 1,000 school gift packs for school children in the province. I commend Dr Phuoc Vo, OAM, chairman of the AusViet Charity Foundation, the organising committee and all the volunteers involved in coordinating this worthy cause.

#### CAROLYN GLEN

**Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde) (17:24):** On the morning of 22 June 2023 I stopped off on my way to Parliament to attend Carolyn Glen's Cancer Council cake stall at Coxs Road, North Ryde. Carolyn lost her husband, David, after a battle with melanoma on 22 February 2022. Determined to make a difference after her devastating loss, Carolyn put on an array of homemade cakes, slices, crackles and cookies, which were a hit with parents doing the school drop-off at North Ryde and Holy Spirit primary schools. According to the Cancer Council, melanoma makes up only 1 per cent to 2 per cent of all skin cancers but is the most serious cancer due to its likelihood of spreading to other parts of the body, especially if not found and treated early. In sunny Australia the risk of melanoma is inflated, so the work of people like Carolyn is even more important. I thank the people in our community who so generously donated to the cause, and I commend Carolyn on her demonstration of strength. It is typical of the Ryde community and something many of us in this place should seek to emulate. Carolyn's dedication to honouring her late husband's memory and supporting the Cancer Council is to be commended, and I thank her for sharing her and David's story.

#### WOY WOY RUNNERS

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:25):** Amid the lockdowns of the COVID-19 pandemic a sea of blue arose—the Woy Woy Runners, a group formed by Kenny Lau, a local father of three young kids. His movement has transformed from a small group that began with the sharing of a casual hobby to a group of 300 members, who run routinely in the region's spectacular spots such as Mount Penang and the Woy Woy waterfront. They run

early and late, balancing family and community bonds. The group is a spectacular example of community strength and resilience, forming relationships through shared activity. The Woy Woy Runners promote a healthy lifestyle and demonstrate the values of our great region to future generations. In addition, local runner Jody O'Connor is an integral part of the group. She has been recognised as a great encourager of everyone involved. The group has come to engage young and old members of the community in a practice that has become a proud part of the community. I congratulate the Woy Woy Runners. In the words of Jody, "Come on!"

#### **CLARENCE TOWN RURAL FIRE BRIGADE**

**Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (17:26):** I am proud to congratulate the Clarence Town Rural Fire Brigade's Community First Responders on their invitation to participate this weekend in the Australasian Rescue Challenge in Adelaide. The team of Brad Elloy, Wendy Trevethan, Shaun Cox and Emma Hallahan will compete as two two-person teams in the trauma and CPR challenges. Clarence Town Rural Fire Brigade president Alan Earle is extremely proud of the team, saying, "The invitation to compete is quite a feather in our brigade's cap." Clarence Town Community First Responders was formed in 2016 in response to the death of a local resident following a cardiac arrest. Members of the RFS brigade undertake eight days of training from NSW Ambulance paramedics. The volunteers provide initial care during life-threatening medical emergencies while awaiting an emergency response, which they have done on more than 800 occasions, or about once every two days. I wish the Clarence Town Community First Responders all the best for this weekend.

#### **ST GREGORY'S COLLEGE**

**Mrs SALLY QUINNELL (Camden) (17:27):** St Gregory's College has had a long tradition of sending young men out into the community well prepared and informed, and this year's year 12 cohort will be ready. On Tuesday 6 June I was honoured to be invited to speak at their inaugural Night with a Mentor. The evening started with a masterclass with mentors John Issa and Anthony Minichiello, followed by a reverse interview involving three 13-minute chats with year 12 students. This was followed by an excellent supper and a question and answer session. The young men were beautifully prepared and asked pertinent questions such as "How do I know what to choose at university?" and "How do I make my music hobby into a career?" I was surrounded by an incredible array of mentors, including pilots, doctors, lawyers, cleaners, local developers, scientific researchers and a representative from the United Nations. I congratulate Michael Ivancic, the leader of learning, transition and pathways, and Matthew Brennan, the headmaster, on a fabulous and well-organised event. However, it is the young men of the year 12 cohort who conducted themselves with maturity and intelligence who I congratulate the most, and I wish them the greatest of luck in their future endeavours.

#### *Committees*

#### **JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL MATTERS**

##### **Membership**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council regarding the proposed number of members comprising the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters. I set down consideration of the message from the Legislative Council as an order of the day for a later hour.

#### **LEGISLATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

##### **Establishment and Membership**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council informing the Legislative Assembly that it has this day agreed to the following resolution:

- (1) That under section 4 of the Legislation Review Act 1987, a joint committee known as the Legislation Review Committee be appointed.
- (2) That under section 5 (1) (a) of the Act, Ms Higginson, Ms Munro and Mr Murphy be appointed to serve on the committee as members of the Legislative Council.

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

##### **Establishment and Membership**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council informing the Legislative Assembly that it has this day agreed to the following resolution:

- (1) That under section 31A of the Ombudsman Act 1974, a joint committee known as the Committee on the Ombudsman, the Law Enforcement Conduct Commission and the Crime Commission be appointed.

- (2) That under section 31C (1) (a) of the Act, Ms Higginson, Ms Merton and Mr Murphy be appointed to serve on the committee as members of the Legislative Council.

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

#### **Establishment and Membership**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council informing the Legislative Assembly that it has this day agreed to the following resolution:

- (1) That under section 63 of the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act 1988, a joint committee known as the Committee on the Independent Commission Against Corruption be appointed.
- (2) That under section 65 (1) (a) of the Act, Dr Kaine, Ms Mihailuk and Ms Munro be appointed to serve on the committee as members of the Legislative Council.

### **COMMITTEE ON THE HEALTH CARE COMPLAINTS COMMISSION**

#### **Establishment and Membership**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council informing the Legislative Assembly that it has this day agreed to the following resolution:

- (1) That under section 64 of the Health Care Complaints Act 1993, a joint committee known as the Committee on the Health Care Complaints Commission be appointed.
- (2) That under section 67 (1) (a) of the Act, Dr Cohn, Mr Donnelly and Mrs Maclaren-Jones be appointed to serve on the committee as members of the Legislative Council.

### **COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

#### **Establishment and Membership**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council informing the Legislative Assembly that it has this day agreed to the following resolution:

- (1) That under section 36 of the Advocate for Children and Young People Act 2014, a joint committee known as the Committee on Children and Young People be appointed.
- (2) That under section 38 (1) (a) of the Act, Dr Cohn, Mrs MacDonald and Ms Suvaal be appointed to serve on the committee as members of the Legislative Council.

### **JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON ROAD SAFETY**

#### **Establishment and Membership**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council informing the Legislative Assembly that it has this day agreed to the following resolution:

- (1) That this House agrees to the resolution in the Legislative Assembly's message of Thursday 22 June 2023 relating to the appointment of a joint standing committee to inquire into and report on road safety in New South Wales.
- (2) That the representatives of the Legislative Council on the joint standing committee be Mr D'Adam, Mr Latham and Mrs Ward.
- (3) That this House requests that the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly set the time and place of the first meeting.

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

#### **Establishment and Membership**

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Clayton Barr):** I report receipt of a message from the Legislative Council informing the Legislative Assembly that it has this day agreed to the following resolution:

- (1) That this House agrees to the resolution in the Legislative Assembly's message of Thursday 22 June 2023 relating to the appointment of a Joint Standing Committee on the Office of the Valuer-General.
- (2) That the representatives of the Legislative Council on the Joint Standing Committee on the Office of the Valuer-General be Mr Buttigieg and Mr Farlow.
- (3) That this House requests that the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly set the time and place of the first meeting.

#### *Private Members' Statements*

### **LAKE MACQUARIE ELECTORATE HEALTH SERVICES**

**Mr GREG PIPER (Lake Macquarie) (17:30):** I have on many occasions addressed this Parliament on what I believe is one of the most significant issues, if not the most significant issue, for Lake Macquarie residents, which is the availability—or, I should say, the lack of availability—of health services in the rapidly growing

southern part of the electorate. We are all very well aware of the current challenges faced by the New South Wales health system. COVID undoubtedly has taken its toll on the health services in this State, but residents of Lake Macquarie and I have been raising these issues long before COVID wreaked its havoc. Not a week, and sometimes not even a day, goes by where my office is not contacted by Lake Macquarie residents raising health-related concerns. These concerns have some common themes: surgical wait times, access to health services and concerns around the quality of health care provided. In raising these concerns, I make absolutely no criticism of the dedication or work of our health professionals—our doctors, nurses, paramedics or allied health workers. Those workers are at the coalface of our health system. They bear the brunt of the community's frustrations over its systemic failures. They do so with professionalism and compassion.

I acknowledge the proactive steps being taken by the Government to address these systemic issues. I acknowledge the creation of a surgical care task force, the introduction of safe staffing levels and the commitment to employ more nurses, paramedics and other health staff. Fixing the healthcare system in this State is no easy task and there will be no single solution. I heard the Minister for Health in this Chamber on Tuesday, when he said that "building more bricks and mortar does not deliver health care". As a former mental health nurse, I agree with that sentiment. But access to and equality of access to health services is an important piece of the puzzle. The people of Lake Macquarie currently do not have access to adequate health services.

The Lake Macquarie area—particularly the southern lakes region, encompassing suburbs including Morisset, Bonnells Bay, Balcolyn, Yarrowonga Park, Wyee, Sunshine and Cooranbong—has some of the highest levels of residential growth in the State. According to census data, in the 10 years between 2011 and 2021 there was a 17.1 per cent increase in the number of residents of Lake Macquarie, with over 11,000 new residents coming into the electorate. Of those new residents, 8,400 moved to the electorate in the five years between 2016 and 2021, and nearly half moved to the Southlakes postcodes of 2264 and 2265. This area experienced a 28 per cent growth in population between 2011 and 2021, with an increase of over 5,000 residents. This growth is expected to continue, with major projects flagged for the Morisset area. Forward planning to address the health needs of this expanding population should be happening now.

In addition to its size and projected growth, the population of Lake Macquarie is an aging population with significant health challenges. The 2021 census ranked Lake Macquarie eleventh in the State in terms of population over 65, with 24.5 per cent of residents over the age of 65. The electorate also ranked fourth in the State in terms of residents with a long-term health condition; 23.3 per cent of residents of the electorate have such a condition. The expanding health needs of the Lake Macquarie electorate, and in particular the Southlakes area, can be acutely seen in the most recent Bureau of Health Information data for Southlakes' nearest hospital, Wyong Hospital. The most recent quarterly BHI report, for the January to March 2023 quarter, showed a 7.1 per cent increase in the number of ambulance arrivals to Wyong Hospital compared with the same quarter in 2022. Over the same period, Wyong Hospital also experienced a 4.3 per cent increase in emergency presentations and a 56.1 per cent increase in the number of hospital admissions from the emergency department.

These numbers are extraordinary. They demonstrate the increasing demands on health services from the growing Lake Macquarie population and they support the need for additional services. There is currently only one community health service for the entire Lake Macquarie electorate, located in the Westlakes area. I am not aware of any plan to expand health services in Lake Macquarie. We all understand there is a housing crisis in New South Wales and there is a need to find solutions, including increasing housing supply. The Southlakes area of Lake Macquarie will be part of the solution, but Lake Macquarie cannot continue to grow without its residents being provided adequate and equitable access to health services. Residents and taxpayers in Lake Macquarie have waited long enough. Hunter New England Health and the Government must turn their minds to solutions for this area.

#### **PORT MACQUARIE ELECTORATE HOCKEY PLAYERS**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie) (17:35):** I extend my congratulations to the under-15 girls representative hockey team, whose hard work has been rewarded with the title of Division 4 Champions at the competition held in Grafton on 16 to 18 June. Thirty-one hockey teams from across New South Wales converged on the regional town of Grafton to compete for the prestigious Division 4 Hockey NSW State Championship. The high-calibre performances and incredible talent shone throughout the weekend of competition, with teams from New England, Grafton and Sydney fiercely contesting the illustrious title. Like many sporting organisations, the coronavirus pandemic impacted operations for our local hockey team in Port Macquarie, affecting team practice, fundraising and membership. Coupled with the 2019 summer bushfires and the March 2021 floods, this all equated to a perfect storm affecting team performance and competition over many years. Thankfully, a reprieve from natural disasters and health pandemics has seen a revival of interest in local hockey for the Port Macquarie Hastings Hockey Association [PMHHA], with a small cohort of girls coming together to challenge the best of the best in hockey from across the State.

It might be classed as a cliché, but it remains true that age is no barrier to success, especially when it comes to competitive sport. Natural talent, enthusiasm and an experienced coaching team are the core ingredients. In Grafton, the Port Macquarie team for the Division 4 age group consisted of 15 girls, six of whom were under-age for that group. This meant a portion of the team were only 12 or 13 years old, which is said to be one of the youngest squads flying the PMHHA banner in the club's history. Undeterred by their young age, the girls performed superbly throughout the championship and grew in confidence match by match, quickly learning and dominating play, all the way to the grand final. Ably led by team captain Lexi Bradford, the under-15 girls representative team competed against Sydney East Hockey Association team three in the grand final, snatching victory 1-0.

I need to single out one gun player, Sophie Holmes, for securing the honour of leading team goal scorer for the series, with five goals. Sophie's quick pace and superior technique frustrated her opponents, securing passage for the team's grand final appearance and ultimately the championship win. In recognition of her performance throughout the series, Sophie was named the coaches' Player of the Tournament. Also displaying superior grit and determination was 12-year-old goalkeeper Macey Walker, who was described as an unstoppable barrier. She only allowed one goal past for the entirety of the championship—an incredible effort.

Teamwork is always the key to success in the end, and all players deserve acknowledgement for this remarkable win and commendable achievement. I congratulate each team member: Lexie Bradford, Sophie Holmes, Sienna Neumann, Lily Rowlatt, Daisy Pees, Amelie Rowland, Lily Walker, Gabrielle Turner, Georgia Dunn, Macy Marshall, Haidyn Taylor, Nessa Kinchington, Tayla Fancett, Alanna Walker and Macey Walker. So respected were each of these individuals that the entire team was presented with the Respect Officials Award for impeccable sportsmanship, demonstrated through fairness of play and respect for officials, umpires and their opposition. This in itself is an outstanding accolade, considering 31 other teams competed in the championships.

On the girls' return home, news broke that captain Lexi Bradford had been selected in the Hockey NSW under-16 squad, where players will be vying for State selection in 2024. It was a worthy reward for a player who confidently steered her team to victory. I commend the girls for believing in themselves and taking every opportunity to secure the Division 4 Championship. I also acknowledge coach Scott Bradford and acting team manager Karen Fancett, who were instrumental to the team's success, working tirelessly to ensure the girls were ready and equipped to participate in Grafton. From underdogs to reigning champions, they all exceeded expectations and have cemented the Port Macquarie Hastings Hockey Association as a formidable team to be rivalled and revered into the future. Congratulations!

### CENTRAL COAST HARVEST FESTIVAL

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford) (17:39):** During the long weekend I had the privilege of attending the Central Coast Harvest Festival. The Harvest Festival, held every year on the Central Coast, puts the fabulous Central Coast hinterlands west of the expressway on display. Taking community members behind the farm gates, the Harvest Festival allows them to explore our rural farming communities in a different way and to experience the abundance of fresh products and produce the Central Coast agricultural industry has to offer. It is a perfect time to enjoy the views, soak up live music and free entertainment, and celebrate local produce from around the region. I had a great time picking pecans amongst the 400 trees at the Artisan Estate and revelled in the experience of shelling them at home—tediously, I might add—with a new appreciation for the difficulty of the task. I then whipped up a pecan pie, which was really delightful, to share with the team. The beautiful people at Artisan Estate gave me a special pecan picking-up device to use. I had a gadget on the bottom of a stick that I could poke onto the pecans and then pop them into a bucket. It was a really inclusive activity amongst the beautiful pecan trees.

With four key precincts across 30 event hubs, there was lots to do. The best part was that people could choose to do whatever they wanted. The festival put the Central Coast on the map, celebrating an important part of our community. I am proud to call the Central Coast my home: an electorate of gorgeous beaches and coastal open spaces, and at the same time home to beautiful hinterlands full of farms, food and flowers. Whether you are a foodie who wants to sample delectable delights, or your plan is to keep the kids entertained with farm animal encounters, one thing is for sure: The local community pulled together to bring people a weekend packed with excitement and adventure.

I give a shout-out to our local country women's associations [CWAs], who sold out of scones at 2.00 p.m. on Saturday and then cooked overnight and sold out again on Sunday. They are a fantastic part of our community. The Somersby, Mangrove Mountain and Peats Ridge CWAs all worked together. I thank the fabulous team at Westy's Place pump and irrigation business. They had veggie gardens planted with spuds for kids to come and pull out of the ground. I think that is an important connection back to nature and teaches kids where we get our food from. There was free macadamia nut picking and a jumping castle sponsored by the community. It was an affordable family day out.



The NSW Rural Fire Service Kariong, Bulk Water Unit, Spencer and Mangrove Mountain brigades were also in attendance, as was the RFS Catering Unit. I received feedback from RFS Spencer that they had approximately 3,000 people come through their hub. Given the recent history of bushfires, it was great to have them there answering questions about how people could prepare their homes for the bushfire season, because who knows when we might face the next bushfires? I thank our RFS volunteers—more are still needed.

The fabulous Lentini family at Eastcoast Beverages welcomed an estimated 30,000 visitors. Sam Lentini said it was fabulously chaotic and they were at capacity. They held great farm visits. People toured the Eastcoast Beverages factory. They visited farms, and food and market stalls. ARC Ento Tech had an amazing insect farm for families to look at. They use insects to strip plastic of any food waste so that it can be recycled at their plant. The insects eat away at the juicy bits of food and leave lovely dry plastic, ready to recycle into new products. It really is a beautiful place up on the mountain, and the Harvest Festival is part of our Central Coast sustainability pledge, which begs guests to tread lightly and to love our slice of paradise. There are fantastic nurseries and beautiful flower farms. It really is a delight of surprises, and it is super important for our communities that visitors are able to access the farm gates.

I congratulate Central Coast Council for putting together this marvellous event. The council team handled traffic management and looked after everyone on the day. I give a special shout-out to Emma Miller, Marie Lentini and Mark Malloy, who all worked tirelessly behind the scenes to put on the Harvest Festival. There was fantastic advertising and promotion for the festival within the Central Coast community, but people came from far and wide to attend. I cannot wait for our next Harvest Festival. I congratulate all involved in putting on this very special event.

### ROYAL OAK HOTEL

**Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta) (17:44):** Parramatta has a rich First Nations and migrant story, and our heritage sites are of great local, State and national significance. As the second European settlement in New South Wales, Parramatta has laid claim to some of the oldest hotels in Australia. However, over the years they have slowly disappeared. Therefore, it was incredibly disappointing when the former Liberal-Nationals Government compulsorily acquired and demolished the historic Royal Oak Hotel for the construction of the Parramatta Light Rail stage one.

Between 1825 and 1831, John Tunks, the son of a First Fleeter named William Tunks, built an early inn in Church Street and named it the Shamrock, Rose and Thistle. John and his descendants went on to become important community members in the establishment of the township of Parramatta, which is known colloquially as the cradle of our nation. Later renamed the Royal Oak, the building consisted of a two-storey rendered brick structure with a metal street awning featuring the painted words "Established in 1829". Situated to the rear of the Royal Oak were the Cobb & Co stables, a resupply station for the stagecoach arteries that defined nineteenth century New South Wales transport. The Parramatta Light Rail Built Heritage Impact Assessment states:

The stable at the rear of the property is two-storey rendered brick with a gabled roof. The property is of significance for historic, aesthetic, and representative values.

Without a whimper of support from the former Liberal member for Parramatta, and despite the community, local government, heritage advocates and the Labor State Opposition at the time opposing the demolition of the Royal Oak, the bulldozers were brought in and the pub came down after dark on 19 May 2020. Since then, the construction of the light rail has continued. Despite the heritage significance of the remaining Cobb & Co stables, the former Government did nothing to protect them, and the site of the former hotel was simply deemed residual land.

Currently, the site appears abandoned and covered with weeds, standing as a constant reminder of the previous Government's callous disregard for Parramatta's heritage and community. While the Royal Oak Hotel is sadly lost to us, the site of approximately 350 square metres provides an opportunity to celebrate our heritage and enhance this entire space. I look forward to working with my Government colleagues to ensure the protection and restoration of the Cobb & Co stables and to create a popular new place for residents and visitors, in consultation with the City of Parramatta.

I thank Graeme Tunks and the Tunks Descendants Association Incorporated, Gary Carter, the late Brian Powyer, Suzette Meade, the North Parramatta Residents Action Group, the City of Parramatta Council and particularly the City of Parramatta Heritage Advisory Committee, Parramatta National Trust, and the many other concerned community members for their advocacy for the Royal Oak, the Cobb & Co stables and for continuing to care about the future of this important heritage place. Parramatta is one of the fastest growing electorates in New South Wales and it has the largest population of any electorate in this State. One of its unique features is its rich history and heritage. The people of Parramatta have supported a Labor government in the knowledge that this

will be a government that respects heritage, and I have no doubt that in this regard, and many others, the Minns Labor Government will far exceed its predecessors.

#### **DUBBO ELECTORATE KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS RECIPIENTS**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo) (17:47):** More than 1,000 Australians have been recognised in this year's King's Birthday Honours for outstanding work in their communities. Among the distinguished recipients are sportspeople, scientists, veterans and volunteers. I recognise the contributions of two extraordinary individuals from the Dubbo community, Jennifer Armstrong and Peter Milling, who each received a Medal of the Order of Australia, an OAM, in the King's Birthday 2023 Honours List. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge Jennifer Armstrong, OAM, a nurse with a real heart for regional New South Wales, who has dedicated her life to serving others.

Throughout her career, Jennifer has made a profound impact on the lives of those in smaller communities across the Central West. Starting her nursing journey in her mid-30s, she pursued her lifelong dream of becoming a nurse, despite a few initial setbacks. Jennifer eventually completed a "new opportunities for women" course at TAFE, after reapplying and ultimately gaining acceptance into nursing school. Jennifer's compassionate spirit and commitment to caring for others has extended far beyond her nursing career. She has selflessly volunteered her time and expertise to organisations including St John Ambulance NSW, The Salvation Army, and Royal Life Saving Society Australia.

As a former first-aid teacher, Jennifer has empowered countless individuals with lifesaving skills. After her husband, John, passed away, Jennifer decided she needed to go back into a caring role once again, which has led to her current work in the disability and aged-care sector. Jennifer understands the importance of communication in providing care, especially for the elderly. She is currently working about 3½ hours a day three days a week, which she says is plenty for her. She loves helping people. Her role as a chaplain for the Salvation Army has further emphasised the significance of meaningful connections and genuine conversations. With a passion for chatting, Jennifer exemplifies the essence of compassionate care. Jennifer was very proud and honoured to hear she would be an OAM recipient and very humbled to know that people have deemed her work of over a few decades worthy. I say well done to her.

I also recognise Peter Milling, OAM, a true legend in the livestock industry and across the Dubbo and wider region. Following in his grandfather's footsteps, Peter followed his lifelong passion for the livestock industry, which led him to establish Peter Milling and Company in 1973. Even at 92 years of age, Peter continues to attend work every day, demonstrating his unwavering commitment and love for the work. Throughout his distinguished career, Peter and his work have received numerous accolades, including the Dubbo City Development Corporation Award in 1998 and the title of Best Regional Travel Agency in 1996.

Peter's leadership and expertise have extended far beyond his own company. He has served as president of the Dubbo Stock and Station Agents for a number of years. He also assumed the role of president for the New South Wales Stock and Station Agents Association from 1974 to 1977. At the same time, he also served as the inaugural chair for the Australian Council of Livestock Agents New South Wales, further solidifying his influential role within the industry. Peter's passion for horse breeding is also well known. He held the presidency of the Western Districts Bloodhorse Breeders Association from 1972 to 2020.

In addition to his achievements in the livestock industry, Peter is recognised for his work as a presenter on local radio station 2DU. After almost 75 years, his rural affairs program still draws in thousands of listeners from across western New South Wales. Peter humbly expressed his gratitude for the recognition he has received, acknowledging the honour of being recognised by his industry peers and the immense amount of work associated with his achievements. It is hard to fully express the influence that Peter has had on the lives of many people but, suffice to say, he is one of the living legends of Dubbo.

On behalf of the Dubbo electorate, I extend our heartfelt congratulations to Jennifer and Peter for their exceptional contributions to our community. Their selflessness, passion and unwavering dedication serve as an inspiration to all of us. We are really grateful for the positive impact they have had in their respective fields, enriching the lives of countless individuals. May their achievements continue to shine brightly and inspire future generations to follow in their footsteps. Let us celebrate the outstanding accomplishments of Jennifer and Peter, for they truly embody the spirit of service and community. I say well done to both of them.

#### **STATE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION SECTOR**

**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) (17:52):** A former Prime Minister, the late E.G. Whitlam, ever the great internationalist and education advocate, said in his 1974 speech to his alma mater, Knox Grammar School:

I should like to think that the most enduring result of our policies on education has been to raise the community's level of expectation.

What an inspiring and uplifting national goal. Our neighbours in Victoria like to think that they are the Education State. They like the name so much it is printed on their numberplates. Not to hurt our southern neighbour's pride, but I like to think that our great State of New South Wales deserves an even better title, the Great International Education State, because it has developed a great global reputation as a destination for overseas students to learn, live and thrive as part of their educational journey and as part of our society. New South Wales is among the top 10 destinations in the world for international education. Our State attracts many students from overseas, particularly from the Asia-Pacific region, because they know that in New South Wales they will receive the finest education anywhere in the world.

Only this week the 2024 QS World University Rankings were released, and New South Wales punches well above its weight. Our State has two universities that now sit in the top global 20: my alma mater, the University of Sydney, and the University of New South Wales. Those two great universities rank higher than some American Ivy League institutions and some of the prestigious universities in our region like the University of Hong Kong. I am also proud to say that, even in my own backyard of south-west Sydney, Western Sydney University, which includes 13 modern, state-of-the-art campuses, ranks in the top 2 per cent in the world—not bad for a university that has been open for only a little over three decades. Of course, history tells me that it was E.G. Whitlam who gave WSU its first land in Campbelltown, a great legacy that he left for his local community in south-west Sydney.

The universities and tertiary education institutions in New South Wales all provide many thousands of international students with the best academic and research opportunities to prepare them for tomorrow. From science to business to humanities, the world's brightest minds are being shaped and equipped in New South Wales to lead the innovation of now and the future. Most importantly, being a hub of international education brings our State countless economic and social benefits and opportunities. Our State is open and cosmopolitan. The diversity in language, culture and lived experiences that international students bring only adds to our State's character. Additionally, those from overseas provide us with diverse ideas and worldviews that enlighten our discourse and enrich our common intellectual tapestry. Even more, international students contribute greatly to our domestic economy.

International students become leaders and innovators in their professions and industries, incorporating our State's values in their work and building networks that all come back to New South Wales. Through international education, our State leaves its biggest mark on the world, which strengthens our global economic and cultural influence. The Government recognises that and is committed to keeping our State as a centre for exceptional international education and promoting its reputation as such. Study NSW, which is in my portfolio, provides all the information and resources that students coming from overseas need to be supported in their decision to study at our first-class educational institutions.

The Government understands that moving overseas can be a challenging and daunting experience, especially for younger students—for example, those who are doing their undergraduate degrees. But we want to help those students so that their focus is on the exciting opportunities available in New South Wales. International education is important to New South Wales. It is one of the main ways we engage with the world to harness economic and social opportunities for the people of our great State so that everyone will call us the Great International State of Australia. As a former international student myself, I say that it is a wonderful experience for anybody to have. New South Wales and Australia provide a warm and welcoming opportunity for those students to learn, contribute and take something back to their home countries and make their own contributions to the world.

#### **GANDANGARA LOCAL ABORIGINAL LAND COUNCIL AND LIVERPOOL CITY COUNCIL DEED**

**Mr NATHAN HAGARTY (Leppington) (17:57):** On Friday 2 June I was honoured to be in attendance as the Gandangara Local Aboriginal Land Council and Liverpool City Council signed a deed of agreement at Phillips Park in Lurnea. A genuinely historic document for the region, the deed aims to streamline collaboration and communication between both parties based on mutually agreed principles. Among the principles underpinning the deed are the principle of peace treaty, which acknowledges and respects Aboriginal custodianship of land and sovereignty within the meaning of the Uluru Statement from the Heart over land that has never been ceded; and the principle that we must see each other as co-creators and co-managers who willingly collaborate for the good of all our people and communities in a spirit of justice and truth. As Gandangara CEO Melissa Williams said on the day of the signing:

This Deed is a significant milestone on that path in our region, and in our country. For the first time, it defines a legitimate, two way, honest and open working relationship between us, that is founded upon mutual trust, mutual respect and a genuine appreciation of each other's values, qualities, and ambitions.

However, this moment should not be remembered as the signing of a Deed of Agreement, but as the realisation and implementation of an historic, peaceable treaty. It is a peaceable treaty by intent, in word, in attitude and in desired outcome. And that outcome is a peaceful, collaborative community spirit that benefits everyone here, and is a model for all Australians everywhere.

To many reconciliation means the act of former enemies agreeing to an amicable truce. That is both a narrow and inaccurate definition that falls well short of what we have before us today. This is not a truce, because there are no hostilities to bring to a halt. It is, in reality, a pledge between friends.

Melissa was joined by the Chair of Gandangara, Tony Scholes, along with the mayor and CEO of Liverpool council, Ned Mannoun, and the Hon. John Ajaka as signatories to the deed. It should be acknowledged that work on the deed began during the previous term of council, under then mayor Wendy Waller. I commend the work of the former council in recognising the need for reconciliation and for beginning the journey toward this deed. I commend all members of the deed working group from both parties, whose core team consisted of Kelly Nichols, Mark Spithill and Melissa Williams at Gandangara, and Galavizh Ahmadi Nia and Tina Bono at Liverpool City Council. The deed of agreement should set an example for similar bodies around the nation. It points to a positive way forward for all levels of government on the path to genuine reconciliation.

I note Labor's commitment prior to the election of \$5 million towards a year-long consultation on a legally binding agreement between the New South Wales Government and Indigenous Australians, which, much like this deed, will allow for partnership and collaboration around decision-making. The now Premier said in January, "When you partner with Indigenous organisations and First Nations leaders, you're getting better outcomes." Work on the consultation process will begin after the referendum on the Voice later in the year. While we are on the topic of the Voice and bipartisanship, I was struck by the words of the Federal member for Berowra, Julian Leeser, who said in May about the Voice, "You make better public policy when you consult people that are directly affected by the laws and policies that are made about them. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are the only people that we make laws about on the basis of their race. It's therefore a reasonable thing that they should be consulted about the effect of those laws and policies."

The Voice referendum provides an important opportunity for Australians to come together and make lasting change that will benefit our nation for many generations to come. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a rich cultural heritage stretching back 65,000 years. They also face unique challenges and systemic disadvantage in modern Australia. It is about time that the history and contributions of First Nations peoples were recognised in our Constitution through the Voice to Parliament, as was called for in the Uluru Statement from the Heart. I will be voting yes, and I look forward to having discussions and working with the people of Leppington as part of the yes campaign.

### HUNTER-CENTRAL COAST RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONE

**Mr ADAM CROUCH (Terrigal) (18:02):** Madam Temporary Speaker, congratulations on your appointment. I believe tonight is your first in the chair. I speak on the proposed Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone. Concerns have been raised by my constituents and others on the broader Central Coast in regard to this. The Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone is, simply speaking, a proposal by the Federal Government to establish a wind farm 10 kilometres off the Central Coast and the Hunter coast. The development of the offshore wind farm has been a topic of contention and concern across the Central Coast. I acknowledge the member for Wyong, who spoke on this issue recently. He and I agree on many of the issues that have been raised. The Hunter-Central Coast Renewable Energy Zone does not fall directly into my electorate, but the visual and environmental impacts will flow across the Central Coast, including the Terrigal electorate. It is a topic of concern among many people on the Central Coast.

One alarming issue with the proposal is the lack of genuine community consultation. Recently I had the pleasure of meeting Nick Anderson and Rosi King from the Love Norah Head community group to discuss their concerns about the proposal. We spoke at great length about the issues that are facing not only the Norah Head community but also the wider Central Coast community. I was shocked to learn of the poor efforts made by the Federal Government to inform our community about the proposal. Consultation consisted of a flyer wrapped in junk mail and shoved into people's letterboxes, which is no way to genuinely engage in community consultation, especially on an issue as serious as this. Plainly speaking, the community consultation on this proposal has been nothing short of abysmal and slipshod, and everybody knows it.

Those who attempted to get further information on the project have been stonewalled, with little provided to those who seek it. The key messages that Nick and Rosi expressed to me were the following: first, the lack of proper community consultation in the development of the proposal; secondly, the concern about effects on reduction in swell and lack of protection of the national surfing reserve, which was recently announced to the great excitement of everybody on the Central Coast, including me and the member for Wyong; thirdly, impacts on tourism in the area, as well as the impacts on local commercial fishers, particularly through lobster migration; and, fourthly, effects on whale migration. As we know, we have a whale highway going straight along our eastern

coast, especially along the Central Coast. It is one of our major tourism hotspots. Again there are huge concerns about the effects on whale migration, which is in full swing at this time. The fifth message is about the lack of information on a schedule for construction and dates that would allow the group to submit its response to the development. They are straightforward and genuine concerns. Those points that Nick and Rosi speak of are absolutely valid.

Sadly, it is disappointing to see that our two Federal members remain silent on this issue. The member for Wyong and I hear Nick's and Rosi's and the entire Norah Head and Central Coast community's concerns, and both of us will be calling for further consultation on this matter. There is no problem with pausing this to have proper, open and constructive consultation. I am calling on the two Federal members to step up and represent their communities to the Federal energy Minister and say that this should be paused so proper consultation can show details about what this will do and what the genuine impact will be.

To demonstrate how important this issue is to the community, the Love Norah Head community group recently organised a paddle-out protest at Soldiers Beach, which hundreds attended, which was no easy feat. The paddle-out demonstrated that this issue is at the heart of our community, and it is disappointing that the Federal Government has failed to properly consult the community. The Federal Government needs to do it again, in a better way, and have the detail for the entire community to see. The ball is now in the court of our Federal members. I will continue to call on them to ensure that proper process and consultation with the community occurs before any construction of a wind farm takes place.

As I said, our community is passionate about this. It is up to our Federal members to now make the genuine representation to the Federal energy Minister. Put a pin in it. Get the details right, and have a look at what is being delivered. Even show the imagery of the visual impact of this farm. In the words of the member for Wyong, the community is not against renewable energy and wind farms. We are merely concerned about the effects that establishing of a wind farm so close to the shore would have on our marine environment and our tourism industry. The list goes on. We support renewable energy, but it must be done in a sympathetic manner. We do not do it at the cost of the natural environment. I thank Nick, Rosi and the entire Norah Head and Central Coast community for their advocacy on this issue.

#### **BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN IN THE BLACK SUMMER STUDY**

**Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (18:07):** I speak today on the Babies and Young Children in the Black Summer Study. Australia is increasingly prone to disasters, including bushfires, cyclones, floods and heatwaves. Children are vulnerable in emergencies, and the youngest children—our babies and toddlers—are particularly vulnerable. Their stage of physical and emotional development, specific food and fluid requirements, susceptibility to dehydration and heat, and total dependence on others for care means that special attention should be given to protecting them. Their parents need support in emergencies to keep them safe. However, a 2019 audit of emergency plans in this State found a dearth of planning to meet the needs of infants and young children in emergencies. In fact, New South Wales has far better planning for animals than it does for very young children.

One thing that has prevented improving emergency planning for very young children has been a lack of an evidence base. My electorate of Bega was badly affected by the 2019-20 Black Summer bushfires. Bushfire smoke contains 2.5-micron-wide particle pollutants and invisible gases, all of which have significant effects on the respiratory function of pregnant women and their babies. The coastal town of Batemans Bay recorded a PM2.5 level of 2,500 on New Year's Eve 2019—the equivalent of smoking 100 cigarettes, which is 100 times higher than the hazardous level. An estimated 15,000 births in eastern Australia have been affected by high exposure to bushfire smoke. Previous studies have shown increased rates of pregnancy complications across all three trimesters of pregnancy. During this emergency, many families with very young children had to evacuate, were isolated in homes or towns, or were caught in large traffic jams. They experienced loss of access to health care, clean water, power, communications, fuel, money and shops. Many, many families lost their homes. It was a terrible time.

I inform the New South Wales Parliament about new research from a project that is bringing something positive from the bushfires. With funding from the Australian Government, the Australian Breastfeeding Association [ABA] has been working in Eurobodalla shire on the Community Protection for Infants and Young Children in Bushfire Emergencies Project. Dr Michelle Hamrosi, a local GP and the community engagement officer for the project, has just given me a copy of the research report for the project. The study, called the Babies and Young Children in the Black Summer [BiBS] Study, was conducted by Dr Karleen Gribble from Western Sydney University, Dr Hamrosi and the Australian Breastfeeding Association. This is the first Australian research looking at what is needed to support families with very young children during disasters. The BiBS study confirmed that there were problems in the emergency response during the Black Summer.

A lack of resources to help parents prepare for a bushfire with their young children delayed evacuation and meant that parents sometimes evacuated without needed supplies. Women commonly evacuated on their own and mothers found it difficult to keep their children safe in large evacuation centres due to overcrowding and the presence of strangers and animals, and because there were limited resources for caring for children. Emergency responders told Dr Hamrosi and Dr Gribble that they were often concerned about the safety of young children in evacuation centres. They described child protection concerns, physical dangers and unsafe practices by unsupported caregivers, such as washing baby bottles in toilet sinks and dangerous sleep situations. Breastfeeding women did not get needed support. Pregnant women fainted while queuing to access resources. Recovery supports were focused on preschools or schools and missed the very youngest children and their mothers.

The BiBS study report makes 16 recommendations to improve emergency response, including evaluating existing planning with a young-child lens to see how they can be improved, creating emergency preparedness resources targeted at parents, and having a separate and supportive space in evacuation centres for families with very young children. Dr Hamrosi and colleagues will be working in Eurobodalla over the next year and a half with the Eurobodalla council, the Red Cross, the Country Women's Association, family support organisations, preschools, and parents to improve local planning and response based on the BiBS study. I am hoping that relevant State government departments, such as the Department of Communities and Justice and the Department of Health, will be willing to collaborate in this work. I believe that this project will help to ensure that when the next disaster occurs, families with very young children in the electorate of Bega will be better protected and supported and that other parts of New South Wales will be able to learn from this work.

### COOTAMUNDRA-GUNDAGAI REGIONAL COUNCIL

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra) (18:12):** Having recently met with the New South Wales Minister for Local Government regarding the demerger of the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council [CGRC], I wish to update the House and raise my concerns about the lack of progress on this issue, which is critical to the communities I represent. On 24 August 2022 the former Minister for Local Government announced that the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council would be de-amalgamated. The decision was celebrated following a sustained effort by the communities and council, and we understood that the demerge process would require patience and perseverance by everyone involved. However, since the New South Wales State election on 25 March 2023 there is little evidence of actual progress on the demerge. In fact, it feels as though it has stalled entirely.

Prior to the election, NSW Labor, then in opposition, promised to respect the wishes of communities in merged council areas to determine their own futures. The decision by the former Minister to demerge CGRC—the only one of its kind announced—was made after careful consideration of a report by the independent Local Government Boundaries Commission, which examined the demerger proposal under the relevant sections of the Local Government Act. It is well known that the six years prior to that decision were difficult for council and communities following the amalgamation of the former shires of Cootamundra and Gundagai in 2016. It was already a very significant local and regional issue upon my election in October 2017. I have remained in lockstep with the communities, Gundagai council in exile and the council itself ever since, and I remain proud of what we have achieved together.

In short, the decision to demerge the CGRC remains the right decision and the communities of Cootamundra, Gundagai and the smaller villages deserve nothing less. In May 2021, the Local Government Act was amended by NSW Labor in opposition, with the support of the minor parties and Independents. Section 218CC, which applies to proposals for de-amalgamations, reads as follows:

The Minister is, by making grants under section 620 or using money otherwise appropriated by Parliament for the purpose, to ensure that the cost of any de-amalgamation of the new area resulting from a business case submitted under this section is fully funded.

I stand here today representing the only council in New South Wales to be approved for de-amalgamation, foreshadowing the very real possibility of another NSW Labor backflip by the Labor Government failing to make good the necessary funds for demerging the Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council. Worse still, a failure to deliver a fully funded demerger will amount to another broken pre-election promise by NSW Labor.

Under the New South Wales Labor Government, it has become evident that our fight is not over. CGRC and our communities nervously await advice regarding their future from this Government and its Minister for Local Government. Put simply, having amended the Local Government Act, thereby guaranteeing the New South Wales Government would fund any approved council demergers—amendments supported by the now Minister—the Labor Government simply cannot run from this obligation. With local government elections to be held in September 2024, the clock is ticking. We must have funding certainty and a pathway now. I call on the New South Wales Labor Government to do the right thing: first, honour the de-amalgamation decision made by the previous Minister on 24 August 2022 and follow through with action; second, honour its own pre-election promise to the

people of Cootamundra and Gundagai and support their decision to demerge; and, third, honour and abide by the amendments to the Local Government Act, which NSW Labor proposed and voted for from opposition, and ensure the Labor Government foots the bill for the demerger.

### **FAIRFIELD ELECTORATE TERTIARY EDUCATION**

**Dr DAVID SALIBA (Fairfield) (18:17):** I speak about tertiary education in Fairfield. Education is the gateway out of poverty. It is the great equaliser of our society. It enables kids to realise their dreams no matter where they come from or how much wealth they have, or their family status within our society. Fairfield faces considerable economic and social challenges. Economically, my electorate ranks as one of the highest in terms of unemployment and low income. People are hurting, and governments at all levels need to do better.

Analysis by the New South Wales Parliamentary Research Service, leveraging census data from 2021, shows that only one in five people in Fairfield has a tertiary education qualification. I acknowledge that tertiary education is not the be-all and end-all, but I am well aware that many hardworking and good kids dream of pursuing a university degree: kids who have grown up in poverty; kids who have come to our country from war-torn nations, seeking refuge; and kids who have so much potential but are dealt the wrong cards in life. We clearly have a problem here, and solutions via collaboration and public policy must occur. Government needs to engage with universities and other tertiary education providers to start a conversation about how we get more kids from Fairfield to enter and complete a tertiary education course. This will be one of my focuses in the coming months. I will update the House on my progress.

### **WESTERN SYDNEY FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect) (18:18):** As the State member for Prospect, I emphasise the importance for this Parliament to continue its commitment to addressing family and domestic violence in New South Wales, especially through the support of family and domestic violence services, and especially in Western Sydney. Family and domestic violence is a pervasive problem that has no boundaries. It transcends every demographic, and it tears apart families, perpetuates cycles of abuse, causes immeasurable harm to its victims, and places significant stress on our community. When violence permeates the walls of homes, it threatens the very essence of what makes us human: our feelings of safety, of love and of comfort.

Organisations that provide support to those affected by family and domestic violence play a crucial role in rebuilding those core aspects of an individual in a comprehensive, inclusive and accessible way. For many, those services provide a lifeline. Sadly, when individuals and their loved ones, such as children or parents, find themselves trapped in abusive relationships, they feel isolated, scared and exposed—feelings that no human should have to live with or feel. Support services offer a safe haven, a place where survivors can seek refuge, counselling and legal services, access basic necessities and resources, and receive the emotional and practical support to rebuild their lives.

In the electorate of Prospect, we are extremely fortunate to have several family and domestic violence services with staff and volunteers who are passionate, hardworking, dedicated and caring. Of those, I include Relationships Australia NSW in Blacktown, which, with No to Violence, works tirelessly to provide vital family and domestic violence services to individuals in Western Sydney. That includes access to marriage and family counselling, mental health services, family dispute resolution, group workshops, men's behavioural change programs, support for children, and culturally adapted programs for members of our Arabic- and Tamil-speaking communities. Through those initiatives, Relationships Australia NSW and No to Violence provide a safe space for vulnerable individuals and their families, and they seek to address three significant issues affecting family and domestic violence, including prevention, early intervention and the breaking of intergenerational cycles of violence.

Men's behavioural change programs are vital to address some of the root causes of domestic violence. They aim to challenge harmful attitudes and beliefs by providing supportive environments, such as small group settings, which allow men to understand their behaviour and achieve healthier relationship outcomes. Other programs, such as the Suspect Target Management Program, which is a fantastic collaboration between the NSW Police Force and Stronger Communities, are crucial in identifying early warning signs and providing resources to individuals to prevent the risk of violence escalating. The Jesuit Refugee Service Australia, otherwise known as JRS, is another organisation that offers invaluable support to our community in Prospect. It provides critical support to women who are waiting for the outcome of a protection visa application and who are experiencing, or who have experienced, family and domestic violence. That is achieved through measures such as casework services, emergency relief assistance, access to food or material aid, and employment services.

I take this opportunity to thank the Minister for Women, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, the Hon. Jodie Harrison. The Minister has been a great support in ensuring that

those organisations receive an extension of government funding after 30 June, which is when their contracts expire, allowing for the provision of those services to continue in Western Sydney. Relationships Australia NSW and the Jesuit Refugee Service are only two of many amazing family and domestic violence service organisations in the Prospect electorate. Others include the Zen Tea Lounge Foundation, which provides a plethora of culturally adapted support and empowerment initiatives for women, particularly from Vietnamese backgrounds; Settlement Services International, which has a specialised domestic and family violence unit that advocates against gender-based violence; the Parramatta-Holroyd Family Support Service; the Parks Community Network; and the Cassia Community Centre.

Those services provide invaluable support measures to countless individuals in our community who are often at the most difficult and vulnerable moments of their lives. Supporting family and domestic violence services sends a clear message that violence in the home is unacceptable. No-one should have to suffer in silence, and I commend all the staff and volunteers of those services for their role in providing support to all those affected by family and domestic violence.

### THE GLEN CENTRE

**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) (18:23):** I am sure members will know, but this Sunday to the following Sunday is National NAIDOC Week. This year's theme is For Our Elders. Across generations, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have understood the important role that Elders have played—and continue to play—and the prominent place they hold in communities and families. The NAIDOC website states they are cultural knowledge holders, trailblazers, nurturers, advocates, teachers, survivors, leaders, hard workers and loved ones. We all understand the importance of Elders in Aboriginal culture.

Two Elders from my community, Cyril and Coral, started a great initiative, The Glen Centre, the first part of which opened in 1994. It was the first Aboriginal-run drug and alcohol centre anywhere in New South Wales. Recently the 4.5-hectare The Glen for Women facility opened at Wyong Creek, which will cater to women suffering from addiction. It will allow for patient-driven activities including a yarn circle, hoping to give Aboriginal women the skills and ability to own their recovery. My good friend Joe Coyte oversees the group. He not only works tirelessly to get funding to keep what is a very successful group going but also worked hard to establish the new facility at Wyong Creek. I am very proud to have both of those facilities in my electorate. I have not visited The Glen for Women yet but I have spent many hours at The Glen for Men.

The facilities work with individuals through cultural programs, including dance, art and music, to re-create the cultural connections that strengthen people's spirit and character to help them to get through addiction. The Glen has 20 beds and runs a 12-week stay program. The Glen for Women can house 80 to 100 clients each year, with a focus on local Aboriginal women. The Glen for Men has been operating for a long time and has won awards. Uncle Glen, one of the key facilitators, does a fantastic job teaching dance and cultural practices. I always joke that it is Uncle Glen at The Glen. There is a real spirit there. This morning Joe Coyte sent me a photo of the Central Coast Mariners, who had turned up at the facility. National Rugby League players have also visited. Mr Mortimer, a very famous halfback who played for Canterbury, is a regular visitor and supporter.

**Mr Steve Whan:** Steve Mortimer.

**Mr DAVID HARRIS:** I know him as Mr Mortimer. A whole range of people turn up because everybody is welcome. People who are working their way through addiction and sharing their stories at The Glen have a really good spirit. They sit around the fire and share their stories about where they have come from and what has happened to them. This great program, which is based on culture, was set up because Cyril and Coral lost both a son and a daughter to drug and alcohol addiction respectively. They are not the only ones. Many board members have had personal experiences of drug and alcohol addiction. The Glen for Men and The Glen for Women are facilities that come from the heart, with a real desire to improve people's lives so that clients do not have to go through the heartbreak that Cyril and Coral went through. Joe and I often go for walks and we discuss the difficulties with running the facility and chasing funds. He is a great human being. Everyone who works at The Glen is committed to making people's lives better, and none of us can give a better commitment than that.

### UPPER HUNTER ELECTORATE TRAFFIC

**Mr DAVID LAYZELL (Upper Hunter) (18:29):** I congratulate you, Madam Temporary Speaker, on your appointment to the Speaker's panel. While the rest of the House is buzzing with excitement like the end of school camp, you are sitting in the chair and making a sacrifice for democracy. I thank you. Tonight I address a topic from the Upper Hunter, which is the June long weekend traffic. I acknowledge that there was a terrible accident in the Hunter region recently. But at the start of the weekend, there were a lot of problems with the traffic



network. It is important to note that the long weekend started on the wrong foot. The whole weekend was certainly a testing time. I acknowledge the work of the Hunter Valley Police District, particularly the local officers of the Traffic and Highway Patrol Command. The Hunter Valley Police District Facebook post stated:

Just after midday (Friday 9 June 2023), officers from Traffic and Highway Patrol attempted to stop a Land Rover – that had been reported stolen – travelling on the New England Highway at Muswellbrook.

The vehicle failed to stop, and a pursuit was initiated; road spikes were deployed, and a short time later the vehicle crashed into a truck travelling on the New England Highway about 12.20pm.

The two occupants of the Land Rover – a 16-year-old female and 17-year-old male – are being treated at the scene by NSW Ambulance paramedics.

They are both in a stable condition.

The driver of the truck – a 51-year-old man – was uninjured, and has been taken to Muswellbrook Hospital for mandatory testing.

Understandably, the incident became the subject of a significant police investigation and the wreckage had to be removed from the roadway. The immediate consequence was that a section of the Upper Hunter's two highways, namely the inland connection between Newcastle and the Queensland border, was closed. For the record, data for the Singleton Highway Bypass project, which is just commencing, puts New England Highway traffic through Singleton at 26,000 vehicles each day. Data for the proposed Muswellbrook Bypass records highway traffic at between 11,000 and 20,000 vehicles through the township each day. On Friday 9 June the Muswellbrook to Singleton section remained closed until 10.50 p.m., an approximately 10½ hour closure. For those unfamiliar with the Hunter Valley, that then left just one main road to carry thousands of motorists, many heading away for the holiday weekend.

The Golden Highway runs from Whittingham, south of Singleton, to Denman and, for those heading further west, via Merriwa on to Dubbo and the Western Plains of New South Wales. The Golden Highway Corridor Strategy data reported traffic movements of 11,000 vehicles east of Mount Thorley, 3,700 west of Putty Road, falling to 3,000 through Jerrys Plains and Denman. Normally, traffic would return to the New England Highway by leaving the Golden Highway to follow Denman Road into Muswellbrook and then resume the journey. I am, however, perplexed by the decision to use a local road—Edderton Road—as part of the diversion on the Friday. I respectfully ask that, if possible, the Muswellbrook Shire Council Local Traffic Committee review the use of that diversion should it receive a report on the incident.

Whilst Edderton Road at the Muswellbrook end is a quality section of recently upgraded roadway near the Mount Arthur coalmine, the southern section connected to the Golden Highway near Jerrys Plains is narrow, virtually one lane with rough road edges, and less suitable for heavy traffic. Additionally, that section has a causeway running through a creek crossing. I am advised that traffic diverted onto Edderton Road included vehicles towing caravans and boats, school buses and heavy vehicles. In my mind, that was a potentially dangerous situation, especially for drivers unfamiliar with the road and its condition.

By around 4.15 p.m. that afternoon, with sunset drawing closer at 5.00 p.m., the Golden Highway was impacted by a multi-vehicle crash near the Wambo coalmine at Warkworth, reducing traffic on the now crowded highway to a crawl. One observation of the westbound traffic was that it stretched from Warkworth along the Golden Highway to the vicinity of the Singleton army base. Traffic was impacted all the way through the Hunter Valley during that time. As mine workers were leaving work and holiday-makers were heading through, it was a unique set of circumstances. But I respectfully ask that the Minister for Regional Transport and Roads put this incident under the microscope to see what we can learn from it, including what road improvements may be required in the long term.

### BEGA ELECTORATE MULTICULTURISM

**Dr MICHAEL HOLLAND (Bega) (18:34):** I speak today on a topic of great importance—the benefits of multiculturalism in rural and regional areas of New South Wales, particularly in the electorate of Bega. According to the 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics census, 13 per cent of the residents of Bega were born overseas. This represents a 13 per cent increase since the last census. I was pleased to attend the last two Harmony Day dinners organised in the electorate. These were organised by the multicultural groups of Eurobodalla and Far South Coast. I understand that there may be some underground video of the member for Bega performing the famous traditional Greek folk dance, the syrtaki. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of the chief organiser, Jan Friksen, who started the group in 2017.

As our world becomes increasingly connected, the importance of embracing diversity and inclusivity is more evident than ever. While multiculturalism is often associated with bustling cities, its advantages extend far beyond urban centres and have the power to transform rural and regional communities. Firstly, multiculturalism brings a vibrant tapestry of cultures, traditions and perspectives to these areas. By welcoming people from different backgrounds, rural and regional communities can experience the richness of diverse customs, art forms

and cuisine. This exposure not only broadens their horizons but also fosters a sense of curiosity and appreciation for the world's diverse heritage. Imagine the delight of tasting new flavours, attending colourful cultural festivals or enjoying the beauty of diverse artistic expressions right in the heart of rural New South Wales.

Furthermore, multiculturalism promotes economic growth and innovation. New South Wales is known for its agricultural and tourism industries, and multiculturalism can enhance these sectors significantly. For example, the Batemans Bay Greek community is renowned for the establishment of the local oyster and tourism industry. When people from different cultures settle in rural areas, they bring with them unique skills, knowledge and entrepreneurial spirit. They can introduce innovative farming techniques, open new markets for local produce or establish cultural tourism initiatives attracting visitors from far and wide. The diversity of perspectives and ideas that multiculturalism fosters can lead to fresh opportunities for businesses and stimulate economic development.

Additionally, multiculturalism helps address labour shortages in rural areas. As populations age and younger generations migrate to cities in search of opportunities, rural communities often face challenges in maintaining a skilled and diverse workforce. By attracting immigrants and refugees to these areas, multiculturalism can fill crucial gaps in various industries such as health care, agriculture and trades. I have worked with health professionals including GPs, other specialists, nurses, midwives and healthcare workers from a genuine United Nations of origin—Germany, Ireland, Scotland, South Africa, India, Nepal and the Philippines, to name a few. This not only benefits local businesses but also ensures that vital services are accessible to residents who otherwise might have limited options. Multiculturalism thus becomes a catalyst for the sustainable growth and prosperity of rural and regional areas.

Moreover, embracing multiculturalism promotes social cohesion and community harmony. Rural and regional communities are known for their strong sense of community and tight-knit bonds. By embracing diversity, these communities can demonstrate resilience, tolerance and empathy. Interacting with people from different backgrounds encourages mutual understanding and respect, breaks down stereotypes and fosters a sense of belonging for everyone. Multicultural events and initiatives create opportunities for intercultural dialogue, building bridges of friendship and collaboration among individuals and groups. In this way, multiculturalism strengthens the social fabric of rural communities, promoting unity in diversity. Multiculturalism brings immense benefits to rural and regional areas in New South Wales. From cultural enrichment and economic growth to addressing labour shortages and fostering social cohesion, embracing diversity becomes a powerful tool for transforming these communities. Let us remember that our strength lies not only in our shared values but also in the celebration of our differences. By embracing multiculturalism, we can create a brighter and more inclusive future for all, no matter where we call home.

### **EASTERN CREEK INCINERATOR**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek) (18:38):** This evening I address a matter of utmost importance—the threat that an incinerator may be built in Eastern Creek in Western Sydney. The proposal is so opposed by local governments, residents and members of Parliament that it has united people across political divides to join forces to fight the development. On that note, I acknowledge and thank my colleague the member for Blacktown from the opposite side of the Chamber, who has worked with me over the years to fight this proposed incinerator. However, it is relevant to put on the parliamentary record that since the Labor Government has been elected, the member for Blacktown has publicly been silent in lobbying his own government to deliver on the final step to protect our communities.

It is crucial to recognise that the power to prevent the Eastern Creek incinerator from going ahead lies within the hands of the Labor Minister for Planning and Public Spaces. The Minister has the opportunity to protect families and individuals across Western Sydney from the unacceptable level of pollution that faces them if the incinerator project goes ahead. The incinerator has far-reaching implications and poses a significant health risk to my constituents, as well as to families right across Western Sydney. It is incumbent upon us as representatives to vehemently oppose the notion that Western Sydney can be seen as a dumping ground for big businesses and polluters. Our region should never be seen as an opportunity for profit-driven enterprises that damage the welfare of our communities.

One of the most pressing issues is the potential impact on air quality. Incinerators emit a range of harmful pollutants, including fine particulate matter, heavy metals, dioxins and other hazardous substances. Those pollutants have been linked to respiratory problems, cardiovascular diseases and even cancer. The health of my constituents and their families must not be compromised for the sake of short-term economic gain. The most recent proposal for an incinerator in Eastern Creek is located as close as one kilometre away from the nearest home. My constituents deserve to live in a safe and healthy environment, free from the constant threat of toxic emissions and pollutants. It is imperative that the planning Minister take immediate steps to ensure that the relevant State environmental planning policy, or SEPP, is amended accordingly to prevent the project from being considered a permissible use of land.

By making the required changes to the policy, the Minister can safeguard the interests of our constituents and ensure that their homes and families are safe. The opposition to this project is not driven by mere sentiment or NIMBY concerns—NIMBY meaning "not in my backyard". It is rooted in a genuine commitment to safeguard the health, environment and future of my constituents. I refuse to accept the notion that my community should bear the brunt of the dangerous impact resulting from the actions of profit-seeking entities. Our region deserves better. When the Liberals and The Nationals were in government, our government actually passed legislation that prohibited the construction of incinerators unless they were built in four specifically identified locations in the regions. Those four specific locations were spelt out in the legislation. The Liberals and The Nationals passed legislation to that effect, and the last thing that remains outstanding is to sign this SEPP.

In conclusion, I implore the planning Minister to exercise the power vested in him as a Minister and prevent the Eastern Creek incinerator, or any incinerator project, from moving forward. My constituents, their families and Western Sydney as a whole are relying on the Minister's actions for the wellbeing of our communities. In fact, I inform the House that about three weeks ago I walked into the Chamber while the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces was standing next to the member for Blacktown on the opposite side. I took the opportunity to stand with them both to speak to the Minister and call for him to sign the SEPP, in full presence of the member for Blacktown. Unfortunately, the Minister's response was, "Why didn't you do it?", referring to when we were in government. I agree that it should have been done; I was asking our Minister to do it. But the Labor Government is now in power, so I am asking the Labor planning Minister to sign the SEPP. I call on him to do that. The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces has the power; it is fully and solely in his hands. On behalf of the thousands and thousands of residents in Western Sydney, I urge the Minister to please pick up the pen and sign the changes to the SEPP.

#### SPEAKING 4 THE PLANET

**Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne) (18:44):** Before I begin, I congratulate you on your position, Madam Temporary Speaker. I look forward to serving with you on the Speaker's panel. On 5 June I attended the Speaking 4 the Planet event on World Environment Day at Homebush Boys High School. The event was coordinated by Climate Action Burwood Canada Bay, an organisation comprising of volunteers whose goal is to educate on the environment and sustainability and connect with local State and Federal governments to campaign for action on climate change. The event brought together high schools from across the inner west, including schools in the Drummoyne electorate. It was a great example of what can be achieved when we work together.

I acknowledge my colleague the member for Strathfield, Jason Li, and the Federal member for Reid, Sally Sitou, who also attended the morning session with me. The competition comprised of four categories: public speaking, writing, drama and an art competition, all centred around the United Nations 2023 World Environment Day theme of ecosystem restoration. Reflecting on that message, the theme for Speaking 4 the Planet was One Planet, Our Future: Consume with Care. With the goal to empower students in a powerful and positive way and to voice those concerns through various mediums, it was a great day seeing the creativity of local students. Members in this House could learn a lot from those passionate young people.

I listened to each contestant give an inspiring speech. I make special mention of the following students: Chiara Hughes from Domremy College, Hania Raza from Strathfield Girls High School, Elena Tulloch from MLC School, Poppy Cheek from PLC Sydney and Asad Raza from Homebush Boys High School. I also stayed for the second session on the day, which showcased the writing contestants. It was clear to me how powerful the messages from the students were. Atticus D'Adam from Homebush Boys High School said:

Earth and its resources make life possible. It is our home and your home. It is a miracle and it is the only home we have. Together, let's protect it.

Elodie Atherton from Domremy College's entry stated:

We have been hardwired to consume what we think we need, but not what we truly need. Think before you buy, how would Mother Nature benefit from what you consume?

Serena Farley from MLC School said:

Fading beauty, vanishing dreams, this world we betray. Desperate pleas whispered in the wind, unheard in our chase for more. Consume with care, or be forever haunted by regret's embrace.

Cathy Chong from Strathfield Girls High School said:

Green and gold turning to black and blue, humanity chokes on the smoke of neglect. So why then, Australia, so we mine for minerals while also burying our future?

Nathan Fenech from St Patrick's wrote:

67 million tonnes. This is how much waste we Australians create each year. Can we not cut down on consumption? Must the environment suffer for our own convenience?

Mia Pettenon from Domremy College read:

The Circular Economy, a transformative design, minimises waste and maximises efficiency. Over time, it must, seamlessly integrate into our lives, fostering sustainability while becoming an inherent part of our bring.

Adrita Islan from Strathfield Girls High School chose to write:

Consume with care and protect the serenity of mother nature. Our future lies within our hands so let harmony take the crown. Even huge waves start with tiny ripples.

Christopher Khim from Homebush Boys High School stated:

Earth. Our home, one planet. Holding 8 billion people to thrive, dominate, and inspire the likes of many. Plastic. The driving force behind pollution and extinction. This is our future.

Zoya Rezainia from MLC School entered:

Climate change causes an global threat. Escalating temperatures, sea-level rise, and ecosystem disruption are alarming indicators. Taking action to reduce emissions and promote sustainability is imperative for a sustainable future.

Finally, Andreas Blastos from St Patrick's College Strathfield entered:

So words to make a change. Now 24, maybe enough for a warning. Maybe those words were a waste, but we've done the same. We simply don't have an alternative.

Those students are our future leaders. When I came to this place, I wanted to ensure that I listened and represented the views of the younger people in my electorate. Events like this are so important to the community. They not only inspire young people to speak up about issues that matter to them in their community but also evoke change. I congratulate all participating students and recognise Climate Action Burwood Canada Bay for this wonderful event. I hope to see many more participants at next year's event.

### *Bills*

## **CRIMINAL LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (KNIFE CRIMES) BILL 2023**

### **Returned**

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

**The House adjourned, pursuant to resolution, at 18:50 until  
Tuesday 1 August 2023 at 12:00.**

### *Written Community Recognition Statements*

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

### **HOPE CONCERT KIAMA**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)**—Today the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges the outstanding evening at the Hope Concert at the Kiama Baptist Church which was held on Saturday 24th June 2023 and aimed at raising important funds for Zoe's Childrens' Home in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Congratulations and well done to Tony and Margaret Boothroyd from Kiama and your wonderful team of volunteers and helpers for organising such an enjoyable night at the Kiama Baptist Church in aid of a very worthy cause. After experiencing great trauma, they are helping these children overseas and providing them with opportunities to complete their schooling and to then undertake further educational studies or full-time employment. I was also extremely pleased to buy a tremendous local piece of artwork by Rachel Beddoe who painted it for this incredibly important fundraising event – which I absolutely love! Well done to local residents Tony and Margaret Boothroyd from Kiama and thank you very much for the wonderful work you both continue to do in our local Kiama community – we are extremely grateful to you both.

### **SOUTHERN STARS**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)**—Today the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges the annual Southern Stars performing arts showcase which has launched in spectacular fashion. Keen audiences got a sneak peek of this year's show at the official launch event in Wollongong on Tuesday 20th June 2023. Eleven local schools from our Shoalhaven region will take to the stage this year, singing and dancing for an audience of over 12,000 people. Shoalhaven schools from the Kiama electorate include: Berry Public School; Bomaderry Public School; Illaroo Road Public School; North Nowra Public School; Nowra High School; Nowra Public School; and

Shoalhaven Heads Public School. At Shoalhaven Heads Primary School, rehearsals have already kicked off, with teacher and Southern Stars veteran Tarnya Viney at the helm. Ms Viney is choreographer of the local primary schools' dance number, which will include Bomaderry, Illaroo Road, North Nowra, Nowra, Shoalhaven Heads, and Tomerong Public Schools. Each school has started to learn their steps, and full-group rehearsals. Congratulations to all the teachers, students, parents and friends who are helping to make the Southern Stars a huge success.

#### **DR MICHAEL DAVEY**

**Mr GARETH WARD (Kiama)**—Today the Parliament of New South Wales acknowledges Dr Michael Davey, who is a bestselling author, motivational speaker, child and youth advocate and landscape photographer. Michael's first book, his autobiography, *Journey of Hope*, became an Australian bestseller. Michael is also an award-winning photographer. On 1st July 2023, Michael will ride around Australia to raise funds for suicide prevention. He will ride through Sydney first, then Brisbane, followed by Rockhampton, Mt Isa, then Katherine then head west to Broome through the Kimberleys, then Perth, Esperance, Norseman, Port Augusta, Bendigo then Melbourne. On 18th June 2022, Michael along with two others started their bicycle ride around Australia, leaving HMAS Albatross on the South Coast of NSW all to raise money for Defence personnel and Veterans suffering trauma from their service. In 2014 he rode a pushbike around Australia in order to raise funds for the Kids With Cancer Foundation. The 14,000 kilometre journey raised \$51,000 for children suffering from cancer. Michael suffered from PTSD for many years and decided to help others who are experiencing difficulties. Please visit <https://apostieride4ptsd.com.au/> to find out more and make a contribution to Michael's incredible work. Call Lifeline on 13 11 14.

#### **BOB CLEAL**

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)**—I recognise Bob Cleal for more than 50 years of service to his community. Mr Cleal has set a fine example not only to his immediate family as a role model, but also his wider community through his tireless dedication to community projects through the Lions Club. His initial community service began with the Temora Lions Club, where he was a member working alongside his fellow Lions to build a strong community. When Bob Cleal and his wife Barbara moved to Orange 30 years ago to be closer to family, he transferred to the Orange Lions Club. Through his involvement in Lions, Mr Cleal has served in a number of executive positions which together with his involvement in community projects throughout the years, has seen him devote countless hours to his community. Mr Cleal was also an active member of The Probus Club. Among Mr Cleal's awards to recognise his achievements over the years has been the District Governor's Star for service to the community. Our communities are enriched by people like Bob Cleal who give selflessly to service organisations. I congratulate him and wish he and his wife Barbara all the best for the future.

#### **ANDREW AND TESS HERBERT**

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)**—I wish to recognise the achievement of Andrew and Tess Herbert who have risen above the trauma of major flooding at their home in Eugowra last November to be named Kondinin Group-ABC Australian Farmer of the Year. The Herberts' agri-business, Gundamain Pastoral Co, is a sixth-generation farming enterprise which initially identified as a small mixed farming operation which included a piggery. The couple has since grown to include a 6,000-head cattle feedlot, 7,000 ewes for lamb and wool production, 5,500 hectares of cropping, hay silage and pasture with about 400 hectares of remnant vegetation set aside. The feedlot operation is also used for school and university group visits. One of the strengths of the business has been the Herberts' willingness to embrace and adapt technology which has allowed them to be nimble when challenges arise – challenges like last November's catastrophic floods. The devastation to Eugowra and its surrounds is well documented and the Herberts weren't spared – they lost stock, crop, yards, roads, fencing and other farm infrastructure. However, the highly-diversified nature of their business and their innovative approach has enabled them to be resilient in the face of adversity, putting them in good position to rebuild.

#### **DAN WRIGHT**

**Mr PHILIP DONATO (Orange)**—I wish to recognise the extraordinary efforts of Parkes resident and ambulance officer Dan Wright in fundraising for and setting up the Parkes Safe Haven. After losing his son Luke to suicide four years ago, followed by a friend, Dan was driven to help rein in the number of suicides having a huge impact on the Parkes community. In a matter of months, a further seven Parkes residents lost their lives to suicide, accelerating the urgency of a Safe Haven. Over two years, Dan worked tirelessly to raise \$510,000 to set up Safe Haven – a place of intervention for the vulnerable contemplating suicide or struggling with mental health. In a welcoming and comforting environment, people of all ages are able to access quiet places or interact with others. Since opening its doors in March 2022, 1,100 people have dropped into the Parkes Safe Haven for support for a range of issues including loneliness, anxiety and depression. Dan's initiative is credited with markedly

reducing the number of ambulance call outs and suicides in the Parkes Community in the last year. He continues to speak with community groups to spread the word about the accessibility of Safe Haven for everyone.

#### **TRACEY CORBIN-MATCHETT OAM**

**Mr MARK SPEAKMAN (Cronulla)**—I congratulate Tracey Corbin-Matchett on her recent recognition in the King's Birthday Honours list, receiving the Medal of the Order of Australia [OAM] for service to the arts and to people with disability. Ms Corbin-Matchett is the CEO of Bus Stop Films, a company that works towards greater representation of people with disability in the screen industry. The company seeks paid work for people with disability and assists them in studying across the country. Ms Corbin-Matchett herself has bilateral sensorineural hearing loss. Ms Corbin-Matchett also advocates for people with disability as an ambassador to the Australian Human Rights Commission, as a director of Deaf Sports Australia and a director of Northcott Disability Services. I congratulate Ms Corbin-Matchett on her service to those with disability and to the arts in screen and film.

#### **ROCCO AYRE**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism)**—I rise to acknowledge Rocco Ayre for his performance at the 2023 Australian Surf Life Saving Championships at Scarboro and Trig Island Surf Life Saving Clubs. The Aussies is an annual event where members from the country's 314 surf clubs unite to participate in almost 500 beach and ocean events that mimic surf lifesaving activities. Members of Redhead, Swansea-Belmont, Caves Beach and The Lakes Surf Life Saving Clubs made the trek over to Western Australia for this nine-day event, with their competitors taking part in the Juniors, Masters and Opens competitions. Rocco from the Redhead Surf Life Saving Club competed in the Juniors Competition, taking out the silver medal in the Under 14's Male beach relay and Under 13's/14's board relay. Congratulations Rocco on a fantastic performance, you are a credit to your club and community.

#### **ANDIE WIDSETH**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism)**—I rise to acknowledge Andie Widseth for his performance at the 2023 Australian Surf Life Saving Championships at Scarboro and Trig Island Surf Life Saving Clubs. The Aussies is an annual event where members from the country's 314 surf clubs unite to participate in almost 500 beach and ocean events that mimic surf lifesaving activities. Members of Redhead, Swansea-Belmont, Caves Beach and The Lakes Surf Life Saving Clubs made the trek over to Western Australia for this nine-day event, with their competitors taking part in the Juniors, Masters and Opens competitions. Andie from the Redhead Surf Life Saving Club took out the gold medal in the under 17 Female Taplin team event. Congratulations Andie on a fantastic performance, you are a credit to your club and community.

#### **CHARLIE BURNS**

**Ms YASMIN CATLEY (Swansea—Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism)**—I rise to acknowledge Charlie Burns for his performance at the 2023 Australian Surf Life Saving Championships at Scarboro and Trig Island Surf Life Saving Clubs. The Aussies is an annual event where members from the country's 314 surf clubs unite to participate in almost 500 beach and ocean events that mimic surf lifesaving activities. Members of Redhead, Swansea-Belmont, Caves Beach and The Lakes Surf Life Saving Clubs made the trek over to Western Australia for this nine-day event, with their competitors taking part in the Juniors, Masters and Opens competitions. Charlie from the Redhead Surf Life Saving Club competed took out the gold medal in the under 17 Female board relay team event. Congratulations Charlie on a fantastic performance, you are a credit to your club and community.

#### **RAINBOW SOUTH COAST**

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)**—I would like to congratulate Rainbow South Coast, a newly formed LGBTQIA+ organisation, who celebrated their launch on 17 June at the Warilla Barrack Point Surf Club. This organisation was formed out of Shoalhaven-Based Queers Down South and the Illawarra Rainbow Community. Rainbow South Coast hope to provide one home for queer people in the Illawarra-Shoalhaven. They aim to provide support for queer people, especially queer youth, so they can feel supported and can be who they are wherever they live. They will host events for queer people to come together such as a coming out ball, queer formal and support groups. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour community, I would like to express our warmest congratulations to Rainbow South Coast and commend the work and support they do in our community.

#### **GREATER BANK DAPTO & FIFTY FOR A FARMER**

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)**—I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to Greater Bank Dapto and the 'Fifty for a Farmer' organisation. Fifty for a Farmer is an Illawarra-based organization that provides

support to farmers and their families throughout New South Wales. They employ various fundraising initiatives such as pie drives, market stalls, raffles, Bunnings barbecues, and trivia nights to raise funds for struggling farmers. Recently, the organization received \$2000 from the Dapto branch of Greater Bank, following a community vote. This well-deserved funding will be directed towards farmers in need. On behalf of the entire Shellharbour electorate, I would like to express our deep appreciation to Fifty for a Farmer for their valuable work, as well as to Greater Bank for their support of Fifty for a Farmer.

#### **DAVID 'SCOOTER DAVE' WILLIAMSON**

**Ms ANNA WATSON (Shellharbour)**—I congratulate David Williamson, of Barrack Heights, also known as Scooter Dave, for his outstanding effort in collecting bottles and cans in his motorised scooter, to raise money to donate to various Illawarra community groups. Dave has raised over \$60,000 for organisations and community groups over the past six years giving tirelessly of his time for this cause. Most recently he made a donation of \$5000 to the Marine Rescue Shellharbour Unit which will go towards keeping their operations going so they can help members of the public when they are in distress on the water. Dave has himself been battling a respiratory illness and other medical issues and despite his struggles still makes time to donate to others. I would like to congratulate David on his outstanding service on behalf of the Shellharbour community.

#### **TRINITY ANGLICAN COLLEGE ALBURY-WODONGA STUDENT BANJO DAVIES**

**Mr JUSTIN CLANCY (Albury)**—I extend my congratulations to Year 9 student Banjo Davies of Trinity Anglican College Albury-Wodonga, whose display of footy skills at the 2023 NSW All Schools Football Championships has won him a spot in the CIS Boys U15 Championship winning team. Banjo will proudly represent NSW at the upcoming National Championships in Ballarat, to be held later this year. Furthermore, I also recognise and acknowledge the efforts and leadership provided by coach Mark Dicketts and team manager David Miles whose contributions have played a vital role in the success of the CIS Boys U15 Championship-winning team. Well done to the team, coach and management. I wish Banjo and the team every success as they prepare for the National Championships.

#### **DUDLEY REDHEAD UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)**—I am always impressed by the resilience and community spirit on display in the Charlestown electorate, especially in the face of adversity. On Saturday 17 June, members of the Dudley Redhead United Football Club arrived at their home ground at Liles Oval to find that the ground had been vandalised—the turf had been torn up by a car doing donuts. It's devastating to see this kind of behaviour affecting local kids' weekend sport, but due to the hard work of volunteers the ground was ready for the scheduled games to go ahead. This wouldn't have been possible without the community spirit and volunteerism which is a hallmark of our community, and I was inspired by the way in which the community and local business came together to get the games on. A big thank you to all the hard-working volunteers who do their best to give opportunities to young people in our region, particularly those who came out so quickly and with such warm spirit to support Dudley Redhead United in the face of this vandalism.

#### **INCLUDA**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)**—Caring for the all-round wellbeing of support staff will deliver better outcomes for clients living with a disability, and Charlestown service Includa is passionate about supporting its staff. Includa creates autonomous and community-based teams, designed to help their clients with community connections, community independence, education and employment, online support and independence at home. I recently visited Includa in Charlestown alongside Minister for Work Health and Safety, the Hon. Sophie Cotsis MP for a tour of the service, and we heard directly from the team about the challenges they face and joys they experience as disability support workers. I would like to thank Includa director Mitchell Jones for showing us around, and for giving us first hand information on the experiences of disability support workers in our region. The Minister was in the region alongside SafeWork NSW to observe compliance checks targeted at disability service providers. Disability support is challenging and complex work, and it is important employers ensure workers get the support they need to prevent psychological and physical harm. My thanks to Mitchell, the Includa team and all the Charlestown electorate disability support workers for the amazing work they do.

#### **GLENROCK STATE CONSERVATION AREA**

**Ms JODIE HARRISON (Charlestown—Minister for Women, Minister for Seniors, and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault)**—The Glenrock State Conservation Area is one of the natural jewels of the Newcastle area, attracting up to a million visitors a year to its beautiful beach front and

fabulous forest walks. A huge thanks to the National Parks and Wildlife staff who maintain it and plan for the well-loved park's future. Glenrock is home to over 140 species of birds, echidnas, bats and gliders and helps protect five threatened ecological communities and seven threatened plant species, making it invaluable to protecting our unique local flora and fauna. Many Charlestown electorate locals, including me, take advantage of this lovely area right on our doorstep. Now access to Glenrock will be easier than ever, with construction on a new 47-space carpark off Scout Camp Road due to start next week. The carpark will take pressure off the existing carpark off Burwood Road, where overcrowding has led to risky behaviour on the part of drivers and pedestrians. A big thanks to the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service for taking this step to improve safety and accessibility, and to the locals who championed Glenrock for so long.

#### **40TH ANNUAL BLACKTOWN CITY SPORTS AWARDS**

**Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)**—I want to express my sincere congratulations to all award recipients at the 40th annual Blacktown City Sports Awards. The event recognised the remarkable sporting achievements and contributions by teams and individuals within the Blacktown LGA. With a total of 113 nominations across 10 categories, the event highlighted the diverse and vibrant sports culture that thrives in our city. I'd like to particularly acknowledge recipients from the Riverstone electorate - the Riverstone Razorbacks Junior Rugby League Club, as well as David Beacroft and his son Isaac from Quakers Hill Little Athletics for their awards. Athletes of all ages were acknowledged for their remarkable performances, as well as the coaches, officials and administrators who work tirelessly behind the scenes to foster a supportive and competitive sporting community. These awards reflected a sense of pride, camaraderie and community spirit, all strong values of the Blacktown LGA and a perfect demonstration for the community's reputation for sporting excellence. I wish all recipients and candidates the very best for their ongoing sporting careers.

#### **SYDNEY SHAKTI TEMPLE**

**Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)**—I want to acknowledge Sydney Shakti Temple, Cultural and Education Centre for the wonderful work they do and also congratulate them on celebrating their first annual Brahmotsavan festival recently. Before I was elected, they invited me for their auspicious Thaipusam festival where I was honoured to have the priests bless me with good luck. They asked me to come back if I won the election – so I kept my promise! It was heart-warming to see how hundreds of people, young and old participated in the many sacred rituals. Sydney Shakti, Cultural and Educational Centre is not only a religious but also a community service organisation with almost a third of devotees living in the Riverstone electorate. For more than 13 years, the Centre has been providing a place for people to pray plus also contribute to community initiatives. It is also a significant place promoting the preservation of language, culture, and tradition. The Centre runs on the basic principles of respecting others and the world around them, something I truly admire and appreciate. I congratulate Muthu Menon and his team for organising such beautiful festivities, and I look forward to celebrating many more milestones with you.

#### **RIVERSTONE PAC - OPEN DAY**

**Mr WARREN KIRBY (Riverstone)**—I wish to express my congratulations to the Riverstone Police Area Command on the success of their recent Open Day. Families and friends from our vibrant community were welcomed behind the scenes at the Riverstone Police Station, allowing them a unique opportunity to witness firsthand the dedication and commitment of our local law enforcement. Community members had the privilege of not only meeting the hardworking people behind the Riverstone PAC but also some of our local fires and ambos, who work to keep our community safe. The enthusiasm and support from our community is a testament to the work of our local emergency services in protecting our growing community from the hurdles that life can often throw. I would like to express my gratitude to the Riverstone PAC for the hospitality shown to our community. Their dedication to fostering positive community relations is clear and the success of this Open Day only goes to highlight this. Once again, congratulations to the Riverstone Police Area Command on a highly successful Open Day. The measure of good law enforcement is its relationship with the local community and it's clear that this relationship has been very successful indeed.

#### **CALLIE HUTCHINGS**

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)**—A vision to pursue a future in the medical and nursing sector has earned Blayney High School student Callie Hutchings a finalist position in the recent Western NSW Training Awards for 2023. Callie chose to complete a VET course as a base for a career and has completed a Certificate III in Health Services Assistance with the support of the Western NSW Local Health District. The course means Callie can go into nursing with first-hand experience and training with Western NSW Health describing her as a valued addition to their staff and very proactive in seeking learning opportunities. Indeed, residents and patients speak highly of Callie with her gentle approach and thoroughness of her care exemplary. No doubt Callie is very proud of completing her course as it has enabled her to come out of her shell and be a more outgoing person who can



talk to strangers, family, and friends without feeling shy or lost in the conversion. Callie's story is one of hard work and dedication paying off, and she would encourage others to follow their dreams and push them to at least think about undertaking an apprenticeship or traineeship.

#### **DEBBIE MARIE HANCKEL**

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)**—Debbie Marie Hanckel is a great example why it's never too late in life to improve your skills through education. An employee with Catholic Healthcare, Debbie was a finalist in the recent Western NSW Training Awards for 2023 after completing a Certificate III in Individual Support. It was a just reward for Debbie who made the decision to commit to vocational education at the age of 35. She recognised the value of completing a qualification which supports being gainfully employed in not just work, but a career pathway. I know Debbie is very proud of being able to gain her qualification after nearly 20 years out of any education or formal training. Her story is one which recognises that in everyday life you still have lots to learn and that improving your on-the-job skills and knowledge is something that is very achievable no matter what stage in life you are at. Debbie's story is a triumphant one which typifies her "never give up and always have a go" attitude and I am sure that everyone at Catholic Healthcare in Bathurst is proud of her efforts.

#### **CEANNE BARRON**

**Mr PAUL TOOLE (Bathurst)**—Volunteers are the lifeblood of any community and Ceanne Barron from Oberon Rural Fire Service is a classic example of this. Ceanne gives up her spare time to work with the NSW RFS and has been volunteering with the organisation for more than 15 years. She joined the Oberon brigade all those years ago as other members of her family were already involved and believed it was something she could do that could make a difference. These days she needs to juggle a fulltime job and having a family as well as finding the time to help out with the RFS when an emergency happens to occur. However, it's clear the rewards that come from being a part of the RFS movement are immense. The other volunteers are viewed as part of Ceanne's extended family and the role brought stability and purpose in her life at a relatively young age. Well done Ceanne, your community thanks you for being a quiet achiever and hopefully others will follow in your footsteps and step to fill one of the many and varied roles the NSW RFS has to offer.

#### **LORRAINE HAEUSLER**

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)**—I would like to acknowledge and recognise Ms Lorraine Haeusler for her generosity and dedication to helping the Connells Point Public School community. Ms Haeusler has been an integral part of the Connells Point Public School community, willingly volunteering her time and energy to help the school community over the past five years. As a member of the P&C committee, Lorraine has led and organised some of the school's biggest fundraisers, including the 2022 Fun Run that raised almost \$54,000 for the school. On any given day, Lorraine can be found somewhere in the school, helping out. From serving lunches in the canteen, to selling raffle tickets, managing stock, and getting other volunteers involved. She does all this with warmth, kindness & humility. Lorraine is an absolute treasure to the school and I want to express my deepest appreciation to her for her dedication and commitment to our local community for which we are all extremely grateful.

#### **KON VOURTZOUMIS**

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)**—I would like to acknowledge and celebrate the work of Bexley resident, Mr Kon Vourtzoumis, for his commitment and dedication to the Bexley North Football Club. Bexley North Football Club has been operating in the local community since 1960 and has experienced many successes over its lifetime which would not have been possible without the vital contributions of volunteers like Mr Vourtzoumis. For over 10 years, Kon has graciously volunteered his time and energy to help the Club and its players. He started off coaching the junior and youth boys' teams, before moving into the role of football coordinator, where he greatly assisted the club during grading and team allocations. For the past few years, Kon has held the position of football director across the Club, working with coaches to develop extensive training programs while also coaching the Under 15 and Under 16 boys' teams. Kon is a strong leader and the ultimate role model for not only the Club but for our local community and I thank him for his dedication and commitment to ensuring our children have a safe and fun place to play sport.

#### **KYAN PEREZ**

**Mr CHRIS MINNS (Kogarah—Premier)**—I would like to acknowledge and recognise Marist College Kogarah student, Mr Kyan Perez, for his continuous commitment and dedication to the school community. Kyan is an enthusiastic young man who organises several charities events such as Project Compassion, St Vincent De Paul and the College's Annual Champagnat Day Fundraisers. These initiatives raise much-needed funds to help alleviate poverty and promote justice in the most vulnerable communities in Australia. In addition to this, Mr Perez assists with organising a variety of social justice programs aimed at improving the wellbeing and welfare of the

local community. Kyan regularly attends St Patrick's Catholic Church where he voluntarily cleans the church grounds and attends Wednesday Novena. I wish to express my deepest appreciation towards Mr Perez, for his willingness to volunteer wherever he can and the compassion and leadership he shows in everything he does. Mr Perez serves as an inspiration to the younger generation and I hope that he continues to serve the local community of St George.

#### **KILLARA HIGH SCHOOL MULTICULTURAL FOOD FESTIVAL**

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)**—On Saturday 17 June 2023, I was delighted to attend a Multicultural Food Festival at Killara High School. This wonderful event showcases the best of our community – bringing people from different backgrounds and ethnicities together all in the name of celebrating diversity, cuisine and fundraising. Over four in ten Davidson constituents are born overseas, and over three in ten speak a non-English language at home. Diversity is our community's strength, and these are statistics to celebrate. At this event, there was a wide range of different cuisines and flavours on offer – cuisine from Iran, Pakistan, Colombia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Italy, South Korea, Malaysia, Israel, China, and India. I was pleased to have a taste of all cuisines on offer – that my wife Gessika and I enjoyed very much over the weekend. I congratulate the organisers of this festival, the Killara High Parents and Citizens (P&C) led by President Joseph Chia. I look forward to attending similar events in the years to come.

#### **SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESS: OLAN LIVING**

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)**—On Sunday 11 June 2023, I was honoured to attend the grand opening of Olan Living in Gordon. This small business was founded by Annie Li, who took the risk to go into business selling impressive outdoor furniture. I very much enjoyed meeting Annie and her husband Anson, who reside in St Ives. In Davidson, outdoor furniture is very popular due to the brilliant natural and built environment. At the grand opening, I was joined by the Member for Bradfield, Paul Fletcher MP, and Ku-ring-gai Deputy Mayor, Councillor Barbara Ward. I pay tribute to small businesses in our local community. Small businesses are the backbone of our economy and our communities. They bring much needed goods and services, as well as a special and unique character, diversity, and economic opportunities to all. I look forward to further engaging and supporting small businesses tight across the Davidson electorate well into the future.

#### **'BOBBO' – BOBBIN HEAD CYCLE CLASSIC 2023**

**Mr MATT CROSS (Davidson)**—On Thursday 22 June 2023, I was joined the Rotary Clubs of Turramurra, Wahroonga, Ku-ring-gai, and St Ives for their annual Bobbo 'thank you' event at Magpies Waitara. The Bobbo – formally known as the Bobbin Head Cycle Classic – brings together members of the community to compete in a 27, 57, 80, or 104 kilometre cycling race through Sydney's North Shore and the Northern Beaches. In 2023, over 1,400 people participated in the event on Sunday 26 March. This wonderful initiative, which has been running for over a decade, raises money for important charities such as Lifeline Harbour to Hawkesbury, the Ku-ring-gai Youth Development Service [KYDS], the Cromehurst Foundation, and the Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter. It is events, such as the Bobbo, that highlights the wonderful spirit in the community for sport, social and charity. I pay tribute to presidents Peter Kirkwood OAM, Ian Spencer, Chris Lewis, and Bruce Farnsworth for their efforts leading their respective Rotary clubs. I look forward to continuing to support the Bobbo.

#### **HANNAH SMITH**

**Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)**—I rise to congratulate Hannah Smith, a junior from the Manning River Rowing Club. Hannah volunteered her time and skills to support Rowing NSW and Rowing Australia at the 2023 Australian Masters Rowing Championships (AMRC). Over the course of four days, Hannah assisted in various roles, including boat holding at race starts, distributing bow numbers, presenting medals, and even lending her voice to commentating. Hannah's dedication to the sport extends beyond her volunteering efforts. She has been developing her skills assisting with coaching of the Manning River Junior/Schools Program. Through her commitment and hard work, Hannah has obtained a Level 1 Coaching Accreditation, NSW Boat Licence, and First Aid Certificate. These qualifications were made possible by the Rowing Club's successful application for funds through the Local Sport Grant Program 2021-22 focus on youth, enabling Hannah and three other junior club members to acquire these essential skills. I thank Hannah for making a positive impact on the Manning River Rowing Club and the wider rowing community.

#### **HALLIDAYS POINT PICKLEBALL CLUB**

**Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)**—I rise to congratulate Hallidays Point Pickleball Club who are heading to Queensland this weekend to participate in the highly anticipated state titles. In 2020, Pickleball found its humble beginnings in Hallidays Point, with a mere 14 individuals forming the club. Since then, I acknowledge the tremendous growth of the club, now boasting a membership of over 77 players who actively

compete in both state and national championships. The upcoming state titles at Morayfield Sports Centre have attracted a staggering number of nominations from across Australia, with a total of 525 talented participants vying for victory. Within this esteemed group, I am delighted to share that 15 exceptional representatives from Hallidays Point have earned their rightful place to compete. I wish Hallidays Point Pickleball Club all the best for this weekend and look forward to their continued growth and success as a club.

#### **GREAT LAKES HISTORIC AUTOMOBILE CLUB - MOTORFEST**

**Mrs TANYA THOMPSON (Myall Lakes)**—I rise to congratulate the Great Lakes Historic Automobile Club for organising the highly successful annual Mid Coast Ford Motorfest. For an impressive three decades, this event has captivated car enthusiasts and has rightfully earned the distinction of being the second-largest historical car show in New South Wales. This year's Motorfest surpassed all expectations, boasting an unprecedented turnout of vehicles and attendees. John Wright Park in Tuncurry, overlooking the scenic Wallis Lake, served as the backdrop for this spectacular event, with approximately 300 cars, motorcycles, and stationary engines on display. To provide assistance to Great Lakes Palliative Care Support, a non-profit volunteer organisation in the Myall Lakes, a \$10 fee was collected for car displays, and a raffle was organised with all proceeds supporting this organisation. I congratulate the president Ron Pulling as well as the dedicated members of the Great Lakes Historic Automobile Club whose tireless efforts ensured the seamless execution of this event. I thank the major sponsors whose contributions played a pivotal role in making this event a resounding success.

#### **BANGABANDHU COUNCIL, AUSTRALIA – BOSHAKHI MELA FESTIVAL**

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)**—I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to the Bangabandhu Council, Australia on a very successful Boshakhi Mela Festival to celebrate Bengali New Year. I had the honour of attending the festival at Fairfield Showground on Sunday, 18th June 2023. The Bengali New Year signifies a celebration of rejuvenation, joy, and tradition. With delicious food, vibrant cultural performances, and traditional attire, the festival is a melange of merriment and is eagerly looked forward to by the entire Bengali community. The day attracted a crowd of around 20,000 not only from Sydney but from all over NSW. I am pleased that this enlightening festival is back after 3 consecutive years of postponement due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is an honour to be able to understand and appreciate Bengali's rich cultural heritage and diversity. I thank the Bangabandhu Council Australia, the President, Sheikh Huque, his team, and all the volunteers for taking on this initiative and making it such a great success. I applaud them for their efforts to make everyone feel welcome and to allow other communities to learn, understand, and connect with the Bengali culture and tradition.

#### **EUCCHARISTIC PROCESSION FOR THE FEAST OF CORPUS CHRISTI**

**Mr JIHAD DIB (Bankstown—Minister for Customer Service and Digital Government, Minister for Emergency Services, and Minister for Youth Justice)**—On Thursday 8th June 2023, St Charbel's Church in Punchbowl held its annual Eucharistic procession for the feast of Corpus Christi. At this event, hundreds of Maronite, Melkite, and Roman Catholic parishioners gathered for the 1 km procession through the adjoining suburbs. The candlelit procession began at 7.00 pm after evening prayers at St John the Beloved Church in Greenacre with Father Ibrahim Sultan and Melkite Bishop Robert Rabbat, and concluded with a benediction and Mass celebrated by Father Micheal Sandroussi at St Charbel's. Many community members and faith leaders gathered for this service officiated by His Grace, Bishop Antoine Charbel Tarabay. People from diverse backgrounds and faith joined in to commemorate the feast of Corpus Christi. For immigrant communities in Australia, faith and religion are sometimes the only things retained from their homeland. I thank the Maronite and Roman Catholic churches as well as the organiser Norman Bejani for their dedicated work in arranging this important commemoration. Their commitment to bringing a connection between faith and culture is commended, as well as the ability to collaborate as religious organisations for the betterment of all people.

#### **PAUL O'CALLAGHAN**

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHROP (Newcastle—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter)**—I want to commemorate the life of Paul O'Callaghan, a great compensation and industrial law solicitor who served clients from many unions across Newcastle and regional NSW. Mr O'Callaghan's journey began at Aberdeen Boys School, and he completed his education at St Joseph's College in Hunters Hill. He continued his pursuit of knowledge at Sydney University, earning Bachelor's degrees in Arts and Law. This led onto a successful career, primarily as a solicitor partner with Moroney, Rutter & Mantach in Newcastle, representing many unions, such as the SDA, AWU, and TWU. Mr O'Callaghan's commitment to his clients went beyond mere professional obligations, taking a personal interest in each client, always striving to provide the best possible support and assistance. Beyond the courtroom, he was a sports enthusiast, a founding member of Newcastle Rowing Club and a supporter and follower of the Australian Wallabies and the Newcastle Knights. Paul is survived by his beloved wife, Amanda, their four children, Sarah, Matthew, Tim, and Amy, and

his 11 grandchildren. Thank you Paul, for your dedication to the pursuit of justice, your compassion, and your commitment to the community.

#### **HUNTER SCHOOL OF THE PERFORMING ARTS**

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter)**—Congratulations to the student musicians and teachers at Hunter School of Performing Arts who shone bright in the light of Australia's National Eisteddfod. 99 students from year 7-12 and their teachers took a trip to Canberra and came home with some outstanding achievements. The Junior Concert Band were one of five groups in the 16 years and under Grade C Concert Band category to get platinum, which is the highest marking one can receive. The Junior Concert Band also received another gold marking and the Senior Concert Band and String Orchestra received two golds and a gold and silver marking in their respective categories. It is truly fantastic to see such talent coming out of one of our local schools, congratulations on this amazing achievement.

#### **YOUNG PEOPLE'S THEATRE**

**Mr TIM CRAKANTHORP (Newcastle—Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, and Minister for the Hunter)**—The Young People's Theatre has put a spotlight on Newcastle's finest young performers for 75 years now. The Theatre has given young Novocastrians an opportunity to take to the stage, to develop their talents and learn what goes on behind the scenes. The Young People's Theatre has produced some of Australia's top performers from comedians to dancers, and actors from the stage to the big screen. It has not been an easy 75 years for the Young People's Theatre, who fought to survive through the Covid-19 pandemic and had their original auditorium and costume storage destroyed by a dreadful fire in 1995. But the show must go on and I'm sure it will continue to for many years to come. Congratulations to the Young People's Theatre for reaching this milestone and thank you for your decades of service to the Newcastle community.

#### **CASTLE HILL SOCCER CLUB, LUKE GARDONI TROPHY MATCH**

**Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)**—In April I attended the annual Luke Gardoni Trophy Match at Castle Hill. Luke Gardoni played for the Castle Hill Soccer Club. The Match is an annual charity match played in honour of Luke. Luke suffered a cardiac arrest whilst playing on 15 August 2020. He was treated on the field by five paramedics and then taken to hospital. Sadly, he lost his life on 20 August 2020. Luke was 21 years of age at the time. Luke was a very much-loved by his parents Andrew and Michelle and by his sister Alicia and brother Aaron. Luke was held in extremely high regard by those who knew him. He will forever be remembered not only by the Soccer Club but by everyone who knew him. He will forever be missed. The Luke Gardoni Trophy Match this year raised an impressive \$3,000.00 which will assist with research into Unexplained Cardiac Death ([www.enducd.org](http://www.enducd.org)). I extend congratulations on behalf of the Castle Hill Electorate to Paul Jones from the Castle Hill Soccer Club and to Sue Torville from the Kenthurst District Football Club and to all those involved who volunteered on the day.

#### **JIMMY SHAW BIRTHDAY**

**Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)**—Jimmy Shaw, is a distinguished individual who recently celebrated his 97th birthday, he has been an enduring advocate for the Greens campaign in the Ryde area. Recently, Jimmy was campaigning in support of World Environment Day, showcasing his unwavering dedication to environmental causes. Beyond his environmental activism, Mr. Shaw has a storied past as a renowned drummer for the esteemed Shawnuff Big Band. His exceptional musical talent and rhythmic prowess captivated audiences, earning him a well-deserved reputation as a notable figure in the music industry. However, it is Mr. Shaw's enduring commitment to environmental conservation that truly sets him apart. Regardless of the circumstances, he remains resolute in his efforts to protect our natural spaces and give voice to the often voiceless inhabitants of our planet. Jimmy Shaw's unwavering dedication and remarkable achievements serve as a testament to his enduring legacy as a true advocate for both the environment and the arts. His contributions continue to inspire others, and his impact on the world is nothing short of remarkable. Happy birthday Jimmy!

#### **OKTA**

**Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)**—On Friday night, I attended the official opening dinner for the Korean Trade Conference, OKTA. It was a highly anticipated event that brought together delegates and business professionals from Australia and Korea. The atmosphere was filled with excitement and anticipation as we gathered to celebrate the beginning of this important conference. The venue was alive with Korean culture, creating a unique and vibrant ambiance. Distinguished guests, including government officials and industry leaders, delivered captivating speeches including from Na Kyung-won, visiting specially from Korea. The event emphasised the significance of strong trade relations between our countries. Ryde is well represented at OKTA, with Isaac Lim of Orana Timbers, Jay Ko of DNK Hair, and Don Ko of Gospel Pianos all playing a critical

leadership role in the organisation's success. I also pay tribute to the Korean Consul General, Taewoo Lee who is a close friend of Ryde. The official opening dinner for the OKTA Korean Trade Conference was an exciting and memorable event. It symbolized the strong bond between Australia and Korea and sparked anticipation for the upcoming conference sessions.

#### **RYDE SECONDARY COLLEGE LEADERS VISIT**

**Mr JORDAN LANE (Ryde)**—I had the pleasure of welcoming Khematep Sok and Josh Phibbs, school captains of Ryde Secondary College [RSC], during their visit to Parliament House and Government House on 28 June 2023. They are two highly impressive young people who represented their school and the Ryde community with distinction. These visits are great opportunities for students to explore the inner workings of our democratic institutions, ask questions and come face to face with decision makers right across our State. Their curiosity and eagerness to learn about the political process gives me much hope for the future. In their role as school leaders, Khematep and Josh are fostering positive change and creating a harmonious learning environment for their RSC peers. It was evident that they have successfully developed their skills in diplomacy, public speaking, and critical thinking. It was a privilege to have such engaged and well-informed young leaders at Parliament House. I have no doubt that Josh and Khematep will continue to make a positive impact on their peers, their school, and the wider community. Their visit serves as a testament to the promising future leaders emerging from Ryde Secondary College. Thank you both for visiting!

#### **MICHAEL PYNE OAM**

**Mr GEOFF PROVEST (Tweed)**—Congratulations to a great friend of the Tweed, Dr Michael Pyne, Head of Veterinary Sciences and Research Programs at Currumbin Wildlife Hospital, on receiving an Order of Australia Medal [OAM] in the General Division in the Kings Birthday 2023 Honours List, for his dedication to veterinary science. Dr Pyne has been integral to the establishment of the Tweed Coast Koala Research Hub in Pottsville, within the Tweed Electorate, which is conducting a first-of-its kind chlamydia vaccine research program. The research hub is a joint initiative of the NSW Government, Tweed Shire Council, Currumbin Wildlife Hospital and the World Wildlife Fund – Australia and accommodates koalas for 30 days between their first and second chlamydia vaccine shots before being released back into the wild. The koala population in Tweed is endangered and this research hub is playing a key role in working to ensure the future of this special species. Thank you to Dr Pyne for your work with the Tweed koala population and congratulations on being recognised with an Order of Australia Medal, it is very much deserved.

#### **2023 ST THOMAS MORE SOCIETY PATRONAL FEAST DAY**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—It was a pleasure to attend as a guest speaker at the 2023 St Thomas More Society Patronal Feast Day Dinner on 22nd of June. St Thomas More was the Chancellor of England from 1529-1532 and is also the Patron Saint of Statesmen and Lawyers. The St Thomas More Society was founded in 1945 and is a fellowship of Catholic lawyers who are inspired by the example set by St Thomas More, as exemplified by his life in public service and martyrdom at Tower Hill. The Society hosts annual celebrations for the Feast of St Thomas More. Colleagues from the judiciary and legal profession, academics, aspiring lawyers, and supporters of our legal community attended Mass at St Mary's Cathedral prior to the dinner, which was celebrated by the Society's Chaplain, Fr Peter Joseph. It was also an honour to address the Society in my capacity as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney General, where I spoke about law reform under a Minns-NSW Labor Government. Thank you to Michael McAuley, President, St Thomas More Society, for your leadership, Matthew Lo, and members of the Society for your dedication towards its growth and success.

#### **NSW POLICE FORCE STATE CRIME COMMAND EXCELLENCE IN POLICING AWARD – DETECTIVE SERGEANT JULIAN THORNTON**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—Congratulations to Detective Sergeant Julian Thornton on receiving a NSW Police Force State Crime Command Excellence in Policing Award on Tuesday 16th May 2023, presented by the Rotary Club of Holroyd. Detective Sergeant Thornton has 23 years of service with the NSW Police Force, with 18 of those years attached to the State Crime Command. He is currently serving with the Cybercrime Squad and was nominated for his investigation under SF Cedrilla which revealed a series of highly technical computer intrusion offences targeting business payroll systems and SF Bidgee where over 80 Westpac customers were victims of smishing attacks. Detective Sergeant Thornton is further nominated for his investigation under SF Brads which identified Outlaw Motorcycle Gang members defrauding the ATO with false GST claims. In total, the fraud incurred a collective loss by the ATO of approximately \$1.2 million. Thank you, Detective Sergeant Thornton, for your commitment to preventing and responding to crime, and for helping bring to justice to victims. Congratulations again on your receipt of this Award.

### **NSW POLICE FORCE STATE CRIME COMMAND EXCELLENCE IN POLICING AWARD – DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE LISA NAVARA**

**Dr HUGH McDERMOTT (Prospect)**—Congratulations to Detective Senior Constable Lisa Navara 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 Navara has 10 years of service with the NSW Police Force, with three of those years attached to the State Crime Command. She is currently with the Criminal Groups Squad and was nominated for her investigation under SF Hathern which investigated the shooting and robbery of an interstate truck driver. Detective Senior Constable Navara successfully managed the hostile victim which resulted in the arrest and charge of six violent offenders. Detective Senior Constable Navara was also nominated for her role as Senior Investigator under SF Parbery, for the shooting and attempted murder of organised crime members and the supply of illegal firearm where she played a pivotal role in the quick arrest of the offenders who were planning another attack. Thank you, Detective Senior Constable Navara, for your commitment to preventing and responding to crime, and for helping bring justice to victims. Congratulations again on your receipt of this Award.

### **BILLS FISHHOUSE + BAR – 2023 SOMMELIER'S AWARDS**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—I rise in the House today to congratulate popular local hospitality establishment in Port Macquarie Bills Fishhouse which has again been highly commended at the annual NSW Sommelier's Wine List Awards. Bills Fishhouse + Bar have taken out the 'Best NSW Wine List in a Regional NSW Venue' at the Sommelier's Wine List Awards held on Tuesday, 27 June 2023 at Parliament House. This is the third such award for owners Pete Cutcliffe and Jen Paquet's since the NSW Wine Industry Association showcased the event in 2018. Set in the heart of the CBD, Bills Fishhouse in Port Macquarie is a casual, modern dining space that boasts locally sourced, seasonal food in a beautiful contemporary environment. Pete and Jen have concentrated their skills on delivering a first-class seafood experience paired with an award-winning wine list for customers to savour and remember. The NSW Sommelier's Wine List Awards recognise our premiere hospitality businesses across the State that take pride in listing a range of delicious, local wines that highlight the quality and diversity of wines being produced in NSW. Congratulations Pete and Jen for securing their third Sommeliers Wine List Award – an impressive achievement!

### **HUNTER REGIONAL INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS (HRIS) PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—Today, I welcome the news that Port Macquarie's St Columba Anglican School students have claimed a number of awards at this year's Hunter Regional Independent Schools [HRIS] Public Speaking Competition. St Columba Anglican School Primary was one of the major award recipients recently at the HRIS Public Speaking Competition. Showcasing a diverse and engaging range of topics, with confidence and conviction were Hannah Morgan, Isabella Marks, Annabel Wellings, Molly Currie and Lily Zhang. Taking out first place in the Prepared Speech category was Hannah Morgan, with Lily Zhang achieving second place in the Poetry category. Annabel Wellings secured a commendable third in Bible Reading. Acknowledged for their Highly Commended performances were students Isabella Marks and Molly Currie who impressed the judges for covering each topic of discussion. St Columba Anglican School is an independent, co-educational school with a reputation that recognises each student's potential while offering every opportunity for success. I congratulate Hannah, Lily, Annabel, Molly and Isabella for their inspiring presentations at this year's HRIS Public Speaking Competition.

### **HASTINGS SECONDARY COLLEGE TABLE TENNIS TEAM ACHIEVEMENTS**

**Mrs LESLIE WILLIAMS (Port Macquarie)**—I recognise the recent achievements of local Hastings Secondary College Port Macquarie Campus' Table Tennis team. The performance of these four skilled young men has seen them achieving an impressive result as the second highest ranking country team in NSW. Competition was fierce at the Combined High Schools Finals held at Sydney Olympic Park, but with skill and determination the boys literally put their best on the table and successfully securing the team's position as the second highest country team and seventh place among all NSW schools. The commendable team members are Jai Smith-Lloyd, Les Smith, Jayden McBain and Beckham Williams. Results such as these require many solid hours of training, commitment and hard work to sharpen both fitness and skills. I further commend the team on their positive attitude and exceptional sportsmanship throughout the entire tournament. Their exemplary behaviour upholds the core values of the College and reflects each of the team members commitment and tenacity which is worthy of commendation. I also acknowledge Mr Neilson, Vince and the HSC Port Macquarie P&C Association for their contributions and support of the team.

**IAN LUGSDIN - HAY**

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)**—Today I'd like to recognise Mr. Ian Lugsdin from Hay for his contribution to the Merino sheep breeding industry. At the recent sheep show in Hay, Ian was awarded the prestigious Ambassador award for his dedication to and influence on the Merino industry. Mr. Lugsdin has been the convenor, or host, of the Merino Sheep Show for 22 years and is part of a family legacy in the district that spans over 150 years. He started showing sheep at regional shows as a 21 year old and values community involvement in improving breeding practices. With land being a finite resource, the potential to expand is impossible which has motivated him to explore breeding practices which are more cost effective. Together with his wife Stacey, he runs a self replacing flock of Merino ewes using the latest technology to manage the animals on an individual basis. This change in practice has improved farm productivity with the animals, with limited resources without impacting the environment, and is setting new methods and standards in the breeding practice.

**AILEEN HONEYMAN - HAY**

**Mrs HELEN DALTON (Murray)**—Today I would like to recognise Aileen Honeyman of Hay, a National Parks and Wildlife Service employee, SES logistics specialist volunteer and supply coordinator currently assisting with the Canadian Wildfires. Aileen was chosen to be part of Australia and New Zealand's second contingent to Canada, sent to assist with what is now Canada's worst ever wildfire season, scorching over 19.2 million acres so far. During her time at NPWS and as an SES logistics specialist Aileen honed her logistics knowledge, making her the perfect candidate for this important role. She will be responsible for sourcing, securing and coordinating, personnel, resources, accommodation, food and water for the frontline firefighters fighting Canada's largest ever wildfire season. I would again like to recognise Aileen for her contributions to the Hay community during her time at the SES and wish her the best of luck in Canada on this important mission.

**XAVIER LACHAT**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)**—I wish to acknowledge and celebrate the outstanding achievements of Xavier Lachat, a talented athlete from Glenmore Park, who has recently been awarded the Penrith Valley Sports Foundation Junior Sports Star award. Xavier, a 16-year-old teenager, has been actively involved in the Penrith City Softball Association, playing for Glenmore Park Phantoms since the tender age of five. Over the years he has demonstrated remarkable skill and dedication to his sport. His prowess on the softball field has earned him recognition at both state and national levels. Xavier proudly represented New South Wales at the U14's national tournament, showcasing his talent and commitment. This year, he was once again selected to represent NSW in the U16's men's team at the national tournament held in Victoria. Xavier played a crucial role in the team's success, helping NSW claim the prestigious title of National Champions. Xavier's achievements serve as a testament to his hard work, perseverance, and unwavering passion for softball. He exemplifies the values of dedication, teamwork, and sportsmanship. Congratulations Xavier.

**BERNICE MOTT**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)**—I wish to congratulate Glenmore Park local Bernice Mott for her outstanding achievement in winning the Frances Binnie Memorial Perpetual Trophy at the Sydney Royal Arts and Crafts Competition. This prestigious award is the pinnacle craft recognition and is given to the most meritorious craft exhibit in the Standard of Excellence category. Bernice's exceptional talent and dedication were evident in her winning exhibit, a beautifully hand-knitted white lace shawl crafted with 1 ply wool. Her intricate work and attention to detail showcased her remarkable skill as a craftswoman. The Frances Binnie Memorial Perpetual Trophy is a testament to Bernice's artistic excellence and her commitment to the craft. I commend her for this remarkable accomplishment and for being recognised as having the best craft exhibit in the entire show. Once again, congratulations to Bernice Mott on this well-deserved honour. I wish her continued success and many more achievements in her artistic journey.

**ELLA ABDUL-MASSIH**

**Mrs TANYA DAVIES (Badgerys Creek)**—I acknowledge and celebrate the recent news of Ella Abdul Massih's one-year scholarship extension with the Western Sydney Wanderers FC. This exciting announcement ensures that Ella will remain with the club until the conclusion of the 2024/25 season, allowing her to continue her promising journey in the world of football. At just 17 years old, Ella Abdul Massih has already showcased her talent on the field with nine impressive performances in the domestic competition. Her dedication and skill have earned her a place in the national team, where she contributed to the CommBank Junior Matildas' victory in the AFF U18 Women's Championship. Head coach Kat Smith has also praised Ella's versatility and unwavering desire. As a junior national representative, Ella possesses abundant talent, and her technical abilities with the ball, combined with her defensive awareness and endeavour, make her a valuable asset to the team. I commend Ella Abdul-Massih on her contract extension with Western Sydney Wanderers FC. We celebrate her achievements

thus far and eagerly anticipate witnessing her continued growth and success on the field. Ella serves as an inspiration to young athletes, highlighting the potential and opportunities that lie within our local sporting community.

#### **DR AMELIAH SCOTT – THE FLYING VET**

**Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)**—I would like to recognise Dr Ameliah Scott, The Flying Vet for her passion and skill in providing veterinary services to isolated regions. Dr Ameliah Scott has a unique veterinary practice that is one of the largest in Australia. Based out of White Cliffs in Far West NSW, her business provides mobile veterinary care to an area of more than 200,000 square kilometres. She pilots her own aircraft and has a fully equipped ute, enabling her to bring veterinary care to previously unserved areas. As well as raising a young family, running a station with her partner and her business she has also found time to write an inspiring book about her life as a vet and farmer. Thank you for providing this important service to communities in the Far West and your dedication to the outback.

#### **MELLISSA SPEER**

**Mr ROY BUTLER (Barwon)**—Mellissa Speer is the owner of "No Moo 4 U" in Condobolin and is a finalist in the 2023 Western NSW Business Awards in the Outstanding Start-Up category. Mellissa and her mother Nicole Simpson developed the "No Moo 4 U" brand to provide more inclusive food options for customers with dietary requirements around Australia. Mellissa launched her products in Condobolin in March 2022 with her little green van and has since expanded into a Dessert Bar. Mellissa has sponsored and supported local sporting groups, raised funds for the flood victims in Eugowra and was the Outstanding New Business for the Condobolin 2022 Business awards. With the help of her team, Mellissa is now franchising across three locations around Australia. I congratulate Mellissa on being nominated for the award and I am looking forward to hearing the outcome.

#### **WALK WITH INNER WEST FOR YES**

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)**—The upcoming referendum on an Indigenous Voice to Parliament presents an incredibly important opportunity for our country to enshrine in its constitution the recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People. Inner West for Yes is a local group co-chaired by Aunty Norma Ingram and Mayor of Inner West Council, Darcy Byrne, dedicated to showing community support for a Yes vote to the referendum. This Sunday, 2nd June 2023, Inner West for Yes invites supporters to walk together from Victoria Park to the Come Together for Yes event being held in Prince Alfred Park. Come Together for Yes is part of a National Day of Action for the Yes campaign and will have supporters gathering from all around Sydney, along with food and festivities. Similar events will be occurring at other capital cities across Australia. I urge all those who believe in the importance of a Yes vote and the importance of an Indigenous Voice to Parliament to attend their event to show their support for this crucial moment in our nation's history.

#### **MACQUARIE FIELDS SALVATION ARMY**

**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)**—Say the words generous and welcoming, and for many in the Macquarie Fields electorate the team at the local Salvation Army in Macquarie Fields will come to their minds. I am a regular visitor of the Macquarie Fields Salvos, and it is always great to see so many friends and familiar faces volunteering to do their bit for our local community. The team do everything from operating the Salvos shop to raise money, to serving amazing coffee and cakes at the café, to providing financial planning advice and much more. The Salvos have also run their annual Red Shield Appeal over the past two months to raise much-needed funds that go directly to helping people with food, clothing and support in the Campbelltown area. There are always people coming to the Mac Fields Salvos for help, but the current cost-of-living crisis has forced many to turn to the local team for the first time. I commend Darren and his Mac Fields Salvos team for continuing their great work in the community.

#### **THE HILLS WINTER SLEEP OUT**

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Kellyville)**—The Hills Winter Sleep Out is a unique, overnight event that aims to raise awareness of homelessness and the factors such as DV (domestic violence), financial hardship, mental illness that can lead to homelessness in the Hills. Held on the grounds of the historical Bella Vista Farm, the Sleep Out brings residents and local business owners together to raise vital funds for local charities who work with the homeless, victims of domestic violence and the financially disadvantaged in the Hills community. 2023 marks the 10th Anniversary for the Hills Winter Sleep Out, and I congratulate the previous Mayor of the Hills Shire Council Dr Michelle Byrne for her vision in creating this event, and her dedication to the cause over the last decade. I also



congratulate all of the volunteers and participants who each year bring this event to fruition raising these much-needed funds to support the homeless community.

#### **RAYLEE LEVEY**

**Dr JOE McGIRR (Wagga Wagga)**—It is my pleasure to recognise and congratulate Mrs Raylee Levey for her work as an educator and leader within my electorate as she retires from Talbingo Public School at the start of the next term on the 19th of July 2023. Mrs Levey has had a long career as an educator, starting in Howlong and finishing in Talbingo with 35 years service. She was the founding member of the Alpine Learning Partnership Small Schools [ALPSS] which included schools at Talbingo, Rosewood, Humula, Khancoban and previously Cabramurra. Raylee has been an organiser and often the leader for every ALPSS excursion and has led camps every two years. She has organised staff training and team building; and is a dependable team member. Mrs Levey is an engaging teacher who demonstrates genuine community care. Everything she does truly helps her students to shine. Equally, for her fellow staff, Raylee is a supportive team member who brings out the best in everyone.

I applaud Raylee's dedication as an educator and I acknowledge her leadership and inspirational approach to prioritising small community education. I thank and congratulate her for her service and wish her joy in retirement.

#### **SARA PHEMISTER**

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)**—I rise today to recognise Sara Phemister. Sara completed an Associate Diploma of Fine Arts in 1995. Sara has been exhibiting her art since 1997 throughout Yass, Canberra, and the South Coast. Sara has also had her artwork compiled within private collections around the world. A notable presence of a dog whilst undertaking her drawing has been an integral part of her life. Sara's sketching forms a foundation for her paintings, which she completes in oil. Sara's work was recently on display at the Tyger Gallery in Yass. The Tyger Gallery is Yass Valley's newest art gallery and it's first exhibition titled 'Bryter' focussed on "hope and optimism for the future". I congratulate Sara on her many achievements and recognition that she has gained from art galleries and private collectors. It is a privilege to recognise her talent and I wish her every success in the future.

#### **SIMON STREATFEILD**

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)**—I rise to recognise Simon Streatfeild. Simon is from Yass and is a well-known for his illustrations, animations and his Facebook and YouTube videos. Simon has been teaching cartooning, creative thinking, and animation in a professional capacity for the past fifteen years. Simon is passionate about creating a space for children that increase and enhance their self-esteem, encourage, and support their creative thinking and growing their outlook and way of thinking. The belief that every child is unique and be provided with the opportunity to discover and explore their creative selves and make use of their imaginations when delving into drawing and art. Along with his wife Cass, and Vegetables the Dinosaur commenced "Envelope Awesome" in 2018, where a plethora of creative activities are placed into illustrated envelopes with a distinctive theme each month and are sent to children, which they receive via post. Simon undertakes responsibility for the illustrations, Cass is the brains and graphic designer, their twin daughters provide many of the ideas and Vegetables the Dinosaur undertakes the important duties. I congratulate Simon and commend him for his inspirational work, which aims to inspire children's creativity and confidence and how the whole family is involved.

#### **KEN MCDONALD**

**Mrs WENDY TUCKERMAN (Goulburn)**—I rise today to recognise Ken McDonald. Ken has been creating and perfecting his artistic sculptures since 2004. Having lived in the Wingecarribee for his entire life and embracing the natural beauty of the native flora and fauna of the area, amplifying these environmental attributes through his sculptures. Ken is renowned for his work known as the Stonemason's Trail, celebrating the local flora and fauna. The trail sponsored by the Bruggeman family, owners of the Wingello Village Store, who acknowledged Ken's abilities and skills and thought that it was a quintessential to share these with locals and visitors. The Stonemason's Trail extends from Wingello through Penrose, ending in Bundanoon, depicting sandstone sculptures of Kenneth the Cockatoo, Christmas Beetle, Elizabeth Lizard, Banksia Serata, Gangang Cockatoo, Wallace the Wombat, Lyre Bird, and Edna the Echidna. Ken is also a very talented oil painter, with his paintings displayed at the Penrose Art Show in March. I commend Ken on his artistry and skills and thank him for sharing these with the Southern Highlands community and visitors alike. Your portrayal of the natural and magnificent beauty of the flora and fauna is exquisite.

### HOCKEY NEW ENGLAND UNDER 15'S TEAM

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)**—I recognise the achievements of the Under 15 years Hockey New England team for winning the State Titles recently held at Wagga Wagga. To achieve this the side won against Newcastle, Port Macquarie, Coffs Coast, Far North Coast, East Sydney and Grafton, whom they played in the Grand Final. The team also won the Hockey NSW Respect for Official award following the three days of play. I congratulate each member of the team, including Thomas Bull, Connor Sillitoe, Harry Strijland and Ryan Gudda-Deen from the Northern Tablelands. We thank all involved in their coaching, family and supporters, with this fine result being a culmination of your efforts. Special thanks to Ella Whitty who travelled with the team, to the organisers, umpires and fellow competitors for making this event a success. I commend each of the players on their hardwork and teamwork not only on the win, but in terms of their preparation and practice leading up to this event, as well as their commitment to sport. Each player is are great ambassoders for Hockey and have bright futures ahead.

### RECOGNITION OF ZIGGY HARRIS

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)**—I recognise Ziggy Harris former student at The Armidale School, for his achievements in Opera, being recently selected to play the role of Don Giovanni in Mozart's Opera, taking place in Germany this July. This is preceded by playing Papageno in the Magic Flute, also my Mozart in Germany last year. Mr Harris has a Bachelor of Music, majoring in Classical Voice and the recipient of the Pete Davidson and Patricia Long Scholarships. I congratulate Mr Harris on such achievements, his dedication and contribution to the field of Performing Arts. This has not happened overnight, rather being a culmination of time spent with the New England Conservatorium of Music, Armidale Youth Orchestra, Eisteddfods, The Armidale School Music programs, the Armidale Symphony Orchestra and various Choirs. I commend Mr Harris on continuing to study and work whilst pursuing his lifelong ambitions in Opera and Theatre. We wish him all the best in his performances and in completing a Masters of Opera at the Schulich School of Music, in Canada later this year.

### ARMIDALE SECONDARY COLLEGE FUTURE TEACHERS CLUB

**Mr ADAM MARSHALL (Northern Tablelands)**—I recognise the achievements of Armidale Secondary College for its imitative in providing an opportunity for students to participate in the Future Teachers Club. The aim of the club is to provide New England high school students with opportunities to build skills in areas of teaching, organisation and communication, while mentoring younger students. I congratulate Armidale Secondary College and organiser Tanya Williams for staging this inter-school event, with 450 students in attendance at the University of New England. Other schools in the electorate participating included both Guyra and Uralla Central Schools. Students were given the opportunity to collaborate, develop lesson plans, benefit from UNE staff, with their teaching efforts supervised and evaluated by local teachers. I commend Armidale Secondary College Future Teachers Club for their hardwork and commitment to young people in the electorate, along with hosting such a successful event. It is an extremely valuable opportunity for all the students and appreciated by the entire community.

### RECEPTION FOR THE PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)**—It was a great honour and privilege to meet the Prime Minister of India, His Excellency the Honourable Shri Narendra Modi recently during his visit to Australia. Our great State had the privilege of hosting the Honourable Shri Narendra Modi at the only Australian public reception in his honour. There was a fantastic turnout, with over 20,000 people coming to hear His Excellency speak. The event was organised by the Indian Australian Diaspora Foundation, who do fantastic work within communities across the State, partnering with over 350 diverse organisations and working closely with the Indian Community in New South Wales. It was also fantastic to meet with the Resourceful Australian Indian Network [RAIN] and South Sydney Indian Association, two wonderful Indian organisations operating within my Electorate. Australia and India have a long-standing history of diplomatic engagement, built upon our shared values of freedom, democracy and a desire for peace and stability. It was a pleasure to meet with the Shri Honourable Narendra Modi, and I know that the relationship between India and New South Wales will continue to flourish into the future.

### REVIVAL CHURCH VISIT

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)**—It was an honour and privilege to attend Revival Church in Penshurst recently. I was pleased to meet with the congregation to discuss the work they do in the community. Revival Church are all about serving others to empower and connect their ministry locally. They have a fantastic worship team, with a vision to grow the church in the St George community. Revival Church run several programs for kids and youth. These outreach programs ensure that those in the community who require care, receive it through the dedication of volunteers and staff. As the Member for Oatley, I am so proud of the work that churches and

religious organisations like Revival Church do in my community. These places are often safe havens from the pressures and tensions in the world around us, giving us the opportunity to slow down and reflect. I'd like to thank Senior Pastor, Grant Hobbs for having me and for all the work that he and his wife, Pastor Michelle, do in our community. I look forward to attending another service in the near future.

#### **ST GEORGE ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH THANKSGIVING SERVICE**

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley)**—I rise to thank the St George Antiochian Orthodox Church for hosting me at their recent Thanksgiving Service. I was joined by my Parliamentary colleagues at this service, representing the New South Wales Liberals and Opposition Leader, Mark Speakman. The Thanksgiving Service commemorates the centenary of the laying of foundations for the first Antiochian Orthodox Church in Australia. Built in 1953, the St George Antiochian Cathedral has stood as a testament to the hard work and dedication of the Antiochian Community in New South Wales for 100 years. The Antiochian community has made remarkable contributions to our State, promoting the principles of inclusivity and respect for people from all walks of life. As Shadow Minister for Multiculturalism, it is a great privilege to work alongside the St George Antiochian Orthodox Church, bearing witness to the fantastic work they do in our community. I would like to acknowledge and thank The Archbishop, His Eminence Basilios Kodseie, as well as Reverend Father Nabil Kachab for hosting such a fantastic service and wish the St George Antiochian Orthodox Church all the best within the coming years.

#### **COAST SHELTER**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford)**—Tonight, I want to congratulate Coast Shelter for opening a new Community Centre in Wyong. Starting as a humble refuge in Gosford and a vision to end homelessness and domestic violence on the NSW Central Coast over 30 years ago, this leading not-for-profit organisation has been providing a safe space, food, clothing and financial support for vulnerable individuals. Coast Shelter's Wyong opening marks a significant milestone for Coast Shelter itself and highlights the mateship of our beautiful community members who have volunteered and supported this organisation. The new centre is in the heart of Wyong and offers a range of services including hot meals, emergency accommodation, domestic violence support, mental health support, drug and alcohol counselling, life skills training workshops and so much more. It is commendable how Coast Shelter has identified the needs of the community and taken actions to help and support vulnerable people on the northern end of the Central Coast. I thank Coast Shelter for being the beacon of light for those in need and I know we will continue to see more wonderful achievements from Coast Shelter.

#### **CWA INCLUSION UPGRADES**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford)**—It was lovely to visit the beautifully designed accessibility upgrades at the Country Women's Association Hall in Umina Beach and enjoy a cup of tea and cake with the ladies. The Centre reopened after having major renovation updates to make the venue accessible for all visitors, including a ramp for disabled access, a new entry way, as well as a large accessible bathroom with two toilets and a shower. These simple changes will make joining CWA activities so much easier for everyone in our community. The impact of the CWA's work across our community cannot be measured. For women across the community the CWA provides a safe and welcoming place to come together, enjoy a laugh and make new friends. The range of activities from cooking, sewing, craft and even a book club mean that there's something for everyone. I am inspired by the ladies' efforts and determination to raise much of the needed funds through regular fundraising activities to help boost the grant funding. Thank you so much to everybody involved in the project, including our fabulous local Tradies – a win for everyone!

#### **ALL ABILITIES STATE CHALLENGE**

**Ms LIESL TESCH (Gosford)**—Congratulations to Gosford Netball Association's All Abilities team who took out second place at the inaugural Netball NSW All-Abilities State Challenge. In front of players, coaches, and umpires from across the state, the team took to the court in their Gosford uniforms with immense pride, with each game a showcase of teamwork, spirit, and joy – not to mention plenty of goals, tips, and intercepts. To Sky, Kristi, Elyse, Chloe, Skye, Saree, Caitlyn, and Morgan, as well as coach Fiona, manager Emily, and umpire Caitlin, congratulations on this fabulous achievement, you have all done Gosford proud! Thank you to Gosford Netball Association for providing such an inclusive environment for people with disabilities, as well as an avenue to participate in one of the country's most popular sports. Also, thank you to Netball NSW for offering and hosting the wonderful event, and for providing people with disabilities the platform to showcase their talents in such a supportive and inclusive environment. I am sure the Gosford team will be back next year!

#### **MONICA TOEWS BROWN**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)**—Monica Toews Brown was a recent nominee in the Maitland Local Woman of the Year Awards. Monica has a genuine care for people's safety in the workplace, and strives to improve the workplaces of fellow Maitland residents. In 2022

Monica was named WHS Champion of the Year at the Hunter Safety Awards, Monica says "Safety is a mindset, and these awards help us develop a stronger safety mindset locally and looking after locals means everything to us". Monica loves giving back to the community. In 2022, Monica sponsored the Special Children's Christmas Party, and also the local Maitland Christmas Lolly Run. Monica continues to be a great role model to her three daughters, demonstrating what hard work, passion, and dedication can achieve. Monica is most worthy of recognition as a valued and valuable member of the Maitland Community.

#### **KEN LANE MENSWEAR**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)**—On the 5th May 1948, Ken Lane opened his menswear store in High Street Maitland. I don't think he would have envisioned his grandson Patrick 75 years later posting a Facebook video to celebrate 75 years of Ken Lane Menswear. Ken's son John took the reins in 1968 and now grandson Patrick is in charge. They have employed dozens of local staff, supported charitable causes, and served the Maitland and wider Hunter community over this time, enduring and prospering during all the changes that have taken place in High Street. Every occasion for the men of the region requires a trip to Ken Lane's. The secret to their success comes down to outstanding customer service and high-quality products. Patrick and the team know the size and fit of the men of Maitland better than their wives or partners, me included. Be it a suit for your wedding, debut, your school formal or school uniforms Ken Lane's has endured as the store of choice for over 75 years. Congratulations to Patrick and the whole team and thank you for your service to the fashion-conscious men of Maitland.

#### **MAX FERGUSON AND BRAYDEN LE BRETON**

**Ms JENNY AITCHISON (Maitland—Minister for Regional Transport and Roads)**—This week 10-year-old Max Ferguson from Gillieston Heights and Brayden Le Breton from Thornton are representing Australia in Futsal, playing in the Montesilvano Futsal Cup in Italy. Futsal began in Uruguay in the 1930's, an indoor version of Football that can be played on a basketball court, with international competitions have been played since the 1960's. The Montesilvano Futsal Cup is a showcase for the young talent who wants to finalise the development of their career at prestigious clubs both nationally and internationally, thanks to the presence of highly accredited observers and coaches in the world of futsal. Max's mother Katie has been posting updates as she receives them back here in Australia. She reported that the Maitland Magpie's junior scored a double in the team's 4-1 win over Marconi. Max and Brayden won selection for the Under 11's Boys Australian Futsal Association squad in January this year. Max's family put out the call and the Maitland community rallied behind him to raise the funds needed to get Max on the plane. Congratulations Max, Brayden and all the team and I wish them well for the rest of the tournament.

#### **ROBYN HICKS WINTER SOCKSTICE FESTIVAL**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)**—I would like to take this opportunity to recognise local businesswoman Robyn Hicks who has creatively taken her passion and given it purpose! This year saw the inaugural Winter Sockstice Festival hit Dubbo. A pure celebration of the humble hand knitted sock and a chance to fundraise for local charity organisation Pink Angels. Reaching out to her Australia wide audience of her business Yummy Yarn & Co, Robyn put the call out for entries into what she hopes will be the first of many Winter Sockstice Festivals. This year saw over 75 pairs entered to compete for both a people's choice winner & a packer's prize and with over 150 visitors to the event donating gold coins to vote and purchasing the socks on show, Robyn has raised well over \$1500 – no small feat for the event's debut! Congratulations Robyn for your clever combination of both showcasing creative talent & kindly supporting a worthy community cause. I can't wait to see this annual festival grow each year and wish you every success for future Sockstice celebrations!

#### **THOMAS NELSON**

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)**—I would like to acknowledge the remarkable achievements of Dubbo local Thomas Nelson. As a member of the NSW Blues Opens Men indoor cricket side, Thomas faced the challenge of competing against some of the best cricketers in the world at the National Championships in Ipswich. Thomas, having honed his skills for over a decade in the realm of indoor cricket, is no stranger to national tournaments. However, this particular championship was unlike any other he had encountered before, and presented him with the opportunity to test his mettle against the very cricketers he had looked up to, and he eagerly seized the chance. The only Country-based member of the NSW side, Nelson was also one of the squad's youngest players. While NSW finished the round fixtures in fifth place, narrowly missing out on a spot in the finals, their journey was not without triumph. Their resounding victory over the eventual champions, ACT, a team boasting several Australian representatives, showcased the immense talent and skill possessed by Thomas and his teammates. Congratulations, Thomas, and all the best for your future endeavours!

### CASTLEREAGH YOUTH LEAGUE

**Mr DUGALD SAUNDERS (Dubbo)**—The very sizeable crowd that packed out Narromine's Cale Oval on Sunday for the Youth League Grand Final were treated to an absolute nail-biter between the Narromine Jets and the Binnaway Bombshells. The opening exchanges saw the Bombshells dominate territorially, but they could not breach a determined Jets defence. And, in the 13th minute, it was a breakout try to the Jets that opened the scoring. The game then returned to the pre-try scenario, with the Bombshells dominating field position, eventually breaching the Narromine defence with a converted try in the final minute of the half to lock it up at 6-6 at the break. With just seven minutes remaining in the game, it seemed an unlikely Bombshells' victory was on the cards as they took the lead at 22-18. The title hung in the balance with less than a minute on the clock, when the Jets scored a try to lock the game up, and then calmly converted, bringing supporters flooding onto the ground! Congratulations to Jamari Clarke who was named Player of the Match, and Charlie Bonham who was awarded Castlereagh Youth League Player of the Year. Well done Narromine Jets!

### HUNTERS HILL GETS WASTE WISE

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)**—I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Hunters Hill Council for organise a fantastic community sustainability event. On Saturday the 17th of June, Hunters Hill Council hosted its inaugural "Waste Wise: A Festival of Sustainability". Hundreds of community members participated in the days free workshops and events which included clothing swaps, bike repairs and electric vehicle showcases. A special mention to Mayor Zac Miles, General Manager Mitchell Murphy, and the entire Hunters Hill Council team for their work in organising such a successful inaugural event.

### RAY AND ELMA KEARNEY

**Mr ANTHONY ROBERTS (Lane Cove)**—I want to take this opportunity to thank Dr Raymond and Elma Kearney for all their work and advocacy in the Lane Cove Community. The Kearney's have been Lane Cove residents for decades and since first moving to the area in the 70's have been constantly involved in a variety of local charities and community advocacy groups. In recent years the Kearney's have been tireless advocates for the protection of local Bushland and the rare fungi species that bushland houses. Through their involvement in the Sydney Fungal Studies Group, they have gone from fungi enthusiasts to fungi experts and have discovered numerous species, with the couple being immortalised with a species of fungi being named after them. I once again thank Raymond and Elma for their contribution to the community and to the sciences.

### 100 YEARS OF STEAD CYCLES

**Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)**—Charlie Stead was wounded twice during his service in WWI and was placed on light duties at the Raleigh Bicycle factory in Nottingham, England. Following the war, Charlie came to Australia, where his experience at Raleigh led him to found Stead Cycles on Maitland Road with his wife Ina. The shop still standing today. The business started with a large workshop behind the business with 10 staff mechanics fabricating frames out of Reynolds 531 tubing, before they were baked and enamelled in ovens. Later, Charlie's son Len and his wife Lydia relocated the business to Beresfield for 7 years where they rented a shop. After they purchased a property on Landor Street, Stead Cycles continued to grow their business with the help of their very loyal customers. The business remains family owned and run by Charlie, then his son Len, and Len's son Craig and now Craig's daughter Alesha Stead. Stead Cycles Beresfield prides themselves on giving the excellent and friendly service in the industry, complete with assembly job and after sales service. Congratulations to the Stead family on a century of running a successful local business and their continued support to the community.

### JECS CLEANING SERVICE

**Ms SONIA HORNERY (Wallsend)**—JECS Cleaning Service was nominated as one of the finalists in the 28th Hunter Region Business Excellence Awards held on 19 May 2023. It is an outstanding achievement to be one of the almost 80 outstanding finalist individuals and companies throughout the Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Port Stephens, Cessnock, Dungog, Singleton, Muswellbrook and Upper Hunter LGAs. There were 16 categories – Hospitality & Tourism, Internet-based Business, Personal Services, Professional Services, Health Services, Trades & Industry, Financial & Real Estate Services, Not-for-profit Businesses, Home-based Business, General Business, New Start Business, Customer Service (Individual), Customer Service (Business), Young Entrepreneur, Businesswoman of the Year and Business Leader of the Year – with the overall winner declared Business of the Year at a gala dinner. Operations manager Nicole Honnery says JECS pride themselves on their personal service, and this is a great recognition of a business who go above and beyond. Ms Honnery registered JECS Cleaning Services in 2018 and has gone from cleaning houses for friends to a business now with eight employees and three team leaders including Ms Honnery herself with a personal, hands-on approach. Congratulations to a well-deserved nomination.

### WARATAH SCHOOL OF ARTS REDEDICATION

**Ms SONIA HORNER (Wallsend)**—A tremendous thank you to Jackie Wilson and Mick's efforts in the rejuvenation of our Waratah School of Arts. Waratah School of Arts was built by Bennett and Yeoman's with W. McRae of Waratah and opened by Sir Henry Parkes, GCMG and the Mayor of Waratah, John Scholey on 15th December 1888. The venue hosted travelling showmen in the early 20th century and opened as Waratah Pictures on Wednesday 17 November 1915 with a collection of films. As a special attraction, on Saturday 20 November, the Waratah Municipal Town Band played before. The pictures in the School of Arts building had closed by late 1921 when a new theatre opened on 14 December. In 1919, the venue hosted the Welcome Home Dances from the Great War. The foundation stone was relayed on 15 March 1934 with extensions to the front and rear of the building. The rear of the School of Arts building was converted in the 1950s, into a branch library for Newcastle City Council. In 1997 the building was extensively damaged by fire with the library annex gutted. Thank you to Jackie and Mick for their tireless efforts of restoration.

### FRIENDS OF YASMAR

**Ms JO HAYLEN (Summer Hill—Minister for Transport)**—I would like to commend the work of the members of Friends of Yasmar, particularly Angie Gallinaro. Friends of Yasmar is a sub-committee of the Haberfield Association that is dedicated to the care and preservation of Yasmar Estate, an estate built during the Victorian era and one of the last surviving Parramatta Road manor houses. Angie and her fellow heritage lovers have worked tirelessly over many years to maintain the grounds of Yasmar and preserve as much of the remnant grounds and building as possible, and restore areas that have fallen into disrepair. I have spoken previously in this place about the stellar effort by Friends of Yasmar in installing a fence to protect the heritage sunken garden bed on the grounds of Yasmar. This was achieved through the perseverance of the volunteers of Friends of Yasmar, despite the challenges posed throughout 2021 and 2022 by COVID outbreaks and lockdowns. Thank you to the members of Friends of Yasmar for all the work you do to ensure the preservation of the heritage of our local area.

### GREVILLEA WATERS CANCER CARE COMMITTEE

**Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)**—I would like to acknowledge the recent fundraising efforts of the Grevillea Waters Cancer Care Committee. The committee's aim is to raise \$10,000 annually which they well and truly exceeded when they raised over \$12,000 to share equally between the Grafton and Lismore Northern NSW Cancer Care units. On 23 May, residents and guests attended the fundraising event with several raffles of over 160 donated prizes from the local Yamba business community. Goods, vouchers or cash to provide prizes for the annual raffle morning tea were kindly donated. A special raffle was also held for an accommodation package donated by Blue Dolphin Resort and Ray White Yamba also made a large donation toward the event. Two separate raffles were held with original art pieces kindly donated by local artist June Mascord. Tickets for these were highly sought after. I thank the Grevillea Waters Cancer Care Committee, Alida Swanston, Chris Harris, Marie Grant, June Winsor, Toni Lynch, Sue Kenny and Jan Rennex for the efforts they continue to put in and wish them all the best with this year's fundraising.

### MACLEAN UNITED HOSPITAL AUXILIARY

**Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)**—I would like to acknowledge the efforts of the volunteer members of the Maclean United Hospital Auxiliary who spend countless hours holding events and baking goodies for sale to raise much-needed funding to purchase hospital items and medical equipment for Maclean District Hospital. The Auxiliary's latest fundraising efforts were the Great Debate where a hot topic is debated by two teams made up of community members and their annual partnership with the Maclean Bowling Club who host the Maclean Cup Fashion Parade and High Tea where guests dress up in their best race day outfits and come along for a fun-filled afternoon. They also receive a number of generous donations from local organisations and businesses throughout the year. The two recent events raised around \$4700 which is an outstanding effort. These funds help fill the gap between hospital need and what the government can supply. I commend the Auxiliary on the wonderful work they do and give special mention to its current Executive, President, Anne Farrell, Vice Presidents Lori Brown and Nola Baker, Secretary, Marilyn Donelan and Vice Secretary Helen Hamilton, Treasurer, Jim Simmons and Vice Treasurer, Bev Anderson and Publicity officer, Vicki Gulaptis.

### STAN FOSTER

**Mr RICHIE WILLIAMSON (Clarence)**—I would like to recognise Mr Stan Foster of Casino, a devoted and much treasured volunteer at Whiddon Casino Men's Shed. The Whiddon Group established the Men's Shed for residents about five years ago. By making and selling their projects the men are able create something by themselves, promoting their self-worth and helping them feel part of the community. Stan was one of the first volunteers to join the Men's Shed. He loves helping residents with their projects helping them make different items such as bee and insect houses, bird boxes and rustic Christmas trees and nativity scenes. He brings in his

own tools and sources wood and bamboo for the projects. He has gone above and beyond to contribute to the success of the group. From the proceeds of the projects they have sold, the Men's Shed has been able to purchase a supply of tools and sometimes enjoy outings together. Stan is a volunteer with a passion, and I thank him for making the lives of residents brighter.

#### **TAMKIN HAKIM**

**Mr MARK HODGES (Castle Hill)**—I would like to recognise Tamkin Hakim from Afghan Women's Rescue. Tamkin was recently nominated for the Zest Awards under the Voluntary Leader category. Tamkin works as an Enterprise and Employment Officer with the Community Migrant Resource Centre in Castle Hill. She also commits to humanitarian efforts, helping young women especially escape Afghanistan. So far, thanks to the efforts and of Tamkin and her team, they have managed to help 27 young women flee Tamkin's former homeland. Alongside this, Tamkin also assists in providing support for over 300 refugees from Afghanistan staying in the Hills area before they are settled. I would like to thank Tamkin for her valiant and tireless work in rescuing these refugees and for her continued effort in assisting these vulnerable people as they find their new home in the Hills. Congratulations to Tamkin on her nomination for the Zest Award for the Voluntary Leader category.

#### **PHIVE NOMINATED INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARY OF THE YEAR**

**Ms DONNA DAVIS (Parramatta)**—PHIVE is the piece de resistance of Parramatta Square. A transformational landmark that will place Parramatta on the world stage. This is born out with the nomination for International Public Library of the Year. PHIVE's bold design by French Firm Manuelle Gautrand Architecture, in conjunction with Australian firms DesignInc and Lacoste + Stevenson, creates a modern interface with Parramatta's rich heritage. PHIVE is a remarkable building as functional as it is visually striking, designed with a powerful use of colour – red hues inspired by our local flora coupled with a prestigious 6 star NABERS rating for Energy, making it one of the most efficient buildings in Australia. As City of Parramatta Lord Mayor I was honoured to officially open PHIVE. So I am extremely proud that the Parramatta Library and PHIVE have been shortlisted for the final four of the International Public Library of the Year awards. Congratulations to all past and present City of Parramatta councillors, staff, project partners and members of the Citizen's Jury who contributed to deliver this bold building for Parramatta.

#### **LISA THOMPSON**

**Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)**—I rise to recognise the contribution of Lisa Thompson, a dedicated support worker with CORE Community services and manager of the Intensive Support Team. The Intensive Support Team provides support services to young people aged 15-25 in south-west Sydney who are at risk of being homeless. The team delivers services that aim to secure long-term accommodation and develop skills for young people, increasing engagement with employment, education, training and community. As manager of the Intensive Support Team, Lisa has made a substantial contribution through her management of caseworkers and in the delivery of frontline services. Lisa's solution-focused practice recognises the importance of stability and a safe place to live in changing the trajectory of vulnerable young people. Her valued efforts ensure continued engagement with support services and keep clients centred as they confront their struggles. I sincerely congratulate Lisa for her invaluable contribution to my electorate and I recognise her well-deserved nomination in the Outstanding Community Leader category at the 2023 ZEST awards.

#### **SENIORS ON TOUR**

**Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)**—I would like to congratulate the Liverpool City Council's Seniors on Tour project for their well-deserved nomination at this year's ZEST Awards. The ZEST Awards is a special event that applauds the outstanding work of community leaders, organisations and projects. The Seniors on Tour project was nominated for the Outstanding Project Award. This award recognises those projects that have helped to provide strong communal support to culturally and linguistically diverse people in our community. I would like to thank the Seniors on Tour project for providing a safe and supportive environment for older Australians looking to better their knowledge and understanding of technology. With over 58 people having already benefited from this project, it is no surprise that it has been nominated for this year's prestigious Award. I applaud the work of Liverpool City Council and all those responsible for this fantastic project. I look forward to its continued success in the years to come.

#### **ZEST AWARDS CEREMONY**

**Ms CHARISHMA KALIYANDA (Liverpool)**—On 24 June, I had the honour of attending the 2023 ZEST Awards, a special event where we recognised and valued the hard work and dedication of our community's most passionate and committed groups and leaders. The night acknowledged the valuable contributions made by community programs like the Transition to School Community Partnership Program and the Liverpool Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Women's Water Safety Program. Thank you to the organisers of these programs for

your contribution to the health and wellbeing of our community. I would like to also extend my warmest congratulations to the Living Stories Western Sydney Writing Competition nominees for winning the Outstanding Project Community Arts and Culture Award. I thank West Lit Libraries and WestWords who in partnership have showcased the artistic talents Liverpool has to offer. I would like to thank the organisers and partners for hosting and supporting this remarkable event. A big congratulations to all the winners and nominees. We wish you great success in all your future endeavours.

### **2023 MIRANDA LOCAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR**

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)**—I congratulate the 2023 Miranda Local Woman of the Year, Simone Marslew – a pillar of our local community. Simone is truly deserving of this recognition. She is a remarkable woman whose personal tragedy has resulted in her dedicating herself to driving change and supporting vulnerable people in our community. In a happy coincidence, I presented Simone with the award on the anniversary of her brother Michael's passing on 27 February 2023, which was the catalyst for the formation of Enough is Enough by her father Ken Marslew in 1994. Enough is Enough is a fantastic organisation that works with individuals and groups to encourage them to take personal responsibility for their actions while promoting violence prevention strategies. As General Manager of this incredible local organisation that provides counselling services, educational programs and support to perpetrators of crime and their victims, Simone works tirelessly to ensure they have what they need to rebuild their lives. I commend Simone on being named the 2023 Miranda Local Woman of the Year and for her commitment to transforming the lives of vulnerable people.

### **SUTHERLAND FOOD SERVICES**

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)**—I acknowledge Sutherland Food Services who are the successful recipients of \$10,054 from the 2022 Community Building Partnership Program. For over 50 years, Sutherland Food Services have offered solutions to support healthy and independent living across the Sutherland Shire. With meals developed through their network of reliable and trusted providers, the team work hard to assist those in need by providing healthy and delicious meals. This funding will allow Sutherland Shire Food Services to purchase a new oven to create and deliver more hot meals to community members. It is not only the hot meal that makes a difference to the lives of many in our community, but also the welfare check and interpersonal contact that comes as meals are delivered. Of course, none of this is possible without the hard work and dedication of the Sutherland Food Services Executive Committee. I acknowledge Karen French, Martina Wutzke, Michelle Metham, Joanne Williams, Michael Douglas for their efforts in caring for the vulnerable in our community. I thank the members of the Sutherland Food Services for bringing the importance of this project to my attention and look forward to seeing the positive impact this project delivers to our community.

### **MIRANDA RSL YOUTH CLUB**

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda)**—I acknowledge the Miranda RSL Youth Club who are the successful recipients of \$5,566 from the NSW Government's 2023 Local Sport Grant Program. The Miranda RSL Youth Club has been at the heart of our community since its establishment in 1962. In this time, the club has developed a reputation as a welcoming group that provides fun and inclusive activities such as karate, trampolining and tumbling for all young people. The funding will provide new trampoline gymnastics beds which will allow for two new trampoline gymnastics classes and as such, great participation opportunities for boys and girls. Of course, none of this is possible without the hard work and dedication of the executive committee of the Miranda RSL Youth Club. I recognise President John Boes, Vice Presidents Anthony Bull and John Caruana, Treasurer Bill Lewis, Secretary Amanda Donaldson, Chief Instructor Louise Brown and Head Coach Robert Bull for their contribution to our community. I thank the members of the Miranda RSL Youth Club for bringing the importance of this project to my attention and look forward to seeing the positive impact it makes for our community.

### **STARS OF THE NORTH**

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)**—Once again Norths Cammeray played host to one of the most anticipated events of the local community, Cancer Council NSW Stars of the North. This event can only be described as a high energy dance spectacular, bringing the North Shore and surrounding suburbs together and raising much needed funds for Cancer Council NSW. This year two Mosman locals dusted off their dancing shoes and put their skills to the test, Ignatius 'Iggy' Mendonca and Mark Wallis. Both are well known in our local community, with Iggy the franchisee owner and director of Pattisons Patisserie Mosman, and Mark who is the President of Mosman Rotary, board member and director of Taldumande Youth Servies, and committee member at Impact100. I can attest to both their dancing skills as they brought the house down with their fantastic routines, all in the name of raising money for a worthwhile cause. I recognise Cancer Council NSW for all their efforts combatting the insidious disease of cancer and I am proud to report that over \$142,000 was raised which is incredible. Congratulations once again Mark and Iggy on an outstanding effort, you've made our local community proud.



### VALERIE LHUEDE CELEBRATES 100TH BIRTHDAY

**Ms FELICITY WILSON (North Shore)**—I want to recognise Kirribilli local Valerie Lhuede who is about to celebrate the incredible milestone of her 100th birthday. Valerie has been a resident of North Shore for many years and before moving to Kirribilli, Valerie's father Aubin Rene Lhuede subdivided a large parcel of land at Beauty Point around Pearl Bay Avenue where he built the family home and Valerie had a house boat off Pearl Bay Reserve near The Spit for many years from the 1960's. Interestingly Valerie also worked throughout her life to save the silver mining town of Yerranderie in an isolated part of the Blues Mountains, though it is only a short distance from Sydney across the Burragorang Valley. Valerie helped put an airstrip at Yerranderie which has been an enormous asset in fighting bushfires in recent years, particularly during the 2019 black summer bushfires. I want to wish Valerie a very happy birthday as she celebrates her 100th birthday and wish her and her family the very best for the future.

### KING'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS

**Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)**—I wish to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of local constituents of the Drummoyne electorate who have been recognised in the King's Birthday Honours List 2023. I would like to congratulate: Ms Jane Fitzgerald Spring AM of Drummoyne, who was recognised as Member in the General Division for significant service to disability advocacy in sport and public sector administration. Ms Margaret Lee Grove OAM of Abbotsford who was recognised with a Medal in the General Division for her service to the community through a range of organisations. Mr Graeme Berwick OAM of Drummoyne, who was recognised with a Medal in the General Division for service to the community through charitable organisations. I appreciate the contribution of these constituents and I extend my sincerest congratulations to this year's King's Birthday Honours recipients. Thank you for making a difference in the community.

### UNDERWATER DIVE SERVICES

**Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)**—I rise today to congratulate Underwater Dive Services on the great accomplishment of being awarded an Inner West Local Business Award in the category of Specialised Business. Underwater Dive Services offer services in professional diving and marine concierge services, performing a wide range of tasks including search and recovery for lost items underwater, hull cleaning services, boat salvage, mooring services, structural inspections and also recreational diving services. I sincerely congratulate the Head of Underwater Dive Services, Pablo Canestro and the rest of his team on this incredible achievement and for continuing to provide excellent service for locals. I am extremely proud to have so many local businesses from my community receive well deserved recognition for their hard work and achievements. Congratulations Underwater Dive Services!

### COMMUNITY FUN DAY

**Ms STEPHANIE DI PASQUA (Drummoyne)**—On the 11th June, Communities For Communities hosted a Community Fun Day at Drummoyne Oval. In its third year, this is a day that everyone in my community looks forward to and there was no exception this year. With markets, food stalls, live entertainment, rides and fireworks to end the night, the Community Fun Day was magnificent. It was great to see so many couples, families and groups out and enjoying their long weekend at this incredible local event. I want to thank over 40 volunteers, local community organisations and, performers and everyone who participated in the day. I would like to acknowledge the Communities For Communities team for coordinating this wonderful event together. This is a great example of community coming together to foster a true sense of local spirit and camaraderie in an inclusive way, and for the benefit of residents. I would like to thank the Communities For Communities Committee including Founder and President Lance Brooks, Vice President Hannah Rayment, and John McIntosh. I would like to congratulate and thank local resident and MC for the day, Spiro Christopoulos, St John's and Five Dock Rotary volunteers for their time. Great job!

### SAMUEL WHITEHEAD

**Mr DAVID HARRIS (Wyang—Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Minister for Gaming and Racing, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Medical Research, and Minister for the Central Coast)**—Samuel Whitehead from Woongarra represented Australia in the 2023 Oceania Boxing Confederation Junior and Youth Oceania Boxing Championships based in Samoa with an outstanding result winning the silver medal. Samuel has been boxing for over 4 years and has been part of the NSW Futures program for the past three years. He first started training at Central Coast Boxing gym in Budgewoi under Steve and Bailey Mannix who later introduced the team to a well-known local coach Dean Robinson. Team Robinson trains out of Accolade Boxing Gym in Morisset with continued success and Whitehead is the third young boxer under Coach Robbo to make the Australian team and compete at an international level this year. Next month Samuel will be visiting South Australia with the NSW team to improve on his last result in his weight division 63.5kg at the Australian titles.

This is just the beginning of the 18-year old's international career and I wish you all the best on the start of your boxing career.

#### **LIONS CLUB OF TOUKLEY**

**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)**—The members at Lions Club of Toukley always go above and beyond to support the local community in their own time. Recently the Club raised \$1,500 and generously donated the money to the Toukley Neighbourhood Centre for new warm blankets for vulnerable, disadvantaged homeless people in our community. The members are dedicated to striving in making a difference throughout the local area making it a better place to live, work and grow.

#### **WAYNE PARROTT AND SHARON PASCOE**

**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)**—The Central Coast Mariner supporters Wayne Parrott and Sharon Pascoe from my local area started a campaign called Footy Boots for the Cook Islands and donated up to 600 pairs of boots, and football gear. During their visit at Rarotonga last year, they watched the local soccer games and wondered why there were delays between the games. The boys who had just come off the field took off their boots and their shin pads and handing them to the under-15 girls. Some children were wearing boots held together with electrical tape and the couple knew they could do something. Wayne and Sharon started setting up a drop box for boots at the Mariner's home games, the couple also collected football gear from members of the community. The Cook Island Sport and National Olympic Committee Raukura Ellison was very grateful for the kind donation from our community in Australia. The sporting community received 576 pairs of boots, 110 pairs of shin pads, over 300 pairs of brand-new socks. Wayne and Sharon have done an amazing job collecting boots to give them a second chance homing them with the young football players in the Cook Islands.

#### **ST JOSEPH'S SHARING STORIES**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)**—Kindergarten and Year 1 students from St Joseph's Primary School in Grenfell recently took part in a very memorable day with their teachers as they visited residents at the Grenfell Multipurpose Service. Students have been very busy working on their creative imaginative stories and literacy skills and were so excited to share these with the residents. Both residents and students enjoyed the time together sharing stories and enjoying delicious home-made chocolate brownies. It is wonderful to see this social interaction between our youth and older generations as this presents important health benefits for both generations, enhancing the opportunities for children and people of all ages to have frequent interaction. Excursions at school are a fun and interactive way for students to broaden their knowledge and skill base and share with their communities the exciting things happening in the classroom. I congratulate the Kindergarten and Year 1 students at St Joseph's Primary School on representing your school in a very positive and enthusiastic manner.

#### **60TH ANNIVERSARY FOR WEST WYALONG LIONS CLUB**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)**—Congratulations to the West Wyalong Lions Club for their remarkable achievement of reaching 60 years as a registered club. This incredible achievement stands testament to all the past and present members of the West Wyalong Lions Club for the enduring spirit of unity, dedication, commitment, and rich history within their local community. Cooking up a storm at the annual Australia Day Breakfast, hosting a variety of charity concerts, selling large amounts of raffle tickets, or raising funds for other community organisations, the West Wyalong community can always rely on their Lions Club to be there for support. Lions Clubs are instrumental in recovery work after natural disasters and are always at the forefront of assisting the community in times of need, whether it be bushfires, floods or drought. The Lions of West Wyalong exemplify the true meaning of being a Lion. I am sure that I speak on behalf of the whole community of West Wyalong when I say thank you to the Lions Club members both past and present for all they do and continue to do for their community.

#### **WYANGALA COUNTRY CLUB FIREWORKS**

**Ms STEPH COOKE (Cootamundra)**—It was my pleasure to join Wyangala Country Club President, Mr Tony Mehmed and Cowra Shire Council Mayor, Bill West for the annual Wyangala Bonfire and Fireworks Spectacular. I was delighted to be a part of the 4000 strong crowd who headed to Matt Morrison Oval in Wyangala on Sunday 11 June for a free afternoon of community activities. The afternoon started strong at 4pm with live entertainment and food and drink stalls. A bonfire was then lit at 4:30pm and the community favourite fireworks display starting at 6:30pm. Volunteer committee members from the Wyangala Country Club, Wyangala Bowling Club and Wyangala Golf Club, all worked together to ensure the afternoon and evening was enjoyed by locals

and visitors to the community. The committee members are commended for their tireless voluntary contributions to this spectacular event. The committee wish to thank the 19 local companies who came on board and sponsored this year's event. Their generous contributions help make this event happen year after year. Well done to the committee members for a fantastic fireworks display. A great celebration for the long weekend.

#### **ARTARMON GIRL GUIDES**

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)**—I would like to pay tribute to the invaluable work Artarmon Girl Guides do in building skills, service, confidence and friendship among girls in our community. Girl Guides Artarmon meets on Monday evenings at the Artarmon Guide Hall off Barton Road where local guides engage in a whole range of fun and interesting activities, learn new skills, and make new friends. The Artarmon Unit is of course part of Girl Guides NSW, and indeed, the worldwide Girl Guide movement. For over a century, Girl Guides has provided a place for girls to carve out their own journey, to learn, be challenged, discover new talents, have adventures, be creative, and to have fun. I would especially like to honour the Girl Guide leaders across our state who selflessly volunteer to lead, build up and encourage the girl guides. In the Artarmon Girl Guides, I would like to acknowledge the team of dedicated leaders who lead the girls weekly. I am grateful for the contribution Girl Guides make to moulding girls into women of character who serve others.

#### **WILLOUGHBY GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL PRODUCTION – INTO THE WOODS**

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)**—I would like to commend Willoughby Girls High School for its production of the musical, Into the Woods. Performed from 21-24 June in their school hall, the musical brought joy to the school community and to the broader community of Willoughby and beyond. Since its Premiere in 1987, Into the Woods has become a classic, much-loved musical with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, a celebrated American composer. I appreciate the many hours and weeks of rehearsals that the staff and students of Willoughby Girls High School dedicated to ensuring that this musical production was a great success. The cast, orchestra and backstage crew are to be congratulated for all their talent, dedication and hard work into the production of this outstanding musical. It is a credit to the whole community of Willoughby Girls High School – a great local school of which I'm proud.

#### **A NEW HOME FOR WILLOUGHBY MEN'S SHED**

**Mr TIM JAMES (Willoughby)**—On Saturday 24 June 2023, I had the pleasure of attending and participating in the opening ceremony of the new Willoughby Community Men's Shed at Warner's Park Northbridge. Established in 2007, Willoughby Community Men's Shed is a venue where men of all walks of life can gather, exchange skills, and forge friendships, creating a space for personal growth, and shared wisdom. The Shed is always filled with the sound of creativity, as men engage in woodworking, crafting beautiful pieces and discovering new talents in our community. Beyond the tangible creations, it is the intangible benefits that truly shine. The Shed offers a haven of support, ensuring no one feels alone. Through engaging activities and heartfelt conversations, members find comfort, purpose, and renewed vitality. Willoughby Community Men's Shed is a commendable pillar of the community, empowering men to flourish both individually and collectively. I am grateful to the Shed, Willoughby Council and community for support in making a lasting impact on men's lives in our community and wish them well in their new home.

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